

**Remarks by UNDP Resident Representative Kyoko Yokosuka on behalf of the UN  
Resident Coordinator  
International Human Rights Day  
10 December 2025**

Rt. Honorable Prime Minister of Nepal, Sushila Karki

Honorable Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission, Mr. Tapa Bahadur Magar

Honorable Commissioners of the National Human Rights Commission Chairperson and Members of various Constitutional bodies

Representatives from the Government of Nepal

Chairperson of the NGO Federation of Nepal, Mr. Arjun Bhattarai

Convener of the Magma Meet, Shova BC

Friends in civil society, the media and international community

**Namaste!**

On behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator, and as Representative of UNDP, I am honored to address this gathering as we mark **77 years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

This year is significant: the United Nations celebrates **80 years since its establishment**, and Nepal marks **70 years of membership in the UN**. These milestones reflect decades of partnership and shared commitment. Each of you—member states, human rights defenders, media, and civil society—has contributed immensely through trust, dialogue, and engagement to uphold the UN Charter globally and here in Nepal.

**Human Rights Day** reminds us not only of the principles that bind us but also of the **collective responsibility** we share to protect and strengthen them.

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**Human Rights in a Changing World**

Promoting human rights, maintaining peace, and strengthening justice remain as relevant today as they were in 1948. Yet, we live in a time when rights are increasingly shaped by **digital realities**. Across the world—and here in Nepal—young people are leading

movements for accountability, often mobilizing through digital platforms. Social media has become a powerful space for advocacy and civic engagement.

But with these opportunities come new challenges. **Digital rights—privacy, freedom of expression, protection from online harm, and tackling misinformation—are now central to the human rights agenda.** Technology must empower, not exclude. It should expand opportunities, not deepen inequalities. Ensuring that digital spaces are **safe, inclusive, and respectful** is essential for any modern human rights framework.

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### **Persistent Challenges**

While new dimensions emerge, long-standing human rights concerns remain unresolved. **Discrimination and exclusion—based on gender, caste, ethnicity, geography, disability, and other factors—continue to shape daily lives.** These systemic barriers undermine equality and social justice.

Addressing these issues requires **sustained policy reforms, stronger institutions, and an unwavering commitment to tackling root causes of inequality.** Legal instruments that enforce fundamental rights—such as the bill on the National Human Rights Commission—are critical. Equally important is implementing recommendations from UN human rights mechanisms and national institutions to demonstrate accountability and transparency.

I take this opportunity to encourage Nepali authorities to **expedite measures to implement recommendations from the National Human Rights Commission, other commissions, and the judiciary.** Investing in the capacity and resources of local institutions is vital to translate guarantees into realities on the ground. These steps are fundamental to restoring public trust in institutions created to serve and protect the rights of the people.

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### **Rt. Hon. Prime Minister,**

Your government carries an important mandate: **to conduct elections, promote accountability and transparency, and strengthen good governance.** This includes ensuring elections that are not only free and fair, but also inclusive—creating space for historically marginalized communities to participate fully in the political process. Safeguarding freedoms—such as expression, opinion, and peaceful assembly—remains essential to uphold the rule of law and nurture a vibrant democracy.

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**Dear Colleagues,**

Nepal's efforts to advance justice, reconciliation, and human rights deserve recognition, particularly given the complexities of a post-conflict context. Over the years, important steps have been taken, including the establishment of the **Transitional Justice Commissions** and, more recently, the **Inquiry Commission**—demonstrating the Government's continued commitment to addressing these sensitive issues.

As these nationally led processes evolve, **sustained dialogue and cooperation among all actors** will be key to ensuring effectiveness and credibility. Victims' perspectives must be reflected, and outcomes must be transparent and accessible to build public confidence and social cohesion. The United Nations, with humility and respect for national leadership, remains ready to accompany Nepal in advancing this shared commitment to human rights and dignity for all.

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**Finally,**

Human rights are the foundation of **peace, justice, and sustainable development**. On this Human Rights Day, let us renew our commitment to making rights enshrined in law a **lived reality for every Nepali**. Let us work together—across institutions, sectors, and communities—to strengthen implementation, deepen inclusion, and build a future where **no one is left behind**.