

**UPR WORKING GROUP - SECOND SESSION**

(5-19 May 2008)

**UPR of FRANCE – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE**

(14 May 2008)

**INTERVENTION BY INDIA**

Mr. Chairman, Madam High Commissioner, Distinguished Members of the Delegation of France!

My delegation would like to welcome the delegation of France and thank them for their useful presentation. France is a country which has a tradition of continuing commitment to upholding human rights which we hope that it would continue.

Mr. Chairman,

2. The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief had expressed her concern in 2006 about Law 2004-228 on the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols in public schools as she was of the opinion that this law mainly affected certain religious minorities. Would the delegation of France please share with us their experience in the implementation of the law since 2004?

3. The independent expert on minority issues has noted that France has traditionally not accepted the concept of minority rights and recognition of minority groups. The CRC and CESCR have proposed that France review its position on minorities by recognizing and protecting them as minority groups. My delegation would recommend that France actively consider doing so.

4. Further, the independent expert on minority issues has also recommended that the Government undertake more aggressive strategies to increase the number of people with immigrant heritage in the public service, particularly the police, civil service and the judiciary, in order to better reflect the broad diversity within France. My delegation would recommend that France actively consider this recommendation as well as the setting up of an appropriate institutional modality for this purpose.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.