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Statement submitted by

The Inclusivity Project, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

Statement

Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (CDWD) represent diverse groups across the globe who face systematic marginalization, exclusion, and violence due to their inherited social status. This social status is often linked to ancestral occupations that are stigmatized within caste hierarchies, leading to exclusionary practices and systemic inequalities. These communities include groups such as the Roma in Europe, Dalits in South Asia, Burakumin in East Asia, Osu, Mboros, and Haratins in Africa, Quilombola in Brazil, Palenque in Colombia, and many others.

Women and girls from CDWD communities experience the compounded impact of gender, descent, and social exclusion. Their lives are shaped by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that restrict access to education, healthcare, political participation, and employment, while reinforcing systemic inequalities and violence.

When gender and descent intersect, they compound the discrimination faced by this group. These forms of violations include, inter alia, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking, forced prostitution and other forms of gender-based violence, bonded and forced labour, discrimination in political, economic, cultural, and social life, and a lack of or limited access to food, water and sanitation, healthcare, education, and adequate housing. For example, Roma women, particularly those who are illiterate or displaced, experience systemic exclusion from reproductive health and maternal care services. Women and girls from descent-based communities are also particularly vulnerable to reprisal attacks when they seek justice for crimes committed. In addition, those who are refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless or internally displaced, and who live in urban, camp, or remote

rural settings, may experience further barriers in being guaranteed their rights. The intersection of caste or descent-based discrimination and patriarchy intensifies their marginalization, making it difficult to assert their rights, access justice, or participate in advocacy efforts.

It is of concern that there is a low rate of reporting of cases of discrimination by victims, including in cases of psychological and sexual violence and rape, owing to general mistrust in the protection system and State institutions with regard to the prosecution and adequate punishment of those crimes. Ongoing hate speech and discriminatory propaganda targeting Burakumin women, requires the urgent need of governments to enact legislation that prohibits and punishes such speech. There is often a culture of impunity for perpetrators committing atrocities against CDWD women. Women from CDWD communities often face multiple barriers in gaining access to justice, owing to legal illiteracy, lack of awareness of their rights, limited accessibility of legal aid and other structural reasons.

In alignment with the 2025 UN Women Policy Paper on *Women belonging to communities discriminated against based on work and descent: Advancing intersectional rights and justice*, we urge the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and all Member States to prioritize the following actions for 2026 and beyond:

1. Strengthen data collection and accountability frameworks

The CSW should work closely with national governments to develop guidelines for the systematic collection, analysis, and dissemination of disaggregated data to reflect the lived realities of CDWD and other marginalized groups. To be effective, data systems must capture the specific realities of CDWD women and girls across intersecting dimensions of antigypsyism, caste, ethnicity,

occupation, class, geography, and disability. This entails the collection of both quantitative indicators and qualitative evidence that reflect the lived experiences of discrimination, exclusion, and resilience of marginalised communities, with special attention to CDWD women.

Drawing from the European Union and Council of Europe’s JUSTROM Programme—which improved access to justice for Roma women through coordinated data collection and legal monitoring—governments can establish integrated data systems to track CDWD women’s access to justice, education, health, and economic opportunities.

2. Implement mechanisms to address discrimination

Generalized anti-discrimination frameworks frequently fail to capture the unique experiences of CDWD communities, resulting in underreporting, inadequate responses, and impunity for perpetrators. For example, according to the CEDAW Alternative Report on Moldova (Sections 6–7, 2025), 99% of Roma women indicated they would not report marital rape due to fear of racism, distrust of police, and social stigma. By establishing dedicated units with trained personnel, culturally sensitive procedures, states can ensure more effective protection and accountability. These mechanisms must be independent, adequately resourced, and empowered to take binding action to address rights violations.

3. Adopt comprehensive reforms

The CSW must adopt comprehensive legal and policy frameworks to eliminate discrimination based on work and descent. Reforms must recognize the compounded nature of discrimination and

incorporate gender-responsive budgeting to remove barriers to education, healthcare, employment, and justice for CDWD women and girls. In addition, we also require the establishment of specialized units within the CSW to specifically address complaints involving intersectional discrimination based on caste, gender, descent, occupation, class, antigypsyism and other overlapping factors.

Weak enforcement and limited access to legal recourse perpetuate cycles of poverty, violence, and systemic invisibility. To address these inequities, states must explicitly prohibit descent-based discrimination within national equality laws and establish strong enforcement and accountability mechanisms.

Nepal's constitutional recognition of caste-based equality and affirmative action measures demonstrates how inclusive legal reform can improve representation and expand rights for women from historically marginalized communities.

4. Prioritize meaningful participation

The meaningful participation of CDWD women—through grassroots organizations, collective platforms, and individual advocates—should be institutionalized within the CSW. Every policy, program, and initiative concerning CDWD women must be grounded in continuous dialogue and partnership with affected communities.

We urge the CSW to make such participation a mandatory principle in policy design, monitoring, and evaluation processes. Dedicated task forces and working groups within UN structures should ensure that CDWD women are not only consulted but actively involved in shaping implementation and accountability frameworks.

5. Invest in rights education and legal empowerment

We urge the CSW to promote the development of targeted educational and legal empowerment programs for CDWD women. For CDWD women and girls, access to rights-based education and accessible, community-led training programs is essential to overcoming structural exclusion. These initiatives must be designed to equip CDWD women with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to navigate legal systems, challenge discriminatory practices, and participate fully in civic and political life.

Empowerment must go beyond formal education to include legal literacy, leadership development, and advocacy skills, tailored to the specific contexts and lived experiences of CDWD women. When women from these communities are equipped with rights-based knowledge and tools, they are better positioned to engage in governance, demand accountability, and drive systemic change.

6. Establish multi-stakeholder platforms

The CSW should promote inclusive, multi-stakeholder platforms and working groups that bridge political commitments, policy development, and community storytelling. Embedding narrative-driven, community-led approaches within formal UN and state structures enhances the visibility of systemic harms while fostering empathy, accountability, and transformative change. These platforms must elevate local knowledge as a key source of evidence for policy innovation.

Participatory research, storytelling, and documentation initiatives should be prioritized to center the voices and lived experiences of CDWD women and girls. These narratives are vital for informing

both local policymaking and global advocacy, ensuring that interventions are contextually grounded and rights-based.

Colombia's "*Women Narrate Their Territory*" initiative demonstrates how community-led storytelling can strengthen identity, resilience, and policy responsiveness in post-conflict and marginalized settings.

6. Include CDWD women in the *CSW70 Agreed Conclusions*

The inclusion of CDWD women discrimination issues in the CSW70 Agreed Conclusions is essential to addressing the systemic discrimination that serves as their primary barrier to equality. In the justice sector, institutional bias and anti-Roma or caste-based stereotypes often lead to the dismissal of complaints, while a widespread lack of civil documentation renders many effectively invisible to state protection. Furthermore, the tension between discriminatory customary laws and formal legal frameworks often leaves CDWD women without rights to inheritance, land, or bodily autonomy. By explicitly naming CDWD in the Agreed Conclusions, the international community acknowledges that descent-based exclusion requires targeted, intersectional remedies rather than broad gender policies.

Names of the submitting organizations

As a legal entity with ECOSOC status, the Inclusivity Project hosts the Global Forum of Communities Discriminated Based on Work and Descent (GFoD). This statement has been drafted in collaboration with the GFoD Informal Women’s Anchor Group, and the following civil society organizations:

- ADRF (Asia Dalit Rights Forum)
- ERGO Network (European Roma Grassroots Organizations)
- CONAQ (National Coordination of Articulation of Black Rural Quilombola Communities)
- Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement
- Platforma Femeilor Rome ROMNI

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