



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



Press Release – 02 February 2010

**OHCHR-Nepal Representative meets with the new Chairperson and Members
of the National Dalit Commission**

On 2 February the Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Richard Bennett met with the newly appointed Chairperson of the National Dalit Commission Bijul Bishwakarma Dulal and the members of the Commission.

The OHCHR-Nepal Representative welcomed the fact that the Commission had been reinvigorated with the appointments following the positions being vacant for more than six months. The main points of discussion focused on the joint efforts that can be undertaken to help strengthen the National Dalit Commission to more effectively address dalit rights issues and tackle caste-based discrimination. In the coming months this will include efforts to ensure the passage of legislation providing the National Dalit Commission with an effective mandate, capacity-building for Commission staff, joint monitoring of dalit rights issues including access to justice for victims of caste-based discrimination, and helping to build links between the NDC and dalit civil society networks across the country.

At the end of meeting, the OHCHR-Nepal Representative handed over human rights resource materials to the NDC Chairperson to establish a human rights resource centre at its Kathmandu office.

"OHCHR-Nepal is committed to working to ensure a strong and effective National Dalit Commission fully able to protect and promote the rights of Dalits in Nepal", said Richard Bennett. " Bijul Bishwokarma also expressed his hope that the Commission "will be able to address the historical exclusion of Dalits and support their future enjoyment of equal opportunities with other Nepalis". He further welcomed future collaboration with OHCHR-Nepal in the promotion and protection of the rights of Dalits in Nepal.