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OHCHR welcomes Prime Minister's assurance on concrete steps to end impunity

13 September, Kathmandu,

The Representative of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal, Richard Bennett, and Deputy Representative, Jyoti Sanghera, called on Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal today at the latter's residence. A range of human rights issues were discussed in the context of 100 days of the current Government and the upcoming General Assembly meeting in New York that the Prime Minister will attend.

Prime Minister noted that it is necessary for the Government to implement its human rights commitments, especially in order to end impunity. In this respect he stressed the importance of prioritization and requested OHCHR and other human rights bodies to draw his attention to particularly egregious cases. Noting his recent announcement of a campaign to eliminate Gender based Violence, Bennett welcomed this approach as well as the Prime Minister's intention to strengthen the law and human rights division within his Office.

The Representative also raised the importance of establishing the Commission of Inquiry on Disappearances and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and in addition recommended early ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - the latter has been approved by the cabinet.

The Representative referred to a letter OHCHR sent to the Prime Minister in July 2009 regarding the need for follow up on matters highlighted in various human rights reports, including the report of investigation into arbitrary detention, torture and disappearances at Maharajgunj RNA barracks, Kathmandu, in 2003-2004 and report on Conflict Related Disappearances in Bardiya-2008.

“I welcome the Prime Minister's assurance that he will take concrete steps to address serious human rights violations and to end impunity,” said Richard Bennett, the Representative of the UN High Commissioner. “The cooperation of all parties, through the Legislature-Parliament, to move forward on key human rights commitments essential to the peace process is strongly encouraged by OHCHR-Nepal.”