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NHRC and OHCHR recommended the prompt adoption of NHRC Bill, in full conformity with Paris Principles

Kathmandu - The National Human Rights Commission of Nepal (NHRC) and the United Nations Human Rights Office in Nepal (OHCHR) release an analysis today entitled, 'NHRC-OHCHR Observations on the National Human Rights Commission Bill'. This publication meticulously examines the *Bill of the National Human Rights Commission with regard to its function, duties, powers and working procedure 2009* and offers recommendations for improving the Bill to make it consistent with the Principles relating to the Status of National Human Rights Institutions ("Paris Principles") and highest international standards and best practices.

As part of their continuing collaboration towards strengthening the national human rights protection system in Nepal and OHCHR have made their recommendations public.

The observations emphasize that the law with respect to the NHRC should guarantee the NHRC's independence and autonomy including operational independence and provide it with broad human rights mandate. It points out that the current Bill requires amendments in number of areas to be fully consistent with the Paris Principles including in broadening the scope of the mandate, recruiting staff, guaranteeing financial and operational independence, and the nature of recommendations issued by the NHRC.

NHRC and OHCHR note that the Government of Nepal tabled the new NHRC Bill following the provision of Constitutional status to the NHRC as stipulated by the 'Interim Constitution of Nepal, but that Bill has remained pending before Parliament since August 2009.

"We welcome the Government's initiative in drafting a new NHRC Bill and further acknowledge a number of positive provisions within it which are crucial for strengthening this national human rights mechanism," said Gauri Pradhan, the Commissioner and the Spokesperson of the National Human Rights Commission and Ms. Jyoti Sanghera, the Head of OHCHR-Nepal. "However, we stress the need to improve those provisions which are flawed in light of the Paris Principles and international best practices."

"While the human rights situation of Nepal is for the first time, is being reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva from January 25-27, we call on the Government of Nepal and the Legislature-Parliament to expedite the adoption of a Bill with the necessary amendments we have recommended that will ensure consistency with the Paris Principles and allow for a fully effective Commission able to promote and protect the rights of all Nepalese" stated a joint press statement released today.

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