

**Written questions of the member Voordewind (ChristianUnion) to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade & Development Co-operation about sexual violence against women in India and constraints for human rights organizations, submitted May 6, 2013.<sup>1</sup>**

1. Are you informed about the opinion of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women<sup>2</sup> after her visit to India and of Amnesty International that the new Indian law on violence against women has, besides positive, also a number of ‘regressive provisions’, like the use of the death penalty, the lack of addressing the root causes and the fact that security forces are de facto immune to rape complaints?<sup>3</sup> Is this opinion brought forward in the EU-India human rights dialogue or otherwise brought to the attention of the Indian government? Are you also raising in the context that the law - according to human rights organizations – will not be implemented (properly) without reforms of the police force and the legal system?
2. Are you – also in view of the parliamentary motion about Dalits<sup>4</sup> and your promise that the Dutch government wants to commit itself for strengthening the position of Dalits – willing to make discrimination and exclusion of Dalits a priority in your new human rights policy?
3. Are you willing to raise with the Indian government the problems that the winner of the Dutch Human Rights Tulip 2012 experiences while doing his work, also in view of the priority you give to supporting human rights defenders?
4. What is your opinion about the criticism of the jury of the Human Rights Tulip voiced during a radio programme of VPRO Argos about the manner by which the award – against his wishes – has been handed over by the Dutch Embassy in India to the award winner Marimuthu Bharathan, namely without any ceremony? Will this in the future be the approach to the handing over of the Human Rights Tulip to those winners who do not get permission from their government to travel to The Netherlands?
5. Has the meeting with the India authorities requested by the EU Delegation about (the publication of) a ‘watchlist’ of Indian and international organizations taken place? If so, what is the outcome of the meeting and which conclusion do you draw on this basis about the implementation of the new legislation on foreign funding of Indian civil society organizations? If not, why hasn’t this meeting not yet taken place?
6. Can you inform the Parliament if you are, apart from your answer to question 7 regarding a *specific approach* aiming at women’s organizations, aware of constraints or barriers in supporting women’s organizations and other human rights organizations?
7. Can you give a broader picture of the visa problems Dutch citizens have in obtaining a visa for India? Can you confirm reports - from among others the India Committee of the Netherlands<sup>5</sup> - that many Dutch organizations encounter considerable problems in trying to obtain visa for India and that visa are frequently being denied to officials of development organizations and journalists? What are the Dutch efforts to raise this issue and to possibly solve it?

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<sup>1</sup> Follow-up questions of the members Voordewind, Sjoerdsma, Van Ojik, Bonis, Van der Staaij, Van Bommel and Agnes Mulder about sexual violence of against women in India and constraints for human rights organizations, 2013D03204 (answered 14 March 2013): <http://www.dalits.nl/pdf/kv130312e.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13282&LangID=E>

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/india-new-sexual-violence-law-has-both-positive-and-regressive-provisions-2>

<sup>4</sup> 32 735, nr. 8, motion Voordewind (29 June 2011). See in English: <http://www.dalits.nl/pdf/pb110701e.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> See: <http://www.indianet.nl/in-TKactievrouwen.html>

8. Has the Dutch government indeed raised the constraints in freedom of movement for Indian human rights organizations at the EU level and other possibly effective channels? If so, what have been the results? If not, why not?