

Justice H.L. Dattu
Chairperson
(Former Chief Justice of India)



National Human Rights Commission

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MESSAGE

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 Sitzings 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

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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.

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