

**OHCHR Press Release**  
**High Commissioner for Human Rights Set to Monitor Situation in Nepal**

**11 April 2005**

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is to set up a monitoring operation in Nepal in a move to help establish accountability for human rights abuses and prevent further violations.

High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour and Ramesh Nath Pandey, Minister for Foreign Affairs on behalf of His Majesty's Government of Nepal, signed the agreement establishing the operation today. The agreement is to be implemented immediately and planning is already well-advanced to ensure the early start-up of operations and deployment of human rights officers for the monitoring.

It is foreseen that OHCHR field offices will be set-up at the regional level in order to ensure rapid response to reports of human rights violations. The High Commissioner said she hoped human rights monitoring under United Nations auspices would be an important step in establishing accountability for human rights abuses and help prevent serious human rights violations resulting from the nine-year old armed conflict.

"Breaking the cycle of serious and systematic abuses will be the first essential step toward achieving peace and reconciliation in Nepal", Mrs. Arbour said.

The agreement provides for the establishment of an OHCHR Office in Nepal that will "monitor the observance of human rights and international humanitarian law, bearing in mind the climate of violence and the internal armed conflict in the country". Based on the information collected by the office, the High Commissioner for Human Rights will submit periodic analytic reports on any human rights violations committed by either side of the conflict to the Commission on Human Rights, the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General. The Office will also advise His Majesty's Government on matters related to the promotion and protection of human rights in Nepal and will provide advisory services and human rights support to representatives of civil society, human rights non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Under the agreement, the Office will engage all relevant actors. The OHCHR monitors will seek the cooperation of both the security forces and the CPN-Maoists to ensure that all human rights violations, wherever they occur, are investigated and reported on. The agreement also stipulates that the OHCHR Office will maintain "impartiality, independence, objectivity and transparency" in all its work. It is expected that the Office will work closely with local human rights defenders, including the press, in carrying out its investigations.

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