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The Permanent Mission of India to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Special Procedures Branch of the Human Rights Council and has the honour to refer to the latter's Communication No. UA IND 8/2018 dated 23 May 2018 concerning alleged discrimination and violence against Dalit women and girls across India and the alleged failure of State authorities to effectively respond to various forms of gender-based violence against them. The following information may be brought to the attention of the concerned Special Procedures.

2. It may be noted that ensuring gender equality and combating violence against women are integral to India's national priorities. There are strong frameworks in place in India for the protection of women against violence both in private and public space. In addition to the Constitutional guarantees, many specific laws have been enacted to address violence directed against women and bring the perpetrators to justice. A new 'Women Safety Division' has been set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs in May 2018 to strengthen measures for safety and security of women by ensuring speedy and effective administration of justice in a holistic manner as well as by providing a safer environment for women. Some key measures undertaken by this Division for curbing violence against women including women belonging to Scheduled Castes and girls across the country are summed up below:

- The Government has enacted Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2018 which has put in place a regime which prescribes stringent punishment against rapes.
- The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 has been further amended through passing the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act 2018 for ensuring stringent punishment for the perpetrators of crimes against women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs is developing a National Emergency Response System for providing safety and security for the women of India. In this context, a 24x7 helpline number is being developed for the same.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs had drafted Model Poison Rules which were circulated vide letter dated 30 August 2013 to all States/Union Territories for notifying the same to regulate the sale of acid in respective State/Union Territories. The compliance of the circular is being constantly monitored.
- The Government of India has approved reservation of 33% for women for direct recruitment to non-Gazetted posts from Constable to Sub-Inspector in the Police forces of all the Union Territories. The objective is augmenting the representation of the women in the police forces of all Union Territories so as to make the police more gender sensitive and instil more confidence among women to enable them to

approach the police without hesitation for seeking protection and assistance as and when required.

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has been issuing advisories from time to time with a view to help the States and Union Territories to deal with crimes against women. These are available at www.mha.gov.in.

3. The Permanent Mission of India to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Special Procedures Branch of the Human Rights Council, the assurances of its highest consideration.

**The Secretariat of the Human Rights Council,
(Kind attn: Chief of the Special Procedures Branch)**

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