

International Dalit Solidarity Network

Thank you Madame Chair. My name is [inaudible] and I volunteer at an organization based in India, and I am a member of the International Dalit Solidarity Network. I welcome the theme taken up today, building trust and social cohesion, and the discourse surrounding it, that everyone in this room has been passionately engaged in. Lately, there has been a practice of derogatory rhetoric against minorities in my country. This exists in tandem with impunity offered to state officials, and various policies, like eradication and displacement of [inaudible], indifference to communal violence, push back against Bengali speaking people, deportation of the Rohingyas, destruction of Muslim homes, a.k.a. bulldozer justice, and extrajudicial killings of Dalits. I highlight these examples today because of their profound effects on the civic space in India. Civil society organizations and other non-state actors have become silence on these issues, due to reprisals if one speaks out against these violations. The NHRA was finally downgraded after two consecutive deferrals, and the judiciary is unable to impartially uphold the rule of law. When it comes to UN engagement, India is not committed fully to working with what appears to be the minorities within the UN mechanisms, like the Special Procedures, [inaudible] and the Treaty Body Committees. Rather undivided attention is given to the General Assembly, the Security Council, and membership in the Human Rights Council. Therefore, in line with today's theme, I urge that all states much engage fully with all UN mechanisms and strengthen civic space in order to build trust and social cohesion among all people. The NHRA must be strengthened to its full capacity and comply with the entirety of the [inaudible] recommendations. In the end, my appeal is simple: let's live according to the values that bind us.