



PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Committee against Torture considers Nepal's Human Rights situation after a decade

Geneva, 14 November 2005 - On November 8 – 10 2005, the United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) examined the Human Rights situation in Nepal and more precisely Nepal's second report on the implementation of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

During its dialogue with the official delegation the Committee emphasized the trend of systematic and widespread torture in the country and was deeply concerned by the large number of enforced disappearances. Moreover the Committee requested more information about incommunicado detention in army centres of detention.

The Committee raised the question of access to the place of detention and of a victim's access to justice. One of the Independent Experts cited cases of illegal arrest and torture of the people who seek legal remedy. The Committee also expressed its concern over the attack on the independence of judiciary.

Finally, the Chairperson of the Committee was worried by the current situation in Nepal where the parliament is not functioning and tried to find out the impact of this on the overall situation of Human Rights in the country.

Responding to a series of questions raised by the Committee, Ambassador Mr. Zachary, leading the official delegation admitted that *"there were gaps. But Nepal would like to see them filled and taken into account when it spoke of consolidating its efforts for the promotion and protection of human rights."*

In the meantime the largest coalition of Nepalese NGO's Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Coordination Committee (HRTMCC) together with the Geneva based NGO World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), submitted a shadow report on the violations of Human Rights in Nepal between 1992 and 2004. This report showed evidence of the wide practice of torture and others gross violations of the United Nations Convention against Torture.

The shadow report pointed out several urgent issues in order to stop torture in Nepal, including transfer of all the detainees to legal detention centers, free access for NGOs to places of detention and prompt investigation and prosecution of alleged officials involved in torture and ill-treatment cases.

"There are records of several incidences of severe cases of torture contrasted with the State report. Therefore, the government should demonstrate its willingness to offer an international surveillance to

assure its commitment to the real implementation of the convention” said Kundan Aryal, General Secretary of INSEC, secretariat of the HRTMCC.

During the official NGO briefing to the Committee, Kundan Aryal called upon the Independent Experts to address matters crucial to the rule of law and human rights in the country.

“The coalition of NGOs and OMCT in Geneva await the official concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on Nepal's situation and hope that the authorities will take urgent measures to ensure the implementation of the Convention Against Torture” said Patrick Mutzenberg from OMCT.

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