



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



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The United Nations launches a “Peace through Justice” project

The UN Peace Fund for Nepal (UNPFN) delivers focused rapid-disbursing support through UN agencies to support the peace process. The UNPFN is designed to provide a flexible response to the unique transition needs of Nepal. Since its inception, the UNPFN has contributed to: the verification process; improved cantonment conditions; electoral assistance; and demining. The UNPFN is financed by contributions from the Governments of Norway, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Canada, Switzerland and the UN Peace Building Fund.

On Sunday 19 July, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights in Nepal (OHCHR-Nepal) will start implementing its UNPFN-funded “Peace through Justice” project, at the occasion of the consultation organized by the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) on the proposed Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Udaipur. The objective of the “Peace through Justice” project is to provide assistance to the establishment and effective functioning of the transitional justice mechanisms provided for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including the Commission of Inquiry on Disappearances.

Beneath the scars left by violent conflicts are wounds that, if left unaddressed, may fester and surface in renewed violence. A systematic approach to dealing with the past can help societies heal and work their way back to normality. Establishing the facts of the conflict, acknowledging the losses suffered by the victims and providing a platform for justice, helps end impunity and aids reconciliation. Moreover, efforts undertaken to explain the causes of the conflict will help to ensure that the crimes of the past are not repeated in the future.

Through the “Peace through Justice” project, support will be provided to the MoPR for the preparations and establishment of the Commissions, as well as technical assistance, including direct material support to the Commissions themselves. Part of the project will focus on documenting human rights and international humanitarian law violations committed during the conflict, aimed at handing over the findings to the Commissions. The project will also support civil society, including victims groups, as well as national human rights institutions, to implement activities that engage the grassroots level in the transitional justice process and contribute to the work of the Commissions. As past experience has shown, the goals of strengthening democracy and peace are more likely to be achieved with active consultation, and participation of victims groups, civil society and the general public.

Richard Bennett, Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights says, “I am convinced that the “Peace through Justice” project will provide the necessary and additional support needed by the Government to implement commitments towards the creation of an effective transitional justice process as provided for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement”.

The Project, financed through a \$2 million grant from the UNPFN, will run initially for 12 months. It will be implemented by a team based in Kathmandu working closely with relevant government line agencies, civil society and victims’ organizations.