

PRESS RELEASE

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On United Nations Day, India Needs to Urgently Reaffirm its International Human Rights Commitments

United Nations (UN) Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter on 24 October 1945 and commemorates the day on which the United Nations officially came into being. The United Nations has continued to build international cooperation and works towards establishing standards and securing global human rights through its various agencies. This year, 2018, also marks the seventieth anniversary of the adoption (on 10 December 1948) of the historic Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes, in Article 25, the human right to adequate housing.

Several important human rights, including the human rights to adequate housing, equality, and security of the person and home, have been firmly secured in international law, as a result of prominent UN treaties such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, all of which India has ratified.

Earlier this month, on 12 October, India was elected as a member of the UN Human Rights Council – the inter-governmental body within the UN system that is responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. India's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), mandated to raise awareness on human rights issues and take action in cases of human rights violations, also celebrated its silver jubilee anniversary on 12 October 2018. Speaking at the event, the Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi, reiterated India's commitment towards upholding human rights and stated that the "*protection of human rights has been an important part of our culture*" and that "*human rights should not be merely a slogan, but also a part of our ethos.*"

On this United Nations Day, Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN) India, thus calls upon the Government of India to:

- Comply with all its international legal and moral commitments;
- Meet its obligations to report, on a timely basis, to UN treaty bodies;
- Implement recommendations made to India by:
 - United Nations treaty bodies;
 - United Nations Special Procedures, including recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing in her India mission report; and,
 - The UN Human Rights Council, including the September 2017 recommendations from India's third Universal Periodic Review; and,
- Incorporate international human rights standards in national laws, policies, and schemes, including *inter alia* the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana/Housing for All by 2022 scheme, the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), the Smart Cities Mission, the National Rurban Mission, the National Urban Livelihoods Mission, and the Swachh Bharat Mission.

We look forward to sustained and positive engagement of the Indian government with the United Nations human rights system, including through the strengthening of national and state human rights institutions and mechanisms.