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Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

The Sikh Human Rights Group Commends the Special Rapporteur on a forthright report on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation. We strongly agree with his concern in point B11 that the conceptual and practical development of the human rights to water and sanitation remains a challenge in impoverished rural areas and with regard to hygiene requirements including from a gender perspective.

We believe that education in rural areas on water and sanitation needs to be promoted by the state. In many vulnerable societies, neither the simplest of amenities such as access to latrines nor the education on their necessity exists thus becoming a hindrance to sanitation.

We strongly support the suggestion in section D that special consideration must be given to the needs and requirements of groups in vulnerable situations and that the institutions or entities responsible for water and sanitation management and services, including service operators, must regularly make available information and report to the public in a clear, easily accessible and transparent manner.

There has also been a tendency of some governments to shut down water and sanitation services during times of dissent to further their own political prerogatives. Thus, we would also like to strongly highlight the Special Rapporteur's statement that water and sanitation services must be of quality, available and accessible to everyone on a permanent basis, without discrimination.