

## **Tenth Session on Forum on Minority Issues**

### **Agenda Item 3: Participation of minority youth in public life**

Thank you Mr. Chair,

I am Chet Narayan Rasaili from Nepal; I am the President of the Dalit Youth Alliance. I would like to speak on behalf the Dalit Minority youth of Nepal as they face many challenges in ensuring that they are included in the public and political life, a right which has been denied to them as a result of caste based discrimination and untouchability.

According to the latest demographics and data available, Nepal is a country of minorities because of its multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and religious diversity. Therefore, in countries like ours the “inclusiveness of all” makes the society cohesive which helps to establish long lasting peace. But in the context of Nepal, the Dalit community is the most marginalized minority community due to Caste Based Discrimination and Untouchability that continues to be deeply entrenched in the Nepalese society. Dalit youths, especially Dalit young women, face double, even multiple forms of discrimination: they have limited access to the decision-making process and also lack representation in youth mechanisms. They are judged by their ethnic background and are always devaluated and undermined which most often makes them feel weak, poor and vulnerable. Thus, it is essential that the issues of Dalit youths be inclusively addressed and their needs accommodated in every sphere: social, political, cultural and economic.

The practice of direct/indirect discrimination is a violation of basic human rights and is also against the spirit of the constitution of Nepal and international human rights standards that it adheres to.

Mr. Chair, I want to make the following recommendations:

1. Being a state party of CERD, Nepal should effectively implement all the laws regarding caste based discrimination and should take every possible action to end discrimination against the Dalits and all minorities.
2. The newly forming branches of National Youth Council and programs of Youth Ministry of Nepal should be inclusive and should give the Dalit youths an opportunity to be in the leadership positions.
3. The police and every concerned mechanisms of state should apply “Zero tolerance” while dealing with cases regarding caste based discrimination and untouchability.

Finally, as a fellow of the Minority Fellowship Program I would like to acknowledge this opportunity given by the OHCHR. Thank you Mr. Chair!