



**Identifying Challenges, Assessing Progress, Moving Forward:
Addressing Impunity and Realizing Human Rights in South
Asia
International Conference
9-11 April, 2018**



*Rt. Hon. President of Nepal
Hon. Chairpersons and members of NHRIs
Chairperson of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions,
Representatives from Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions,
Excellences and Representatives of diplomatic missions,
Government officials,
Head of security bodies,
Human rights activists, civil society members,
Distinguished guests, Media Persons
Ladies and Gentleman,*

I am delighted to welcome you all, here, at the inaugural session of the international conference on Human Rights and Impunity. This conference is the result of long discussions with our colleagues throughout South Asia. Admittedly, this conference is the byproduct of the series of intensive consultations with National Human Rights Institutions in forging common understanding among the NHRIs over the assorted issues and agendas attached to human rights. I hope it marks a step forward in the dialogue we need to constantly have with our governments and civil society. The challenges we face might often look very different, but they have a great deal in common.

I believe the agenda honestly reflect our shared priorities; the issues of transitional justice, rights of women and indigenous communities, fundamental rights and human rights, migration and livelihood, truth and reconciliation can lead us to a realistic understanding of the situation of human rights in South Asia, and help us to identify common approaches.

Distinguished Guests,

I have served in the legal field for more than 37 years. My experiences tell me that judicial capacity to safeguard human rights and combat ill-treatment and impunity is the prerequisite to strengthen the role of the court in promoting individuals' human rights. All of us present here expect that the conference will throw light on this.

I believe that the two days of discussion will be a fruitful exchange of ideas and insightful opinions with focus on impunity, an area of human rights relevant to the countries in South Asia in a post-conflict context. I also hope that the conference would be considerably valuable to take a step toward identifying many common challenges for human rights across South Asia.

We all are aware about the role that NHRIs have been playing despite of the obstacles, challenges and difficulties. I expect the conference will provide a platform for to rigorous debates on domestic and regional issues faced by us. This conference is also anticipated to allow participating delegations to recognize the common challenges, while identifying the ways for NHRIs to move forward in working with each other.

Distinguished delegates,

Discussions that we are going to be part of from tomorrow morning seek a kind of consistency to yield regular dialogues on human rights promotion and protection. Such discussions should help us in our search for the development of a regional mechanism, and also to recognize the value of cross-border collaboration and community-level exchange for the implementation of human rights norms. Probably, the need for state governments and human rights commissions to be alert and independent in their responses is also realized.

I hope, and I am confident, that this conference will contribute to peace-building and legal development for the realization of human rights in South Asia. We must find ways to convince people that human rights do not cause conflicts but if properly upheld, they can prevent conflict and bring justice. Without justice, we cannot hope to enjoy peace.

I am sure you will not miss the opportunities that this conference offers us. We must grasp them with humility that our mission is noble and essential.

Last but not the least; we are happy that you have supported our endeavors. My best wishes are with you to make this conference a success through effective deliberations on the identified issues with the effective participation of NHRIs, government bodies, civil society members, academicians, lawyers and human rights activists.

Distinguished Participants,

On behalf of NHRC Nepal, I would like to welcome you all in this conference. I hope this conference will ultimately contribute to peace-building and legal development for the realization of human rights in South Asia.

Thank You.