

# **Child labour and the position of Dalits in India**

**Kv-tk-2011Z21475**

**Questions of the member Voordewind (ChristianUnion) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Minister of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation on child labour and the position of Dalits in India (submitted 31 October 2011)**

1. Are you aware of reports that the negotiations about the EU-India free trade agreement are in an advanced stage and will possibly be finalized in February?<sup>i</sup>
2. Do you know that the European Council in a document of 23 September 2011<sup>ii</sup> speaks about binding provisions on a range of issues regarding trade and investments with regard to the EU-India free trade agreement, while related issues concerning sustainable development are only discussed in terms of ‘co-operation’?
3. In which way are you working on the implementation of the motion Voordewind<sup>iii</sup> in which the government is requested “to exert its efforts in the European context for a robust sustainability chapter, in which among other things is being aimed at: the reduction of child labour, the improvement of the position of Dalits, the availability of medicines for HIV/AIDS and a dispute settlement mechanism; and not to agree with strongly weakened compromise.” Which results have you achieved thus far and how do you judge the chances of success?
4. Do you know the report of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) about India which shows that fundamental labour rights in India, in particular those of Dalits, are violated on a large scale?<sup>iv</sup>
5. On which evidence are the statements of the Minister [of Foreign Affairs] based that he has “full confidence in the way the Indian government is actively engaged in tackling these kind of issues (child labour, forced labour, non-discrimination etc.)” on the basis of “laws that they have recently adopted as well as their implementation.”<sup>v</sup> How do these statements relate to the recent ITUC report and other reports about the violation of fundamental labour rights in India? Do these reports give reason to the Minister to revise his position? If so, how is he going to communicate this to the Indian government?

6. Did the Minister during his visit to India in the beginning of July also raise the question of the discrimination of Dalits about which in the motion Voordewind is being said that “250 million Dalits are the victim of a range of violations of fundamental human rights and that this group disproportionately suffers from violations of labour rights in the supply chains of Dutch companies, including in garments, seeds and natural stone?”<sup>vi</sup>
  
7. In which way are you working to implement the motion Voordewind on the position of Dalits? Are the results of this already visible? If so, which results? If not, why not?<sup>vii</sup>
  
8. Does the Deputy Minister during his planned visit to India in November this year intend to raise the issue of discrimination of Dalits? If so, what will in this context be his input regarding his promise to the Parliament to raise the exploitation of Dalit girls in the South Indian garment industry with the Indian government?<sup>viii</sup> If not, why not?

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.eurasianews.com/>

<sup>ii</sup> [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/EN/foraff/124715.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/EN/foraff/124715.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Parliament Document, 32 500- V-110 [see in Eng.: <http://www.dalits.nl/pdf/m101215e.pdf>]

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.ituc-csi.org/india-workers-rights-require-more.html>

<sup>v</sup> [http://goedemorgennederland.kro.nl/seizoenen/2011-07/afleveringen/06-07-2011/fragmenten/minister\\_rosenthal\\_over\\_mensenrechten\\_in\\_india/](http://goedemorgennederland.kro.nl/seizoenen/2011-07/afleveringen/06-07-2011/fragmenten/minister_rosenthal_over_mensenrechten_in_india/)

<sup>vi</sup> 32 735 nr. 8 [see: <http://www.dalits.nl/pdf/pb110701e.pdf> ]

<sup>vii</sup> Idem [see: <http://www.dalits.nl/pdf/pb110701e.pdf> ]

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.indianet.nl/pdf/vr110524.pdf>