

Memorial Submitted by The Diocese of New York

Against Caste-and Descent-Based Discrimination 2017

Resolved: that the 241st Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York send the following Memorial to the Deputies and Bishops of the Episcopal Church to be assembled at the 79th General Convention:

“Resolved: that the 239th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York condemn the human rights violation of discrimination based on caste and descent wherever it occurs and support its elimination particularly as it occurs within the United States both within and outside the Church; and further

Resolved: that the 239th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York call on congregations in the Diocese of New York to acknowledge the fundamental injustice of caste-and descent-based discrimination, a clear human rights violation; and further

Resolved: that the Episcopal Diocese of New York engage in legislative advocacy and education to raise awareness of the pervasive nature of this human rights violation; and further

Resolved: that the Episcopal Diocese of New York charge the India Network with the preparation of an e-mail document outlining caste-and descent-based discrimination and the atrocities associated with it, such document to be distributed to all Diocesan parishes before the next Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

Explanation

Many of our sisters and brothers in this Diocese have come to us from India. They bring us personal witness to an issue currently prominent in our news media: Many of God’s children, especially women and bearers of alternative identity and preference, are subjected to horrific violence. Among the victimized are people who have for millennia lived under caste-and descent-based discrimination. These people have chosen the name Dalit for themselves. The Dalit population worldwide is estimated to number more than 260 million people.

Ours is a concern shared increasingly on an interfaith level especially by those in our churches, mosques, and temples who advocate for oppressed minorities everywhere.

Because of our long term relationship with our Christian partners in India, members of the India Network have represented our Diocese at two events in our Nation’s capital in support of the International Commission for Dalit Rights. The first was a march to the White House in the spring of 2014 and the second was an anti -caste-and descent-based conference in March 2015.”