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## **UN expert hails Indian court decision to uphold right of every child to education**



Kishore Singh, Special Rapporteur on the right to education. UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

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An independent United Nations human rights expert today hailed a decision by the Indian Supreme Court to uphold a law which mandates that a quarter of the places in the country's private and public schools should be reserved for disadvantaged groups.

“Exclusion and poverty remain the most important obstacles to the realization of the right to education in all regions of the world,” said the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Kishore Singh, in a [press release](#), adding that the decision is an important step towards ensuring

better education opportunities for all, in line with India's constitutional and international obligations.

The Indian Supreme Court yesterday upheld the constitutional validity of the provisions in the *Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009*, which mandates that 25 per cent of places in both private and public schools in the country should be reserved for socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

“This judgment should inspire other countries,” Mr. Singh said. “Human rights law is clear – no one should be deprived of basic education because it is unaffordable.”

The Court's decision followed petitions by some private providers of education who complained that the law violated their autonomy. The Court ruled that the Act applies uniformly to government and unaided private schools across the country, except for unaided private minority schools.

Independent experts, or special rapporteurs, are appointed by the Geneva-based Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a country situation or a specific human rights theme. The positions are honorary and the experts are not United Nations staff, nor are they paid for their work.

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