

2nd WORLD CONFERENCE ON UNTOUCHABILITY

14th -18th April, 2014

Kathmandu, Nepal

A Comprehensive Report



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Dalit Commission of Nepal		
International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU)	Youth Advocacy Forum	HIVOS
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Acronyms

NDC	National Dalit Commission
IHEU	International Humanist and Ethical Union
SOCH	Society for Humanism
FIRA	Federation of Indian Rationalists Association
SDF	Social Development Forum
NGO	Non-Government Organization
YAN	Youth Advocacy Nepal
KENN	Kuriti Elimination National Network
CA	Constituent Assembly
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
SARTHI	Acting Servitor Together for Human Rights Implementation
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. **Background:**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Discrimination should not be made on the basis of caste, creed, race, religion, ideology or any kind of faith. However,

around the world, at one point of time or the other, it is found there has been existence of certain customs, values and practices which discriminates among people on various bases such as gender, race, color, caste, etc. Unfortunately, even in this twenty-first century, the worst practice like untouchability still prevails in society. Untouchability is one of the worst cults in society, where so called upper caste people treat so called lower caste people as untouchable. Due to such unfair caste based discrimination practice, Dalits (so called lower caste people) are bound to live miserable life. They are bound to live as second citizen in society. Caste discrimination is not only violation of social rights rather it is the massive violations of civil, political, economic and cultural rights. It is a serious, inhumane and pervasive human rights problem that is affecting more than 260 million people in all geographical regions, in particular Asia and Africa. Caste based discrimination is a distinct form of discrimination which deserves separate and special attention by UN human rights mechanisms. UN has adopted International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) for eliminating racial discrimination. To deal with this particular issue, caste based discrimination, UN system needs to come up with a special resolution or declaration for elimination of caste based discrimination. In this context, the second world conference on untouchability is organized to create a common platform where activists, key political actors, political leaders, constituent assembly (CA) members, media personnel, policy makers and academicians from national and international level can thoroughly discussed on the issue and can better mainstream the issue. the conference is supposed to initiate, deepen and widen the discourse on the practice of untouchability; its impact on society and the way to eliminate it.

2. Objectives:

- To bring together Politicians, Academics, Human Rights Activists, Jurists and Victims to devise global strategies to address the immense challenge that Untouchability poses to the world
- To create serious discourse on untouchability and formulate critical suggestion to resolve it
- To develop leadership skills on youth and build youth leaders to advocate on the realm of Dalit issues and untouchability

3. Participants:

There was the participation of about 500 participants in the conference comprising academicians, activists, key political actors, youth political leaders, constituent assembly (CA) members, media personnel, policy makers and bureaucrats. Participants from a dozen of countries attended the conference.

4. Proceedings:

The conference was of four days long with having certain theme each day. On the first day, 14th April, an interaction entitled 'Understanding Ambedkar and his philosophy' was conducted. On the second day, the conference provided the training session entitled 'Leadership Training on Untouchability' to youth participants. The formal opening program of the second world conference was conducted on 17th April at Hotel Radisson, Lazimpat. On 18th April, interaction on three different subject regarding untouchability entitled 'United Nations, ICERD and Untouchability', 'Nepal Dalit Movement: Challenges and Opportunities' and 'Untouchability in South Asia' were conducted.

5. Events:

5.1 DAY I: 14th April

INTERACTION ON ‘UNDERSTANDING AMBEDKAR’

On the auspicious occasion of Dr. B.R Ambedkar's birthday, an interaction program entitled ‘Understanding Ambedkar’ was organized on the first day of the world conference dated 14th April. The session was facilitated by Arjun Pariyar, conference coordinator and member of SOCH Nepal. The program was then started by the introduction of the participants presented at the interaction session. Afterwards, Uttam Niroula, executive director of SOCH Nepal gave short welcome speech about the endeavor by different organizations to eliminate the untouchability from the world. He said there are still 25 to 30 states in the world which are still suffering from the menace of untouchability. He then thanked the other collaborators like IHEU and National Dalit Commission (NDC) for helping SOCH Nepal to organize the program. The resource persons of the interaction program were Om Prakash B.K (Nepalese scholar on dalit issue), V.B Rawat, (prominent humanist leader of India and president of Social Development Foundation (SDF) India) and Dr. Sujatha Surepally (Indian scholar).

Presenter Om Prakash B.K started his presentation by briefly highlighting background of Ambedkar and his movement. He elaborated idea of Ambedkar and his movement from social, economic and political perspectives. He also said that there was influence of Ambedkar to initiate Dalit movement after the introduction of democracy in Nepal in 2007 BS. He gave short description about the visit of Ambedkar to Nepal and the dalit society in the Kathmandu and Bhaktapur. He then provided the list of events which has fuelled the dalit movement in Nepal leading towards the recognition of rights of dalits in constitution and various legal documents of the country. He stressed that Dr. Ambedkar is not only limited and renowned for his contribution to fight against untouchability in India, but also he is an initiator of humanist view in the world to start a collaborative effort to fight against injustices prevailed in society.

The program then continued with short presentation by V.B. Rawat. He briefly introduced Ambedkar and his main ideas, which he has propounded from humanist perspective to fight against untouchability in India and around the contemporary world. He told a story how Ambedkar started his career as activist asking for right to water for Dalits and even their right to have religion which include entering temple. He was also politically active leader during the time of independence of India and was even the constitution drafter of India. He elaborately pointed out the differences between Gandhi and Ambedkar. He further, emphasized on the Ambedkar's vision on Buddhism from humanist perspective and described the views on Ambedkar about Marxism as well. Indeed he emphasized that Ambedkar is the hope of people beyond the nationality, country, religion, etc. He then, concluded by saying, 'let's not confine Ambedkar to certain region, religion and caste rather let's have the discourse which he has propounded on humanist view about the untouchability and caste system existing in the world'.

Subsequently, there was short presentation by Dr. Sujatha Surepally on the topic 'Dr. Ambedkar, a Woman's Perspective'. She began her speech by the quote "Women are made but not born". She emphasized- during birth the girl child and boy child are similar but later its upbringing and the rules of society which differentiate among them leading the boy to superior position and girls to inferior. During the time of Ambedkar, the issues about the discrimination and problem of minority, caste system and women were less talked about. However, Ambedkar was such a person who went out of the flow of the stream and raised his voice and initiated the effort to fight against such unjustifiable social practices. Regarding women Ambedkar has stated that the religious scripts available and practiced in society have

subjugated and treated them inferior and put them in the position of status quo. He opposed Manu Smriti and even burnt it at the time of 1930s. Consequently, there were harsh responses against his behavior. However, Ambedkar was of view that progress of women is the progress of society and the religious text which sub-ordinate women shall not be practiced but rather should be reformed or eliminated. He has linked the issue of women even with the caste system. According to him, women are tri suppressed in class, i.e. on the basis of gender, class and caste. Thus, Ambedkar is a vision and way of life to each under-represented group in society. Indeed, the contribution of Ambedkar to raise the issue of women is of significant one.

After the presentation from the experts being based on Ambedkar and his philosophy, there was deliberation of short speech by keynote speakers. The major points highlighted by them are listed below:

Roop Bahadur Pariyar, Prominent Dalit Rights Activist

There is significant role of Ambedkar in defining the idea of Humanism. Ambedkar was very much influenced by Buddhism and he has interpreted Buddhism from humanist perspective. The weak part of Ambedkar was that he himself was a constitution drafter of India however, he need to fight for convincing the idea of giving reservation to dalits in constitution. About dalit movement in Nepal and the concept of Humanism, the first person to speak about this issue was King Jay Prithivi Bahadur Singh. Despite efforts of NGOs, INGOs and government in Nepal, the situation of Dalits has not improved to satisfactory level.

Moti Lal Nepali, Academician and Activist:

Ambedkar has analyzed the theory of Karl Marx and connected it with caste-based discrimination or untouchability. Before the “Puna Pact” Ambedkar has put forward three things about Dalits. There were Separate electoral process, Separate land for untouchables and Reservation for scheduled castes. He was also against Manusmriti which he defined as full of orthodox values leading towards inhumane treatment to Dalits and women.

Chakra Man Biswakarma, Dalit Political Leaders

The concept of human is significant for social transformation. Once K.R.Bali had said, “Ambedkar was born in such state where an individual is not known for his/her effort and capacity but by the caste and status.” In Nepal we have no problem about law and policies but there is hindrances on the attitude of people. For instance, though there is reservation

written in constitution, in implementation level we find dalits are still under-represented. For example there are only 2% of dalit teachers. Likewise, in INGOs and NGOs there are only 4% of dalits and worse in bureaucracy there is only 1% of dalits. It is unfortunate that there is still intra-caste discrimination practiced among dalit community.

Babu Gogeneni, International director of IHEU

One of the newly published books about Ambedkar and his philosophy seems to be in debate. The book contains about the idea of Ambedkar about the annihilation of the caste system in India, which was regarded as the explosive attack on the social system in India. In the continuation of this controversy, the book is now criticized in India on various bases such as:

- The publisher of the book is Brahmin- stating that how can a Brahmin write about the issue of untouchability and the leader of anti-caste movement in India. It's a Brahminical conspiracy.
- The Introduction provided by the writer is much longer than the article of Ambedkar.
- The face of Ambedkar published in front of the book shows he was not good-looking. So, it was designed by the publisher intending to disrespect Ambedkar.
- In the text of Ambedkar's writings there are citation and footnote. The people are angry stating that who gave you authority to give citation to Dr.Ambedkar's work.
- The extremists even stated that if the explanation for release of book is not given they would not be allowed for distribution. There are voices stating either burn the book or turn the book (in such a way it differentiate the introduction by author and the writing of Ambedkar). Consequently, now the people even have threatened to attack the publisher physically.

If we analyze these points of the controversies we find, the people have tried to confine Ambedkar to one narrow point of view. However, the intellectual like Ambedkar shall not be defined by the nationality or ethnicity. In addition, it is not necessary that the person who faces problem only can speak against it. If such things happen, there would be no men working for the rights of women, no people working for the rights of animals, environment and so on. The concern shown by non-Dalits in the issues about Dalits are thus to be taken as positive one. We should thus work together with the view that "Injustice anywhere is a threat

to justice everywhere”. Finally, the controversy shows the issues analyzed were not focused on what was written in the book rather it was based on who wrote the book.

Dr. Vinodini, representative from India

Ambedkar was one of the propounders of Humanism. As plastic flower does not give fragrance of Jasmine but the real flower can. In similar way a human beings should give the flavor of Humanism.

Kamal Thapa, NHRC representative

Before the promulgation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in the world, the concept of equality, non-discrimination and dignity was propounded by Ambedkar and there was movement against untouchability in India. We should also discuss about these issues.

Feroz, representative from Bangladesh

The humanist from Bangladesh stated that a person like Ambedkar shall not be only limited to certain country boundary but rather should be talked, appreciated and discussed beyond the political horizon, caste, class, etc. He said that the country has now focused on education and is working for improving the percentage of educated people but we need to think all the literate and educated people who still belief on orthodox values and tradition. The education system of modern world is not able to change the attitude of people from humanist perspective.

Sundar Das, Law student

We can also discuss about removing the ‘Dalit’ word from the constitution. The tragedy of Nepal is that we have laws but not proper implementing mechanisms.

Bhaggulal, representative from India

Though in state level the act of untouchability is regarded as crime, there is still untouchability practiced in local level. Meanwhile, there is also problem of intra-caste discrimination. Thus, it is not that the High caste people practice untouchability but even the lower caste people also among themselves practice untouchability. Thus, every individual requires ending Brahmanism. Before independence of India there were 60 types of discrimination against dalits but afterwards it has increased and reached up to 90 types of discrimination. During this time the intra-case discrimination has flourished.

Professor Narendra Nayak, President of FIRA

The attitude of people can be changed through the discussion on sciences. About the caste system the discussion on bio-chemical basis can be held.

Uttam Niroula, Executive Director of SOCH Nepal

Gautam Budhha and Ambedkar both advocated for humanism. However, the interpretation by people has created threat to their concept. For instance, Gautam Budhha advocated there is no god, but ironically now he is regarded as god. Today, in the name of Buddhism carrying the legacy of religion, some Buddhist monastery in Nepal keep the small children as monk depriving them to live like a normal child of his/her age. Likewise, in some parts of India, Ambedkar is termed as god. Ironically, his place is designed to be in temple and temple is prohibited to Dalits. Thus, now Ambedkar is made against the movement of untouchability.

Concluding session:

Finally, the session was ended by the ending remarks from the chairperson of the program Sitaram Khatwe Mandal, acting president of NDC. He expressed warm greetings and welcoming to all national and international distinguished guests and participants. He also emphasized that issues raised in the conference would be later seriously taken and evaluated by the National Dalit Commission and accordingly, the recommendation would be provided to the Nepal Government and even some issues might be even forwarded to Constitution Assembly to ensure the rights of Dalits in the constitution.

5.2 DAY II: 16th April

LEADERSHIP TRAINING ON UNTOUCHABILITY

On second day of the conference, training was organized entitled 'Leadership Training on Untouchability'. There were participations of 90 youths from national and international level. The main purpose of the leadership training was to develop leadership skills on youth and build youth leaders to advocate on the realm of dalit issues and untouchability. The program was facilitated by Uttam Niroula. The program was started with the presentation on 'Untouchability, Practice of untouchability in the world', by Babu Gogineni, international director of IHEU. He stated that the issue of untouchability was not limited only to Nepal or India. Untouchability still exists in at least 9 countries. As per statistics, there are 215 million people who are victim of the so called taboos of untouchability. Basically, the trend of untouchability exist in countries like India, Nepal, Srilanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Yemen,

Korea and Japan and Nigeria. Untouchability as a human disease also existed in Sweden in some 800 years ago. It existed in France in some 500 years ago. Thus menace of untouchability has existed around the world at one point of time or the other.

He stated how society defines the untouchables. It is found the society has defined someone as untouchable indicating that the person is lazy and they are incapable of doing anything and they do not have any higher skills than they have been doing culturally. They are dirty and they have very bad body order as well. They are not eligible for human society because they are dirty, smelly and they have body order which so called higher class people cannot bear. They are involved in profession which are very dirty and managed improperly. These are the common characteristics of those who are called or treated as untouchable in society. Consequently, it has resulted into discrimination to the extreme level of humanity either in India, Nepal, Japan or any other countries where the trend of untouchability still exist. He also described the history of untouchability in Japan. History says, in Japan, there was a king or an emperor, who had hobby to shoot flying birds. The emperor thus celebrated some ceremony where his people participated to shoot birds. Later, Buddhism with its ideas of compassion and non violence is introduced in Japan. Under its influence the emperor said he will not participate in non-violence. Following him, the people also started that if emperor is saying, it is not good to shoot birds then we should not shoot it too. Later in Japan, one who was farming birds became butchers. Around the country, people started thinking that the job of the butcher is wrong job and they started disliking the butcher. However, they did not stop eating meat. The people started behaving in such a way that they should not live in the evil community of butchers. They pushed them out of the village. Later, war started and since these people help for war, they were relieved from paying tax. This was given as the privilege but the consequence was that they were effectively outside the Official system. In 1867, Tokuwaba system was a system during which people were so completely marginalized. During that time, there was a judgment given by Supreme Court of Japan which stated that if about 7 members of the community are killed, then it should not to be considered as murder. Similarly, if anyone want to marry, then the castes were registered and the people who wanted to marry should go and check the register for whether they can marry other person or not. In late 1970s, all these famous companies SONY, National Panasonic and all these companies maintained a register. For everything registered, helped to perpetuate the discrimination. In Japan, there is no any specific law to address this system of discrimination.

Similarly, in Korea there are Lino people – who are the aborigines living in Korea and not regarded as the equal citizens. Likewise, in Nigeria in Mid Islamic culture of the Bokohawan of 1000 years there is Oshu community which is treated as untouchables. Oshu prevented from doing is sharing food with someone and having human relation or any kind of sexual relationship. Nevertheless, in 1966 through legislation Oshu system by law was declared illegal and abolished.

In Nepal, untouchability was institutionalized by *Muluki Ain* (The Civil Code) for a long time. Though, now the legislation prohibits any kind of caste-based discrimination and untouchability in *de facto* it still exists in various forms. Meanwhile, in India, there is extreme form of caste based discrimination. In Maharastra, the dalits were not allowed to go to the normal village before 9'o clock in the village. It is because the people in the village believed that the shadow of the untouchables will fall on the Brahmins and make them impurity. Likewise, when Dalits visit the villages, they had to tie a broom at back and tie pot at the front part so that if spit falls from their mouth it does not fall on the ground and make the mother earth impure. Similarly, broom is used to clean the path they have just crossed.

Mr. Gogineni added, 'the basic idea of untouchability among human is because of the purity and impurity. Doctors in eastern India checked the dead body. There are travelers to India who have recorded that a doctor who has to examine has to do with the silk clock. They had no idea of bacteria or virus or anything that concept of health and unhealthy is different from the concept of pure and impure. They believe that cleanliness has nothing to do with the concept of purity. Wherever dead bodies are involved, there is human repulsion or recoil, if we go to the dirty place, naturally we move back. As the professions were considered wrong or dirty, those participating in those professions were considered as impure'.

On discussing the way forward for ending such kind of tradition Mr. Gogineni gave instances of some countries where this system is now limited as a bad memory of the history. For instances, untouchability as a human disease had existence in Sweden in some 800 years ago. It even existed in France in some 500 years ago. But now in these countries the problem has been eliminated for nearly about 300 years ago. Thus, we need to learn from such countries and work towards eliminating the trend of untouchability from society. In addition, he disagreed with the idea of conversion of religion to get rid out of the system of untouchability as we find untouchability exist in various form apart from religious mind set of people. He suggested that in order to end such inhumane behavior from the society we need courage to

speak for ourselves. For that, we need to be together both dalits and non-dalits. Giving example of the nature of participants in the conference itself he said the presence of both group of people in the conference is appreciative. Lastly, he asked a question to the participants that how many of them have experienced the bitter experience of being treated as untouchables in the society. It was seen almost all of the participants from the lower caste raised the hands. Following that, the floor was opened for the discussion. There was overwhelming participation from the participants. The academicians, students, Dalit activists and politicians from India and Nepal shared their real experience of facing discrimination stressing that Dalits still faces various kinds of discrimination in various forms such as food, water, marriage, personal contact and even by government in public sector. The real experiences of untouchability shared by participants are given below in points:

- **Sundar Sheni:** He stated that he could not marry the girl whom he loved because of the caste-based discrimination.
- **Balmiki:** He stated that in 1992 in India, if there was not the problem of untouchability then he would have been now an engineer. His community members were very much victimized in the society. The people were not allowed to touch hand pump, and restricted to enter temple. They even could not get room on rent or start any market business.
- **Gauri Nepali:** Once she went to house of her friend who belongs to upper caste and was having food with her friend, the friend's mother reacted harshly towards her.
- **Ganesh Bahadur Gotame:** He shared his experience how in Nepal Army there is differential treatment to Dalits by upper caste people. During the time of lunch and even in training programs, Dalits used to have separate queue. Likewise, during promotion due to his caste he was not promoted and feeling being humiliate, he left Nepal Army and joined Maoist.
- **Bhaggulal:** He started his opinion with saying, "In world human are born but in our country India castes are born". In India, people are known even by name that they are from lower caste. Around 8 days before, a person was bitten for waking with the shoes inside home. Before independence, there were 60 types of untouchability in India but now it has increased to 90 types of differential treatment. Even there has been problem of untouchability among the Dalits themselves.
- **Dhaarana Biswakarma:** She shared that in her village there was discrimination on getting the access to the water taps. If she and her community member touch the

water vessels then it should be purified by gold and water. Feeling being humiliated, the young people started a club name “Everest club”. At the beginning period, members of the club used to have conflict with the upper caste people and even they were bitten badly. But now after many years struggle, the situation has been changed and the status of Dalits have been improved.

- **Dr. M.M. Vinodini** : She shared the experience of her childhood how her classmates and the teacher humiliated her stating she is untouchable. She said when she was admitted to new school on the first day she saw the students of the class had conversation. They were talking about the pickles and the sarees their mom used to wear. On seeing her they asked her name and she answered her name is Mary Vinodini. They queried what the meaning of Mary is. She replied there are two sisters in Bible. One is Mariam and the other is Mary. Immediately, the friends asked her if she was Christian. When she replied ‘yes’ the friends immediately dispersed and left her alone because at that time in India only the lower caste people are found Christian. In addition, when the teacher entered into class room he humiliated her calling untouchable. He again asked her to read the poem in the book. By that time, feeling humiliated she had become very nervous that she couldn’t utter the words. The teacher then scolded her saying you untouchables cannot read the book which the high caste people can read but you can sing the stupid songs of your caste. This was the incident she could not ever forget in her life. Ironically, she said the school was established by the freedom fighter who wrote a novel for the rights of Dalits.
- **Rajesh (media person)**: He said that he recently has visited different parts of Nepal to collect Dalit related special news. Caste based discrimination still prevails in society. Though, there are strict laws against untouchability, in fact Dalits have not still received social justice.
- **Binod Pahadi**: He provided instances of intra dalit conflict. He shared the incidence of Parbat where Biswakarma had beaten Sharki for being untouchable. Thus, he emphasized while we are talking about untouchability, whether we should only talk about the inter caste discrimination or even discuss the problem of intra- Dalit discrimination too.

After sharing real experience on untouchability, the session was handed over to Tilak Pariyar, senior political leader of CPN- Maoist. Mr. Pariyar presented paper entitled “Untouchability in Nepal and Dalit Movement”. He gave brief introduction of how caste system was

introduced in Nepal and later institutionalized by *Muluki Ain* (The Civil Code) 1910 B.S. He highlighted how Dalits of Nepal have been facing various discrimination in both private and public level, which has deteriorated their civil, political, social, religious, cultural and other basic rights and made them more vulnerable. However, he emphasized there have been some positive changes in the laws of the country which is emphasizing the affirmative action for Dalits and non-discrimination. He also stated that these progresses were possible due to the Maoist war and the 2062/2063 BS people movement in Nepal.

After presentation, the floor was opened for discussion. The statement of presenter that Maoist movement had brought change in the condition of Dalit was later highly criticized by the participants stating that he was emphasizing more on the political agenda of the political party rather than the real issues of the participants. In response to the question, Mr. Tilak stated that there are other issues also but the significant change like enactment of new Act, declaration of untouchability free nation was possible only after Maoist decade long war and the revolution of 2062/2063 BS. Meanwhile, he accepted he should have added some other contents including social, cultural movement in Nepal on establishing Dalit rights. However, participants appreciated that the presentation was worthwhile to understand the civil movement and Nepal and its effect on the rights of Dalits.

The resource person of the third session was Bimal Biswakarma, executive member of National Dalit Commission (NDC). Mr. Bimal presented paper on “The Role of National Dalit Commission”. He briefly introduced National Dalit Commission (NDC), its objectives and activities. He further analyzed the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats for National Dalits Commission of Nepal to carry its objectives. He analyzed the progressive development on the rights of Dalits in the Constitution and the role of Judiciary and international instruments for reiterating the equal rights of Dalits regarding non-discrimination, non-exploitation and so on. He finally concluded, by giving some recommendations to the National Dalit Commission (NDC) for increasing its effectiveness and efficiency on its effort.

The presentation was followed by was ice-breaking and issue raising event organized by youth leading NGO Acting Servitor Together for Human Rights Implementation (SARTHI). They demonstrated through an act. The main thrust of the demonstration was to reveal reason behind why so-called untouchables are always lagging behind and why the non-Dalits are always leading in the society and the country.

Lastly there was demonstration on “Fighting against Superstition” by Chandraiya. He demonstrated some tricks which so-called Godmen and Babas used to create illusion and widespread superstitions among people. Ultimately, he emphasized that these tricks are actually based either on the swiftness of the hand or mental exercise or chemical interaction or special apparatus and so on. Thus, in order to understand their misleading tricks we need to analyze critically and should have scientific attitude. Finally, the program was concluded by Uttam Niraula, the executive director of SOCH Nepal, by giving vote of thanks.

5.3 DAY III: 17th April

FORMAL OPENING DAY

With an overwhelming turn up of discussants the formal opening day of 2nd World conference on untouchability was commenced in a formal manner. The program was facilitated by Swagat Nepal, prominent journalist of Nepal. There were about 250 participants in the program. The program was started with chairing the session by Sitaram Khatwe Mandal, acting president of National Dalit Commission and calling the significant dignitaries on the stage which included the numbers of academicians, politicians, activists and dignified persons from foreign countries. The welcome remarks were presented by T.N Ghimire, Chairperson of SOCH Nepal. He highlighted the objective of the conference. Following him, Uttam Niraula, Executive director of SOCH Nepal, reiterated same idea and elaborated the concept of humanism and its view on ending the untouchability in the world by changing the attitude of people. Afterwards there were speeches of the distinguished guest about the concept of untouchability. The major points highlighted by them are listed below:

Babu Gogineni: He began his speech with his personal story of realizing the concept of existence of untouchability in his society. In addition, he also highlighted the various form of untouchability practiced in different parts of the world. He concluded stating that, struggle to emancipate dalit is not limited to emancipation of Dalit, but it is also a struggle to emancipate non-dalits where they can recognize the rights of an individual person as human being and work for the rights of dalits.

Dr. Yuvaraj Sangraula: He stated that the problem of untouchability should be studied from various dimensions like social, cultural, religious and legal dimension.

Binod Pahadi: He stated how the concept of World Conference was introduced and it came up to II World conference on Untouchability. He even proposed for the third world conference in Lumbini.

Gajadhar Sunar: He highlighted that the problem of employment with dalits as their tradition skills have been displaced by globalization.

Durga Sob: She emphasized we should learn from the efforts made by the international community like European Union for passing the resolution against the untouchability.

Sushila Surpali: She emphasized we should not only raise the issue of the dalits but rather find out the way to solve the problems.

Beda Prasad Bhattarai: There are sufficient laws and regulations in Nepal which prohibits and makes the act of caste-based discrimination punishable. But ironically, the report on occurrence of caste-based discrimination in different parts of the country shows that we have *de jure* laws in Nepal and in *de facto* we are not applying it.

Ganesh Shah: He emphasized on the importance of water rights for the dalits and further recommended the Constituent Assembly (CA) to make such constitution which address the problem of untouchability and uplift the conditions of dalits in Nepal.

Prof. Narendra Nayak: He emphasized on studying the system of caste scientifically and stated the problem of untouchability is due to the unscientific attitude of people.

Tilak Pariyar: He made his remarks with the aspiration that this conference would help to drag towards a conclusion to provide a guideline for the rights of untouchables and their movement for equal rights not only in Nepal but in the other parts of the world too.

Jiwan Pariyar: He emphasized the current situation of constitution making in Nepal and stated we should work together to make dalit friendly constitution.

After speech delivered by keynote speakers, there was paper presentation on “United Nations, ICERD and Untouchability”, by Tek Tamrakar, an expert on dalit issue. Mr. Tamrakar asserted that caste-based discrimination is a serious, inhumane and pervasive human rights violation problem in the world about which even the international arena including United Nations have expressed serious concerns. In UN system the term “caste” is not kept however, there is presence of term “decent” which connotes the similar meaning of

caste. Furthermore, there have been some initiatives in the UN system for tackling the problem of human rights system which includes general recommendation and the system of Universal Periodic Review (UPR). He also added that there are UN Special Procedures to deal with problem of caste based discrimination. Thus, we can now understand if our Government refuses to understand, recognize and solve the issue of untouchability we can seek the help from international arena too. Following that, the comment on the presentation of paper was done by V.B. Rawat, prominent dalit rights activist of India. He reiterated the importance of UN system and the committee of ICERD to raise the voice against racial discrimination in the world including the caste-based discrimination. He emphasized the Indian government is found less reluctant to act according to ICERD, in that case dalits of India can lobby and seek help from the international arena and UN system to address the problem of dalits in India. Thus, it is needed to make people aware about the existence of such important laws and policies.

The other commentator Hira Biswokarma, dalit right activist of Nepal, asserted that after 2002, Nepal government could not submit state report to CERD committee. However, now the government has prepared a draft to submit the next state report to CERD committee. Finally, the program was concluded by remarks of Chairperson of the session, Sitaram Khatwe Mandal.

5.4 DAY IV: 18th April

INTERACTION AND DISCUSSION

The first session of interaction program was presented by Honorable Jeevan Pariyar, member of Constituent Assembly on the topic "Nepali Dalit Movement, Challenges and Opportunities: Constitution building and Dalit Rights". The paper was later commented by the two commentators viz. Honorable Anita Pariyar and Honorable Ramchandra Mandal. The session was chaired by Dan Bahadur Biswokarma, member of NDC. The program was facilitated by Ms. Ruku Maya Ranapal, member of NDC. There was participation of 50 participants including 18 CA members. The program started with a welcome speech of Uttam Niraula for the distinguished Constituent Assembly members and participants. Bimala Parajuli, coordinator of KENN, highlighted the different forms of discrimination against women in the name of customs and culture. She explained the introduction of Kuriti *sanjal*

(network) an important branch of SOCH Nepal in 26 districts of Nepal to end violence against women based on improper cultures and tradition.

The presentation started with introduction of practice of untouchability in Nepal since the Vedic times where he highlighted the historical aspect of how the caste system was introduced in Nepalese society, widely spread as a menace and later controlled by the government through special law. Following that, he gave major introduction of “Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offense and Punishment) Act, 2011”. Besides laws aspect, he stated there are other social forces too who had fought against the evil of caste based discrimination. He provided name of such important NGOs, political organizations which are still continuing their battle against untouchability in Nepal. Meanwhile, he added there are various forms of discrimination against Dalits where Dalit women are double victimized and sometime even multiple discriminated. Finally he analyzed the challenges and opportunities in the Dalit movement in Nepal for equality and non-discrimination. To conclude, as a representative of one of the Constituent Assembly (CA) member he even provided 12 common points necessary to be inscribed in upcoming constitution of Nepal for protection of Dalit rights.

Afterwards, Babu Gogeneni presented the message from international participants. He presented the messages from UK parliament members namely Lord Edbury and Lord Megnath Desai, where they have acknowledge the power of the conference like this. They have stated the 1st Conference on untouchability had acted as an impetus to pass anti-caste discrimination legislation in UK and later even European Union (EU) has supported it. They have wished for the success of the 2nd World Conference on Untouchability, held in Kathmandu, Nepal. There was also message from New Zealand Association of Humanist where they have wished for the success of ongoing conference and hoped that the conference would be able to find solution to end the practice of untouchability mainly from South Asia. Furthermore, there was message from the Indian Radical Humanist Association which appreciated the effort of IHEU on conducting the 2nd world conference on untouchability including the government agencies such as National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), National Dalit Commission (NDC) and Federation of dalit NGOs for fighting against the social evil – untouchability. In addition, there was message from Athiest Centre, which stated that conversion of religion is not the solution to the problem of untouchability rather humanization of society is the basic requirement to end such tradition. Finally, there was message sent by French Free Thinkers. They have emphasized in order to remove such

discriminatory practices against human beings it is the time to raise the struggle initiated by Ambedkar against untouchability to another level.

Comments on the presentation:

The program was then continued with the comments from the commentators on the presentation of Honorable Jeevan Pariyar. The first commentator Honorable Ram Dayal Mandal mentioned that the paper presentation was very much informative and congratulated the presenter for such brief and enlightening presentation. He added some information to it that the Dalits in Nepal are still marginalized because they have inferior feelings. Further, he stated that the political parties have of course raised the voice of Dalits but in reality it is of political nature. Consequently, the Dalit agendas are often weakened by the political debates as Dalit leaders are divided into different parties. He concluded his comment by remarking that all political leaders of Dalit shall come together to raise dalit issues apart from political ideologies.

Honorable Anita Pariyar, another commentator appreciated the presenter for his hard effort and meticulous study. However she criticized that the presentation had mainly highlighted the political movement in Nepal to fight against untouchability. She suggested besides the political parties there are number of civil rights movements and major social incidents which have fuelled the movement for the rights of Dalits. Likewise, she also suggested that in Nepal actually we have proper laws and policies only the problem is in implementation. Thus, the CA member should have also focused on the implementing mechanisms on the Nepal Government for securing Dalit rights in Nepal.

Open floor discussion:

Following the comments, the floor was open for discussion. Some of the participants added the information to the presentation. Honorable Teku Nepali (CA Member) added information on the history of dalit movement in Nepal where the name of Sarvajit Bishwokarma and Mithai Devi Biswokarma should not be forgotten. Likewise, the development of Dalit rights after the introduction of democracy in 2046 BS also should be added.

First question was raised by Narendra Khatiwada where he asked the presenter why in Nepal it took more than 100 years to amend the *Muluki Ain*, and it was only in Panchayat regime in 2020 BS where the amendment in *Muluki Ain* 1910, declared untouchability in Nepal as

illegal. He further added, the legal provision in the recent legislation against caste-based discrimination seems promising and enthusiastic. For instance, it even provides provision to complain the caste-based discrimination practiced by Nepalese people outside Nepal. But the question arises how such provisions would be applied by Nepal government. Saroj Paudel stated that in present Constituent Assembly number of Dalit CA member has decreased. However their performance has been better. Likewise, he asked the presenter, if the Honorable CA member themselves says their voice would not be heard in the government then what's about the general people. It was delightful to see active participation of participants.

Response:

The presenter agreed with the suggestions and comments given by the commentators and participants. He stated that those suggestions would be included in the final version of his presentation. Answering to Mr. Khatiwada's question regarding abolishment of untouchability only on 2020 BS, he stated that it was the prudent step of King Mahendra to influence people. He added-the law was already revised during the democracy period but after the introduction of Panchayat regime the King Prudently accepted such suggestion from the committee on amendment of Muluki Ain and declared abolishment of untouchability in Nepal. He further added, on applying the provisions of anti-caste based discrimination Act new regulation is being made by the government. Lastly, he stated that in Nepal in *de facto* the powerful Dalit leaders have definitely some say in political affairs of the country and can influence on protecting Dalit rights, but they are the exceptions. In general, we find the voices of Dalits have not been heard by the State and the government.

Afterward, the session was handed over to Prof. Narendra Nayak on the topic “Roots of Superstition in society”. Firstly, he introduced the meaning of superstition; defining it as a belief not supported by reason. He pointed out different reasons of following superstition in society. They are: Premordial mind set (We have knowledge but still our attitude is not changed), Herd mentality (Believing in the things the large group of people speaks), defective reasoning (Proving our reasons by limited logic and not by evidences), lack of analytical tools (lack of knowledge on advancement of technology), longstanding belief (Believing the existing old traditions are the best and to amend or change is not good) and fear of unknown (Believing on god, ghosts, demon, witches, etc). With this, he listed out the different consequences of superstitions. The major of them is discrimination between people in the

name of caste, gender, colors. Further, there is trend of dependency on religious texts and certain god men (Baba, Swami, Mata, etc.). In order, to get rid of those things he further provided some suggestions. He focused on importance of education (Not only increasing literacy but also changing the attitude and awareness level among students), Behavioral change (Implying the knowledge into behavior), Pressure group to throw superstition (collective effort of different people is needed at a certain time), Enactment of legislation (Law is like a sword. If kept inside without using, it will rust and if used properly it can cut or remove the superstition), and Scientific attitude (Believing on logic; scientific temper should be part of our life).

Open discussion:

Bimala Parajuli urged the presenter that religion should not be taken negatively as we can find the fear of god has guided good path to people. Others participants also actively participated in an open discussion.

Response:

The presenter answered that the religious texts are actually and usually interpreted by people as per their volition. We find in the country where law is influenced by the religion, it is more likely to be more autocratic and discriminatory.

The program continued with sharing views and experiences of international participants. Firstly, Faizan and Danish, representative of Pakistan, gave brief description about the introduction of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). He divided the participants into three groups and asked them to have discussion on the Articles of UDHR and have presentation on these rights about what they have understood. Accordingly, Group 1 discussed about the Articles in UDHR from Article 1 to 10. Similarly, Group 2 discussed about the Articles in UDHR from Article 11 to 20. Finally, Group 3, discussed about the Article 21 to Article 30. After the presentation of Pakistani participants, there was presentation of Indonesian participants (Glenn, Karina and Lani) on “Root of Indonesia’s human right violation”. The presentation started with a brief introduction of Indonesia and its people, its richness in natural beauty and man- made historical places, such as temples, stupas, mosques etc. They stated that there is no problem of untouchability in Indonesia but there is existence of religion conflict around the country. Consequently, there are incidences of massive human rights violation in the name of religion. Ironically, the president of

Indonesia has received a statesmanship award for religious tolerance and peace in Indonesia. This is because all the violence that occurred within the country is hidden and not published. The main reason behind religious confrontation and violence are weak enforcement of law, poverty and lack of education. The presenter showed how the religion has influence education system in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the presenter highlighted the community school they have established a 'Sekolah Kita' for children of different religions. Children who are a victim of religious conflict are collected and are taught with intent to develop curiosity, confidence, creativity and empathy among each other.

Afterwards, there was presentation of working paper by Uddhab Pyakurel, on the topic 'Untouchability in South Asia and Nepal'. He introduced the concept of untouchability and its existence in the different parts of the world at one point of the time or the other. He highlighted the caste-system resulting on untouchability was actually originated from Hindu religious text- Manusmriti. Further, he illustrated that Nepalese caste system is different from the caste system of India. He categorized Nepalese Dalits into three groups as 1) Newar dalits, 2) Terai/Madhes Dalit and 3) Hill Dalit. He also threw light on the history of Dalit struggle in India starting from Ambedkar. He even highlighted the conflict between Gandhi and Ambedkar regarding the concept of untouchability and caste-based discrimination.

Comments:

Firstly, the commentator Ganesh B.K appreciated the presentation. On differentiating the issues of Dalits of Nepal from India he stated that the term 'Dalit' is written in the constitution of Nepal since 2004 B.S. but in India they are termed as scheduled castes. He also elaborated the concept of caste system from the perspective of Ambedkar. He asserted that caste system consists of caste, occupation and heredity. Thus, all these issues should be discussed at a time.

Another Commentator Dr. Vinodini appreciated the presentation and stated that the untouchability practices are similar in India and Nepal. The philosophy is also similar. She added- In India Dalit exists in every religion as Christian, Muslim and Hindu who are also known as scheduled caste. However, those Dalits who convert their religion lost their reservation facilities inferred in the constitution. She also shared her bitter experience of being discriminated by her class mates and teacher for being a Christian Dalit. She also stated that dalits in India has to face double discrimination; one from caste and other from religious aspects. She also stated a massacre that occurs in Andhra Pradesh in the year 1985 where Dalit

people were denied access to justice by the court because of the religion but later a group of advocates fought against it. The other commentator Sujata Surepally remarked the paper as highly informative. She also stated that there is no single country in the world which consists of homogenous group of people having one religion, one caste and one culture. Thus, tolerance in diversity and unity is required.

Discussion:

Afterwards, the floor was kept open for discussion and several questions were raised. First question was raised by Lalit Khatiwada on the issue of origin of Untouchability and also the reason behind saying that Hinduism is behind it. Similarly, Mina Pariyar showed disagreement that menstruation phenomenon of girls can be categorized as untouchability. Raju Mainali stated that the concepts of origination of caste system from the different perspectives are confusing and quite contradictory. Sundar Sheni asked if dalit is a community or a caste. Likewise, **Bijay Jaiswal** asked if the condition of Dalit in Nepal is still same after the revolution of 2062/63 and when will their condition be improved?

Response:

The commentor Ganesh B.K. replied that Dalit in Nepal is stated as a community rather than a caste. In terms of the reservation, he said that reservation should start from a lowest among the hierarchy i.e. the Sudras should be given priority. The presenter also agreed with comment that concepts of origination of caste system from the different perspectives are confusing and quite contradictory.

Experience sharing:

With the end of presentation and discussion, the program entered into an informal session on exchanging the view of participants about untouchability. Firstly, Bhaggu, participant from India, sang a song on the requirement to maintain equality in the society. Bijay Jaiswal gave a short presentation of Equality by laws in which he made a comparison of India and Nepal constitutional provision. **Veer Swami** gave a short speech on the need to maintain humanity in society. He illustrated different problems faced by Dalits in the name of untouchability. He gave introduction of the Swami Organization which aims for humanist and scientific approach to spread knowledge and scientific education for women, counseling for depressed

class people and urge people not to go to certain god men (*Baba's*) rather visit hospital and find the solution of the medical related problem. He stated that this organization now operates in 6 villages.

Afterwards, Uttam Niraula, the executive director of SOCH Nepal, asked participants to provide suggestion on the way to stop untouchability from society and the whole world. In response to this, a list of diverse opinions came from the participants which are as follows:

- Educating people (where education does not mean mere literacy but changing attitude).
- Dalit People require special treatment and law should be used to bring social change as equality and justice.
- Development in Law and legal recognition of Crime against untouchability.
- Realization of suppressed women of Terai Dalit and different Unions should be created to educate people about the crime of untouchability.
- Change of Mentality and behaviour and encouraging participation of non-dalit for eliminating the crime.
- Change in attitude and advocacy for equal rights of Dalit people.
- Sensitize young people on this issue.
- Acculturation and assimilation with Dalit people.
- Equality and good leadership of Dalit people.
- Sharing of practical life experiences and sitting together and sharing knowledge and conducting such conferences time and again.
- Realization of pain we give to Dalit people and enhance mentality of humanity and equality and ignorance of religion.
- Important to realize Ambedkar and his message and for this translation of his book is necessary. Advocacy and constitutional guarantee of their right along with maintenance of National curriculum against untouchability.
- End of intra-dalit discrimination.
- Educating children to end discrimination in school
- Promotion of reservation system
- proper implementation of acts and laws
- Change of mentality for equality.
- Cultural transformation of non-dalits.

- Change of mentality since childhood and strict implementation of laws and policies.
- Helping each other.
- Organizing protest from Dalit community in case of severe discrimination; educating children from beginning and promoting inter-caste marriage.
- True desire, initiation from oneself and removal of caste from the name.
- Understanding from different dimension and work on different agenda.

6. Closing with the declaration:

After a very inspiring experience sharing session and sharing of recommendation, the program formally came to an end with the distribution of Letter of Appreciation to Prof. Narendra Nayak, Babu Gogineni, VB Rawat, Chandraiya, Bimala Parajuli and Sanjaya Khadka. The program was ended with Kathmandu Declaration being read out by Babu Gogineni stating the objective of the conference and acknowledging the problem of untouchability in the world and providing the strategies to combat against it. Moreover, he expressed that this conference would be one amongst the many trial and errors in the infinite loop of the learning process and that the institution was open and receptive to any sort of suggestions. Finally, the conference was formally ended by Uttam Niraula by delivering vote of thanks to all those people explicitly and implicitly involved in making the conference success. The conference ended with a vow to fight against untouchability. Nevertheless, afterwards there was cultural program held by SOCH youth, where the participants from different countries showed their songs, dances and music and share their experiences.

7. Conclusion:

The second world conference on untouchability was successfully conducted. The conference acted as a common platform where key political actors, activists, political leaders, constituent assembly (CA) members, media personnel, policy makers and academicians from national and international level could exchange views and able to deepen, widen and create serious discourse on untouchability and formulate critical suggestion to resolve it. Many fruitful suggestion and comments came from the conference, which will help to strengthen the campaign against untouchability. The 'Kathmandu declaration on untouchability' was declared at the end of conference, which can be regarded as landmark in campaign against untouchability. Media coverage, both electronic and printed, was noticeable. The conference is believed to be a milestone step in creating international discourse and campaign on untouchability.

Annex 1: Glimpses of The Conference

Annex 2

THE KATHMANDU DECLARATION ON UNTOUCHABILITY

We the delegates of the 2nd World Conference on Untouchability assembled in Kathmandu 14 – 18 April 2014 under the aegis of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, Nepal Dalit Commission and the Global Alliance Against Untouchability,

Recalling the Conway Hall Declaration on Untouchability of 2009,

Reiterating that the practice of Untouchability is an unacceptable grave violation of Human Dignity,

Understanding that untouchability is a universal problem afflicting societies across religions and cultures and of such horrifying consequences that its elimination should involve all humans and all sections of society in all countries in the spirit of our Common Humanity and Human Solidarity,

Recognizing that this crime against humanity is a result of the caste system in some societies, and a result of descent and occupation in all,

Appreciating some government's willingness to acknowledge the intractable problem of Untouchability,

Regretting the continued indifference of other governments in this matter and their attempts to block international scrutiny of the problem under the cover of national sovereignty,

Regretting that many Untouchable communities are severely disadvantaged, suffer from internal untouchability, superstitions and various other social evils including gender discrimination, and that there are severe health issues of malnutrition and alcoholism,

Noting the developments in Global activism against the crime of Untouchability,

Welcoming the overwhelming involvement of official and NGO agencies in this Conference, and the support expressed from various corners of the world to this Conference,

Welcoming the initiatives of the Global Alliance against Untouchability to develop a Humanist, secular line of action, and a knowledge base on the existence of this crime against humanity in different parts of the world,

URGES all humans, irrespective of background, to fight this shame of humanity, and CALLS ON

The International Community

- The UN to appoint a Special Rapporteur on Untouchability, adequately staffed, to monitor and report to the world community its findings through the UN's HRC.
- The International Institutions to formulate and promote specific resolutions and policy initiatives that would strengthen the efforts to rid the world of this obnoxious practice.
- International Aid and Trade Agencies to make improvement in situation of Untouchable Communities a condition of Aid or for granting of favorable trade terms.

All Governments, Policy Makers and Law Enforcement Agencies

- To recognize the gravity of the problem and to take up the matter of Untouchability as an urgent priority in domestic and international policy.
- To coordinate their actions and policies at national and international levels to expeditiously rid humanity of this scourge.
- To involve faith-based organizations and institutions in the fight against Untouchability, since faith, culture and tradition are inexorably linked to the pernicious practice.
- To ensure strict punishment to those who deny Untouchable communities their human dignity by denying free, equal and dignified access to public goods & public spaces.
- To facilitate free and immediate access to all social, cultural and common goods of society to Untouchable communities.
- To ensure there is no interference in the choice of life partners made by members of Untouchable communities especially where it involves inter-caste alliances.

- To ensure and enforce full and equal access for members of the Untouchable communities to all public spaces such as roads, community centers and places of prayer and worship.
- To work with private providers of education and employment to make adequate provisions for equal access to members of Untouchable communities to their services and their employment opportunities.
- To specifically focus on the victimization of Dalit communities due to accusations of Witchcraft, and the continued terrible illegal engaging of occupation of manual scavenging and to initiate urgent action to protect or rehabilitate these vulnerable communities.
- To conduct social surveys to review whether Untouchability practice and caste discrimination has been imported to their country, and to take remedial measures, in countries where there significant numbers of immigrant communities from Untouchability-affected countries.
- To protect, support and encourage activists fighting and campaigning against the Caste System and Untouchability.

NGOs, Faith and Belief Communities

- To educate and to ensure that there can be no restriction on inter-dining
- To campaign for an immediate dismantling of the two-glass system in restaurants, and of the separate dining enforced on members of different caste members in temples in India, and to bring to the notice of Law Enforcement any infringement of related law.
- To critically review, question, revise or disown any religious injunction or cultural practice that may even remotely support the iniquitous caste system or Untouchability.

People's Representatives

- To promote progressive legislation that will establish the equality of all and the disappearance of the caste system, and resist any moves that may strengthen inequity in society or discrimination based on race or descent.
- To create cross-party Legislative, Parliamentary groupings of democratically elected members from Untouchable communities to initiate change and to review progress.

Media

- To appoint specialist reporters and correspondents who can appreciate the problem as a Human Rights issue.
- To report systematically and with sympathy, sensitivity and understanding any instance of this crime against humanity.

THE CONFERENCE INVITES

All Humanist, Secular Human Rights activists and organizations, both Governmental and non-governmental, to join the Global Alliance against Untouchability, and to strengthen its functioning and reach.

THE CONFERENCE CALLS ON THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY

- To appoint a Committee of distinguished personalities of stature and international recognition to act as advisors to its Humanist approach to eradicate Untouchability.
- To appoint spokes persons and points of contact in 50 countries within the next 18 months so that the problem can be brought to the attention of a large section of Humanity.
- To invite, involve and appoint High profile Ambassadors to plead the cause, and advance the struggle against the Caste system and Untouchability.
- To establish an Observatory in Kathmandu to monitor the atrocities and developments which impact the welfare of the Dalit or Untouchable communities world-wide.
- To devise a program of Science and Human Rights education for Untouchable communities so they can participate in society as free modern, equal members of humanity.
- To propose model legislation to countries where no legislation exists and to monitor the implementation of the law where such legislation exists.
- To initiate studies and reports on the specific situation of Untouchable communities and propose modern scientific solutions to these issues that meet the requirements of international legislation and the Universal Standards of Human Rights.
- Initiate steps to regularly organize World Conferences in countries where Untouchable communities exist and to take all steps to involve official agencies as appropriate.
- To focus on the plight of Untouchable Communities and to initiate studies and or make policy recommendations to eradicate the evils that plague them.
- To develop a Media strategy for outreach to all stake holders and opinion makers.

