

# **Indian Women and Making of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

**Dr. Shalu Nigam,**  
Advocate, High Court, New Delhi

## **INTRODUCTION**

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) created in 1948, after World war II ended, is a basic and most significant document that provides the basis for the subsequent human rights instruments and treaties. It is not only about indivisible, inalienable, basic human rights but it is also about human dignity and belongs to everyone irrespective of geographical or political boundaries. The Indian Constitution and the courts in India over decades, have utilized the principles envisioned in the UDHR to interpret the legal texts and therefore have shaped the discourse of human rights. The document has inspired many social movements and it is a powerful pedagogical tool used for imparting human rights education.

However, several people in India have discredited human rights as the foreign, Eurocentric, or Western and the male concept. This paper contradicts such argument and explains that firstly, the human rights as proclaimed in the UDHR is a universal concept as it is the collective aspirations of people from Global North as well as from the Southern Hemisphere that emerged from the experiences of people's struggle across the globe to end the oppression of colonialism. It has been shaped by the ashes of Holocaust and from the graveyards of genocide and ethnic cleansing to envision a better peaceful world. UDHR is about the emergence of a new world order that is democratic, peaceful, and free from slavery, apartheid, imperialism, and all other such vices. It is 'Universal', made jointly by people across the globe as applies to everyone.