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Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by Sikh Human Rights Group, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[20 May 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Promoting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Different Civilizations

Although the High commissioner's report has not been available in time to respond, there is a general overview that might need to be considered. Some of the UPR reports are sombre reading as are country reports.

Seventy five years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was introduced, there is still a lot of work to be done. However it may also be an opportunity to bring in the opinions of critics and analysts about the scope of UDHR to truly become a Universally accepted document.

The UDHR has been translated in almost all major languages of the world. It is read by most of the world in the schools and colleges. Yet there remain issues of implementation and effectiveness.

Perhaps there are lessons to be learnt from history when similar attempts have been made to introduce a universal idea to unite all or most of the world to achieve dignity and respect for all and one metaphysical idea. Efforts have usually come against different concepts of what constitutes good governance, dignity and respect as well what is a uniting theory of metaphysics.

Perhaps what is also needed is an interpretation of the UDHR in the context of different civilisations and what it means in their conceptual ideas of dignity, respect and good governance. History is replete with failures when an idea is only presented in the hermeneutic framework of one paradigm. It meets with challenges either due to misunderstandings or that it does not quite resonate with that civilisation or culture.

Idealism is good, but it needs to be meaningful in different civilisations and cultures. As we are moving towards a plural and multilateral world, it may be worth looking at contextualising the UDHR in this plural and lateral world and explore how it can be made a success with appropriate use of language and concepts.
