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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Mother of Hope Cameroon Common Initiative 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.

[30 May 2021]

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



Freedom of religion and belief

Christian Family in India's Jharkhand State Trapped by Police Orders and Harassed by Hostile Villagers

Christians have been seriously stressed and under pressure in India. Hundreds of Christians in the India have been forced to renounce their religion and become Hindus after lynch mobs issued them with a stark ultimatum: convert or die.

Our organization would like to share that in March 2021, 10 Christians in central India were beaten and forced to "reconvert" to a tribal religion after a controversy broke out over the burial of a deceased villager. Lakhshu Nag, a tribal animist, had been ill for more than a year in Chhingur village, located in the Bastar District of Chhattisgarh. A few days before his death, he approached Pastor Dularam Kashyap and asked him for prayer. Two days later, Nag died in the hospital. On March 2, when Nag's body was taken back to Chhingur for burial, villagers refused to allow Nag's body to be buried in the village because he received Christian prayer. The villagers then assaulted several Christians, including Pastor Kashyap. The Christians reported the incident to local police, and it was resolved that Nag's body would be buried in another village where there was a Christian burial site. After the burial, on March 3, the Christians of Chhingur were summoned before the village elders and told they must attend a reconversion ceremony. Four families gave into local pressure and reconverted to the local tribal religion. However, another four Christian families refused.

A mob attacked the remaining Christian families, forcing them to recant their Christian faith and worship local deities. After this, the Christians fled the village. The villagers frantically searched for all of them on the day and found the members of the four families. They took them along and forcibly sprinkled some water on them as the tradition and made them worship the tribal deities."The police called the Christian victims to the Darbha police station and told them that they must resolve the issue with the local villagers. This is lack of enforcement by police as many of the Christian victims afraid that they may be attacked again.

Therefore, we request your august office to take-up the issue of retributive violence against Christians and other minorities in India and ensure the basic human right and freedom of religion.

We look forward to a positive response from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Special Rapporteurs (SR) on minority issues and Special Rapporteurs (SR) on freedom of religion or belief.
