



Message from Mr. Justice H.L. Dattu, Chairperson, NHRC, India on the eve of Human Rights Day-2017

“Tomorrow on the 10th December is Human Rights Day. It is observed and celebrated on this day to mark the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The Day reminds us that human rights are our basic rights. These include our right to live with liberty, equality and dignity, our right to health, education, freedom of speech and thoughts.

The occasion provides us an opportunity for re-motivating ourselves to use our freedom to stand up not only for the protection of our rights but also of others. If we follow our duties as a citizen, our human rights will automatically get protected. And for this, we must, first, remember to respect the rights of others. We must ensure that in exercise of our freedom we do not violate others' lawful and natural rights. I am sure, many incidents of human rights violations, which we witnessed in the past, may have not happened, if we were little careful on these counts.

The Preamble of the Constitution of India and the Articles relating to the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy make the protection of human rights a Constitutional obligation for the citizens as well as the governments elected by them.

The National Human Rights Commission, India, mandated for the promotion and protection of human rights, has entered the 25th year of its existence on the 12th October, 2017.

On the eve of Human Rights Day, the Commission rededicates itself to continue this mission, as per its mandate, to raise concerns on any action, policy or law, which impinge on human rights in the country. To this effect, the interventions of the Commission should not be seen and sought to be interpreted having an adversarial role to the functioning of governments. The interventions of the Commission should, in fact, be seen and supported only as guidance towards ensuring good governance for which, the State has a Constitutional obligation.

Let us join hands to create a society in which human rights of all are valued and protected in our great nation.

Jai Hind!!”

New Delhi, 9th December, 2017

**(Justice H.L. Dattu)
Chairperson, NHRC, India**



Message from Mr. Justice H.L. Dattu, Chairperson, NHRC, India on Human Rights Defenders Day-2017

“This year, the National Human Rights Commission is entering into the Silver Jubilee year of its establishment. What began as a watchdog to protect the human rights of the common man of the country has now evolved into a mechanism which not only facilitates the Government to protect and promote human rights of the people but has also played a stellar role as the law strengthening mechanism in the country. In the substantive evolution of the National Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Defenders have played a very important role. The press, the civil society organizations, the lawyers, etc. have all contributed substantially as the Human Rights Defenders. The Commission has intervened in many matters which have been brought to the notice of the Commission by the Human Rights Defenders. The interventions have also contributed in strengthening the human rights regime in the country.

Today, on 9th December, the day when the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders was adopted in the year 1998 by the UN General Assembly, due credit and support must be given to the Human Rights Defenders who have been playing a very important role in the promotion and protection of the human rights of common citizens of the country. They have raised many issues where NHRC’s intervention has led to new policy initiatives. They have also supported the Commission during the Open Hearings and Camp Sittings of the Commission in different parts of the country.

The Commission applauds the work done by the Human Rights Defenders and resolves to continue supporting them in their pursuit of ensuring fuller assurance of human rights for all in the country. However, there is a need for greater constructive involvement of the Human Rights Defenders at the grass-root level in the country. There are still pockets which lag behind in the development and implementation of several social welfare schemes. They have to highlight the issues of human rights violations in such pockets so that human rights of the people in such regions can be protected.

The Commission also takes this opportunity to acknowledge the work done by the Women Human Rights Defenders in the country. Women empowerment is one of the cardinal issues to be taken up in the present scenario. Women HRDs, by bringing forth important human rights issues, including those pertaining to women, have rendered a great service for women empowerment. The Commission will continue to support them in their endeavors.

The Commission believes that the work done by the Human Rights Defenders will be supported by the State actors so that the best results for attaining best human rights standards could be achieved. The Commission is not oblivious to the threats, intimidation and other forms of repression faced by the HRDs in their challenging sphere of work at the hands of the State/non-state actors. The Commission will continue to do its best to ensure that they feel safe and secure in their legitimate human rights work.

The Commission wishes all the Human Rights Defenders greater strength and wisdom to fight for the cause of human rights for all in the country.”

New Delhi, 9th December, 2017

**(Justice H.L. Dattu)
Chairperson, NHRC, India**