

## **Minutes of meeting with UNDP delegation held on 2 July 2018 on Business and Human Rights**

A meeting with a delegation of UNDP was held in the Commission on 2 July 2018 in the Commission. The meeting was chaired by Shri Ambuj Sharma, Secretary General, NHRC. The delegation of UNDP consisted of Mr. Livio Sarandrea, Business and Human Rights Advisor, Ms. Victoria de Mello, Programme Officer B&HR and Ms. Suruchi Aggarwal, Programme Coordinator, UNDP India. Dr. Ranjit Singh, Joint Secretary, NHRC, Dr. M.D.S. Tyagi, Joint Director, NHRC, Shri Namit Aggarwal, OXFAM also attended the meeting.

2. Shri Ambuj Sharma, Secretary General, NHRC welcomed the UNDP delegation and apprised that the NHRC had organised the Regional Conference in 2017 and lastly, a National Conference on Business and Human Rights on 12 January 2018 at Bangalore. These Conferences were attended by the representatives of the Central and State Governments, business organizations, companies, trade unions, academia & CSOs working in the area. One of the recommendations emanating from the National Conference was that the Ministry of Corporate Affairs may bring out binding National Guidelines early for which they have agreed to consider. Further, as per the notification of SEBI, 500 listed companies are required to submit their Business Responsibility Report to SEBI. During the national conference, the issue of extending it to all registered companies was also discussed. During the National Conference the issue of human rights of workers in unorganised sector was also flagged as a large number of workforces is employed in this sector and the business enterprises have the responsibility to respect their human rights.

3. The Secretary General informed the delegation that NHRC is celebrating its Silver Jubilee in October 2018 and as part of the celebration, the Commission is organizing an International Human Rights Conference on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and one of its session is on 'Business and Human Rights'. He requested Mr. Livio to suggest names of the eminent speakers for the session.

4. Mr. Livio Sarandrea stated that he is based in Bangkok and primarily works with the Governments & NHRIs through their country office. Now they have initiated engagement with other countries in the area of Business and Human Rights. He stated that 7 countries in ASEAN have so far developed their National Action Plan (NAP).

5. UNDP normally works with the Governments & gives their technical assistance in development of NAP. They also assist in creating advocacy through civil society organizations, peer learning among NHRIs & CSO and also encourages involvement of all stakeholders in the development of NAP. He foresees that India may develop/adopt its National Action Plan on Business Human Rights by 2020.

6. He elaborated on the 3 steps to be followed by government as a prelude to adoption of NAP in India. The first is the issue of revised NVGs/NGs followed by a base line survey and finally development of National Action Plan involving all stakeholders, including civil society organisations. He also suggested that during the time when survey is being conducted, India should welcome a visit of UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. On the issue of an eminent speaker for the NHRC International Conference.

7. Mr. Livio suggested the name of Dr. Seree Nanthasoot, representative of Government of Thailand to AICHR, who was actively involved in development of the National Action Plan of Thailand. He also mentioned that Thailand is likely to announce the adoption of its NAP during last week of September 2018, as such Dr. Seree could share his experience during the NHRC International Conference.

8. Dr. Ranjit Singh, Joint Secretary inquired about the role of NHRC in capacity building. Mr. Livio suggested that NHRC India could work as a bridge between civil society organisations and the Government of India during the whole process.

9. The following actionable points emanated from the deliberations:

- (1) NHRC India will write a letter to Dr. Livio requesting him to suggest names of speakers for the International Conference on Human Rights scheduled for 1 October 2018.
- (2) NHRC India will engage with Ministry of Corporate Affairs for agreeing to formulate the NAP and initiate steps for conducting a Base Line Survey on Business and Human Rights early.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair & the delegation.

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