



PRESS RELEASE

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On United Nations Day and the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations, Call on India to Reaffirm its Historic Commitments to Promoting Multilateralism and Upholding Human Rights

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. This year is special, as the UN celebrates 75 years of its founding. Over the last 75 years, the UN has persistently worked towards building international cooperation, establishing important standards, and securing human rights globally, through its various agencies and mechanisms.

Several important human rights, including the human rights to adequate housing, equality, non-discrimination, and security of the person and home, have been firmly secured in international law, as a result of foundational 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. The UN body of ‘soft law’ consisting of declarations and human rights standards and guidelines, including those related to the rights of indigenous peoples, internally displaced persons, peasants and other people working in rural areas, and rural women; forced evictions and displacement; security of tenure; and, strategies for implementing the human right to adequate housing, among others, have greatly contributed to promoting the normative understanding and implementation of related human rights around the world.

India’s role in establishing the United Nations and its contributions to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are historic. In 2018, India was elected a member of the UN Human Rights Council – the inter-governmental body within the UN system responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights. In keeping with India’s historic commitment to promoting multilateralism, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, Housing and Land Rights Network calls upon the Government of India to:

- Comply with all its international legal and moral commitments;
- Implement its pledge to the UN Human Rights Council;
- Honour its open invitation to UN Special Rapporteurs to conduct, on a regular basis, country missions;
- Meet its obligations to report, on a timely basis, to UN treaty bodies;
- Implement recommendations made to India by UN treaty bodies; Special Procedures, including recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing and the Special Rapporteur on the rights to water and sanitation in their India mission reports; and, the UN Human Rights Council, including the recommendations from India’s third Universal Periodic Review in 2017;
- Incorporate international human rights standards in state and central laws, policies, and schemes, and in all COVID-19 recovery plans; and,
- Foster a spirit of cooperation and support for working with UN mechanisms, including with civil society efforts to strengthen and contribute to the UN system.

We are deeply appreciative of the UN’s contribution to promoting human rights globally. We are looking forward to the sustained and positive engagement of the Indian government with the UN human rights system, including through strengthening of national and state human rights institutions and mechanisms.

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