

Questions of the members Voordewind (ChristianUnion), Sjoerdsma (Democrats 66), Bonis (Labour Party), Van Ojik (GreenLeft), Van der Staay (Reformed Political Party), Van Bommel (Socialist Party) and Mulder (Christian Democratic Appeal) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Co-operation

On sexual violence against women in India and constraints for human rights organizations

1. Are you informed about the gang-rape case regarding a female student on the 16th of December 2012 in New Delhi and the following mass protests as well as the previous gang-rapes of Dalit women in the state of Haryana?
2. What are your views on the observations and recommendations in the recently adopted resolution of the European Parliament on violence against women, in particular the recommendation that the EU and its member states should give priority to programmes to combat violence against women in India? How do you want to implement these recommendations? Can the Dutch government give further support to implement the recommendations in the resolution? What role are formal and informal women's organizations and networks playing in this context or what role could they play? How can The Netherlands support these?
3. Do you share the observation of the European Parliament that women and girls who are discriminated on the basis of their caste run an even higher risk to become the victim of various forms of sexual and other forms of violence and that they are the victims of an 'extraordinarily high level of impunity for perpetrators'? Which groups are more vulnerable to sexual and violence than other groups? Are you willing to do further research on this and develop policy on the issue?
4. In which way is the Dutch government planning to contribute to improving the position of the 100 million Dalit women in India, also in view of the willingness you have shown before to invest in strengthening the position of Dalits?
5. Is the government willing to actively follow the criminal trial against the winner of the Dutch Human Rights Tulip 2012, Marimuthu Bharathan, and his 23 co-accused and to inform the Parliament in case of new developments, in any case before the end of 2013? Is the government willing to raise the problems that Bharathan is experiencing from the hands of the Indian government – including a ban to organize demonstrations or to participate in it – with the Indian government?¹ If so in what way and within which period of time?
6. What is your opinion about reports of 7th January 2013² that the Indian government has put 103 Indian NGOs and 24 international donors on a 'suspect list', after having put 77 foreign NGOs on a 'watch list' in March 2012 in combination with visa restrictions³ and having cancelled the legal registration in August 2012 of 4,139 Indian NGOs?⁴ Is the government willing to urgently request the Indian government to publish the list of 103

¹ See the speech of the jury of the Human Rights Tulip 2012: http://dalits.nl/pdf/SpeechCiscaDresselhuys_e.pdf

² See: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Cash-crimes-Govt-eye-on-103-NGOs/Article1-986373.aspx>

³ See: <http://www.firstpost.com/india/can-indian-ngos-continue-to-get-foreign-funds-244867.html>

⁴ See: <http://vaniindia.org/FCRA.pdf>

Indian NGOs and 24 international donors? Are you of the view that these steps severely limit the effectiveness of the Dutch private funding channel in India and the operational and political space of civil society organizations?

7. Are you informed that the *Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)* assumes that the recent reports about NGOs on the suspect list of the Indian government are also aimed to silence the present movement for the rights of women?⁵ Does the government have concrete indications that support to women organizations in India is blocked or being hampered? If so, in which way?
8. Can the government give an overview of international donors known to her who are prohibited from transferring money to Indian organizations or experience considerable difficulties doing that? To what extent are organizations affected thereby who are working on women rights, the rights of Dalits and other human rights issues? How do you more generally view the situation with regard to the issuing of visa by India to Dutch citizens?
9. Is the government of the view that the space and freedom of association and opinion of Indian NGOs and human rights defenders is severely being limited? If so, are you willing to raise this issue explicitly in the European context in order to address this issue with India?

⁵ Zie: <http://www.vaniindia.org/pdf/response.pdf>