



UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN NEPAL



Press Release – 21 September 2007

OHCHR-Nepal chief briefs media on human rights priorities

Richard Bennett, Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal, on Friday held a briefing for media in Kathmandu to outline OHCHR-Nepal's priorities for the coming months.

The briefing focused on the following themes:

- **Public security** and its impact on human rights. As the Constituent Assembly elections approach, one of the focuses of OHCHR's human rights monitoring will be actions taken locally by security forces to appropriately protect the security of the population while respecting human rights. OHCHR will also monitor that political actors (candidates, their supporters and others playing political roles) respect the rights of all other political actors.
- **Representation** - OHCHR-Nepal has been monitoring draft legislation and procedures for the elections with the goal to ensure representation of women and historically marginalized groups. It will also increase its efforts to assist in building the capacity of organizations that represent marginalized groups.
- **Accountability** – The Office will continue urging the Government and CPN-M to hold accountable those responsible for past human rights violations. It will advocate that the commission on disappearances and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are established according to international human rights standards and practices.
- **Capacity-building** – Civil society, in particular human rights defenders, are key to the promotion and protection of human rights in Nepal. OHCHR will increase its assistance to civil society, in particular working with it to build networks in order to better coordinate its efforts. We will also discuss with the new commissioners of the National Human Rights Commission how we can support their efforts to develop that important institution.

“In these crucial coming months, and years, for Nepal's peace process, OHCHR's efforts will be focused on helping to ensure that respect for human rights remains an integral part of the country's transformation,” said Richard Bennett.