

*Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations Unies et auprès des institutions spécialisées à Genève*

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| **WG UPR 41 – India**  ***Belgian intervention***  XX of November 2022 |

Mr. President,

Belgium welcomes the delegation of India and appreciates India’s efforts in addressing violence against women. However, my country is convinced that further progress can be achieved to prevent and address gender-based violence as well as with regards to the protection and support of human rights defenders.

Therefore, Belgium recommends India to:

**R1**. Remove the exception related to marital rape from the definition of rape in section 375 of the Indian Penal Code;

**R2**. Repeal or amend the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 2020 to ensure the right to freedom of association in line with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

**R3**. Repeal or revise sections 124A, 295A, 298, 153A and 505 of the Penal Code as well as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, to ensure the right to freedom of expression in conformity with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

**R4**. Withdraw the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 and 1990 from the districts where it remains fully or partially in jurisdiction.

Thank you, Mr. President.