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## JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

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Ensure timely implementation of agreement with the freed Haliyas:  
National Dalit Commission, ILO and OHCHR

Kathmandu - The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal (OHCHR-Nepal), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the National Dalit Commission (NDC), while commemorating the second anniversary of the Haliyas liberation, join hands together to call on the Government of Nepal to expedite the rehabilitation of the freed Haliyas, victims of bonded labour in the Mid and Far western region of Nepal.

"We note that the Government's initiative to draft a law prohibiting the practice of bonded Haliyas and to undertake a survey of the freed Haliyas is crucial step towards their rehabilitation," stated in the joint statement. "However, we are deeply concerned over the slow progress on the implementation of the five-points agreement signed two years ago including the annulment of debts, formation of a separate Haliya Commission, and distribution of land to the freed Haliyas."

"The failure of the Government to fulfill its commitment in a timely manner will put the freed Haliyas at risk of falling back into the vicious cycle of exploitation once again and further compound their misery also on account of their Dalit identity, " the statement added.

The findings of several missions conducted by organizations, confirm that the condition of the freed Haliyas is appalling with virtually no access to food, shelter, clothing, health and education. The Haliya women and children are among the most affected.

The statement emphasized, "we urge the Government to adopt adequate legislative and policy measures and ensure their effective implementation to achieve meaningful rehabilitation of the freed Haliyas, consistent with the Interim Constitution, Nepal's treaty obligations as well as the Supreme Court ruling of October 2007."

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