

United States Institute of Peace

**National Peace Essay Contest
Awards Program**



Governance, Corruption and Conflict
Simulation on Nepal

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Public Roles

National Peace Essay Contest 2011 Awards Program
Governance, Corruption and Conflict: Simulation on Nepal

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Rania Pasic

Former Director of Departed UN Peace Mission
United Nations

The United Nations remains committed to building toward the success of Nepal's comprehensive peace accord, despite the recent departure of its Peace Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). Leary of violent revolt in the event that good governance is not increased, the UN has agreed to moderate this meeting of domestic and international stakeholders aiming to strengthen laws outlined in the country's new constitution.

Rania Pasic, the former UNMIN chief, has been chosen to moderate international actors who have come to Kathmandu to offer consultation to Nepal's Governance Monitoring and Implementation Commission (GMIC). Following her work with UNMIN, Pasic maintains vast knowledge of the problems facing Nepal, and dealt with myriad issues relating to corruption and reform. Established in 2007, UNMIN monitored the ceasefire agreement and supported the historic elections of 2008. Its mandate in country was to support the comprehensive peace accord and oversee, monitor, and rehabilitate Maoist combatants. UNMIN departed Nepal on Jan 16, 2011 after ruling parties concluded that its tenure should not be extended.

As a benefit of her time in the country, Pasic enjoys close professional relationships with many of the domestic actors involved in Nepal today. Pasic continues her work with the UN, leading the Global Compact's working group on Anti-Corruption.

Rania Pasic has an extensive background in post-conflict peace building and human rights. Having lived through war in her home country of Bosnia, she has both personal and professional experience in helping opposing parties find accord. These were skills that helped her gain trust of the UN to monitor the disarmament of Maoist fighters and make preparations for Nepal's constituent assembly elections in 2007.

In the Media: Rania Pasic's knowledge of Nepal and continued UN affiliation gives her credibility among the myriad domestic actors. At the same time, during her tenure as UNMIN chief, she was not one to refrain from criticizing Nepal's bickering political parties. Pasic's denouncement of their indecision as UNMIN departed Nepal in early 2011 earned her the respect of the international community who had no cause for concern that she would be hesitant to criticize the country's leaders.

Raya Hadibappa

Secretary General
South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was founded in 1985 to promote economic, technological, social, and cultural development cooperation, while putting a special emphasis on collective reliance in South Asia. SAARC members cooperate in the areas of economy; agriculture; information, communication and media; security; social development;

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trade and finance; and poverty alleviation. SAARC members also benefit from a South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA) and a SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA).

Raya Hadibappa is a young lawyer from the Maldives and the first woman ever to become Secretary General of SAARC. She recently completed a 6-month stint as the Attorney General of her home country.

Hadibappa was invited to chair the domestic plenary session of the Governance Monitoring and Implementation Commission by the members of Nepal's Constituent Assembly (CA). Per the Constituent Assembly's request, Raya Hadibappa will co-chair the general summit with UN Director of (departed) Mission in Nepal Rania Pasic. Mrs. Hadibappa met a few members of the CA at SAARC's 38th annual session in February 2011, in Kathmandu, when her appointment as SAARC's General Secretary was finalized. There, the Secretary General gave an acceptance speech during which she emphasized the need for SAARC to cooperate in eliminating corruption in South Asia. Upon hearing her speech, the CA members sought out Hadibappa's support and expertise in helping the members of the Governance Monitoring and Implementation Commission come to a consensus on issues of governance and corruption. The CA also hoped that Hadibappa's legal background might help when it came to drafting a final charter.

In the media: Hadibappa was appointed Attorney General of the Maldives amid much media fanfare, as the first woman in her country to hold such a position. Pacific political society was shocked when she was dismissed from her role after only six months in office. Several print publications leaked that the President of the Maldives symbolically removed her from her post in response to Hadibappa's public denouncing of perceived illegal activity surrounding the 2009 parliamentary elections.

Governance Monitoring and Implementation Commission Plenary Session Participants

Sudesh Pande

Cabinet Advisor

Office of Prime Minister Jalanath Khanal

Communist Party of Nepal - United Marxist-Leninist

Sudesh Pande is considered the right-hand man to Jalanath Khanal, Nepal's newly elected Prime Minister and Chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML). After Khanal threatened to quit and step down unless the parties reached a consensus, the Maoists signed a Joint Agreement with the CPN-UML, reaffirming their commitment to the implementation of the seven-point deal, and calling on all parties to join and participate in the government. Although the NC was originally reluctant to cooperate, it finally decided to join and participate in the government. Hence, after three weeks of renewed political stalemate, all the major parties were able to reach a consensus, form a coalition government, and draft the new constitution by the May 28 deadline.

One of the largest Communist parties in Nepal, CPN-UML promotes what it considers a moderate leftist agenda. The party was established in 1949 and claims to have struggled for the rights of the people and welfare of the nation since. Its aim as outlined in the 2008 election manifesto, to end "all forms of exploitation and oppression unleashed by feudalism, comprador capitalism and imperialism; and, the establishment of a people's democratic system."

Sudesh Pande was appointed to be one of Khanal's Cabinet Advisors in March 2011. Pande, who is a well-known political figure in Nepal, also supervises the Committee for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), an agency tasked with controlling corruption-related activities in the country. Both Sudesh and Prakash profess that the importance of integrity within their family, makes them well suited to oversee a policing body.

Pande is a sharp upcoming political figure who is well known in the country. Khanal chose Pande in the hopes of improving the image of his party and his own, so that the public will regard the CPN-UML as a legitimate agent of change rather than the puppet of the Maoists.

In the Media: Sudesh Pande became the face of the PM's office when Prime Minister Khanal was sworn in amidst discord. Serving as spokesperson, Sudesh was tasked with doing damage control to the public, Durbar square and the CPN-UML Party when a secret between Khanal and opposition Maoists led him to become the 34th PM of Nepal. Khanal was elected PM after Maoist leader Prachanda quit the race in Khanal's favor in the last minute deal. His close affiliation with the PM gives him a lot of political weight, but controversies surrounding the PM have been dragging down Sudesh Pande's popularity.

Although there have not been concrete allegations, Some in the public question if having Sudesh's nephew Prakash Pande serve as commissioner of CIAA is have led to special treatment of the Prime Minister's office by the CIAA.

Pradip Mohara

Former General and Current Advisor to Party Chairman

Unified Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist Party

As a direct result of the CPA, the Maoists were transformed from a guerilla group into a legitimate political party, the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-M). The Maoists hold the largest number of seats in the parliament and therefore have been arguing that they should lead the government. However, many politicians and members of civil society fear that if the Maoists came into power, they would enact divisive policies such as radical land reforms that might disadvantage certain marginalized groups - the landless, the Dalit or the rural agriculturalists. On the one hand, many groups see the CPN-M as the party that may help raise the issues faced by disenfranchised communities because the party has taken a stand against the regime and the elites. On the other hand, many argue that the Maoists merely use these communities for the purposes of their political gain.

Not only did Prime Minister Khanal end up giving the leadership of the Home Ministry—which controls immigration policy, as well as Nepal’s police and prison systems—to the CPN-M, but the new constitution allows the Maoists to form a new separate force made up of PLA ex-combatants. The public is worried that these actions make it increasingly easy for the Maoists to use force to achieve their political goals. By taking part in the Governance Monitoring and Implementation Commission charter, CPN-M may present itself as a legitimate political entity and take the focus off of their paramilitary background and violent past.

Pradip Mohara served as a general in the People's Liberation Army and from that position proceeded into a leadership role of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal. He joined the PLA at age 19 and rose to the rank of general after several battlefield successes and special operations against Royal Army troops. He was personally selected by Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal (also known as Prachanda) to serve as his chief advisor. Though this position is more symbolic than functional, Mohara is seen as Prachanda's right-hand man and closest confidante.

In the Media: A tape purported to show a Maoist lawmaker seeking more than \$7M from a Chinese national circulated the media in September of 2010. The tape, is said to catch Maoist lawmaker Krishna Mahara seeking the funds from a highly placed “friend” in China to persuade 50 MP’s from other parties to vote for Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda in PM elections.

Deepak Shrestha

Advisor to Party Chairman

Rastriya Prajatantra Party – Royalist Party

Nepal became a secular Republic in May 2008, officially ending a 240-year-old Hindu monarchy. Nonetheless, the royal family remains a revered authority in many areas of Nepal. Amid the political turmoil gripping the country, some are hoping a return to the monarchy could bring stability with it. Back in 1990, when democracy was re-established in Nepal, supporters of the monarchy formed Nepal’s only pro-royalist Political Party, the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP). The royalists are seeking restoration of the monarchy and Hinduism as the state religion. They have been seeking a referendum on reinstating the crown, and have pushed for fresh elections they hope would lead to the return of the deposed king.

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The RPP won only eight seats in the CA, but the recent turmoil has led to an opportunity for increasing party support. As protracted political problems continue, many supporters of former King Ganendra are calling for his return.

Deepak Shrestha was recently appointed Adviser to the RPP to improve the party's public image. Indeed, the royal family is very wealthy and has most of the time been indifferent to the people of Nepal. However, they are still revered by few who had accepted the family as rulers. His relationship with the royal family could put his reputation at risk. Some criticize him for his association with the royal family and their scandals, while others see him as the loyal friend and a gentleman. Deepak Shrestha is a low-profile politician with an impeccable criminal record who has the respect of many.

In the Media: The King's son has repeatedly committed crimes, yet he has never faced repercussions because the judicial system is so corrupted that the King and Queen have always been able to buy a "way out" for the former prince Paras Sha.

Deepak Shrestha recently stood firm in shielding the Ganendra family when authorities were called to a disturbance at the Tantra club in Durbur Marg. Prince Sha, the son of the former King, reportedly pulled a pistol from his coat pocket and fired several shots into the club's ceiling. Conveniently for the inebriated prince, Shrestha was with him at the time and was able to represent the prince when police authorities arrived. Prince Sha was arrested and taken to jail, but he was unconditionally released a month later

Ram Chetri

Committee Leader

Nepali Congress Party

The Nepali Congress party (NC) is fairly well established in Nepal. After the party was founded in 1947, it led democratic movements in 1950 and again in 1990 and re-established itself after an official merger of the Nepali Congress (Democratic) and the Nepali Congress in 2007, keeping the latter's name. NC, a self-described reform-oriented politically centrist party, supports economic democracy by and for the working class.

The NC holds the second largest number of seats in parliament, behind the CPN-M, whose sweeping success in the 2008 election was considered a surprise upset. Since taking office, the NC has failed to advance any substantive platforms to counter the Unified Communist Party (CPN-M). Sushil Koirala of NC leadership holds the top position in the parliament, that of President.

Ram Chetri is a young strategist who obtained a Master's degree in International Business and recently graduated with a PhD in Nepalese foreign policy from Tufts University. He was easily elected to the NC upon his return. Noting his enthusiasm and budding leadership skills, NC and Constituent Assembly President Koirala appointed Chetri as leader of the NC's social committee, which is tasked with addressing the different social issues faced by the Nepalese society.

Chetri has been a vociferous critic of what he describes as multinational corporations attempting to take advantage of Nepali workers. He championed the worker cause first-hand when an Indian pharmaceutical corporation was accused of exploiting its workers under unsafe working

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conditions. Ram Chetri is beloved by some media outlets for his youth and ideals, and he often appears in newspapers and on regional television news programs.

In the Media: Ram Chetri is comfortable in front of the media's lens and has been since his early political days on the campus of Tribhuvan University. His energy and persuasion caught the attention of several foreign offices, and gained him a subsequent visa and scholarship to study within the U.S. His knack for public relations continued as a student in the U.S. While serving a prestigious business internship at General Electric in Connecticut, his abilities won him General Electric's (GE) Corporate Social Responsibility scholarship for young minds.

Devendra Charma

Advisory Committee

Nepal Chamber of Commerce

The Nepal Chamber of Commerce (NCC) aims to promote and protect commerce and industries in Nepal, thereby developing the national economy. The NCC executive board is well aware that corruption is pervasive in the private sector, and that corporations often benefit from tax evasion. Furthermore, the common practice of bribery seriously hampers job creation by driving away much-needed industrial growth or foreign direct investment. Few multinational companies wish to risk setting up in Nepal, if they fear weak rule of law and corruption will jeopardize their investments.

Devendra Charma has been a member of the NCC's advisory committee for five years, and seeks to promote business and formulation of government policies that will support commercial and industrial ventures. During the ten-year Maoist insurgency, rural areas became inaccessible and investments stopped to many areas stopped. But recently the government announced a \$275 million plan to expand much-needed hydropower facilities by offering sweeping tax incentives to investors in the energy sector.

Charma's organization also seeks to develop links with international commercial organizations, and host trade and industrial fairs where relationships can be fostered. Charma has led his organization in publicly denouncing corruption in the private sector. He professes that the NCC is taking steps towards implementing guidelines for its members, which would aid in stemming widespread corruption. It remains unknown exactly what these measures look like and what outcomes they have produced.

In the Media: In 2009, a popular local eatery went bankrupt and was forced to close its doors. Though the eatery enjoyed a decent customer base, any potential profits that could be made were squeezed out by the bribes the owner and his vendors were made to pay. Devendra Charma alerted the media and used the closing as an example of why corruption within the country's private sector should be tempered. He held a meeting at the place of business where he told the Everest Star, "We at the Chamber of Commerce and the larger business community can not accept bribery as a way of life."

Bina Bishwakarma

Student and Activist

Dalit Confederation of Nepal

Bina Bishwakarma is a Dalit and a student activist representing the Dalit Confederation of Nepal (DCN). The DCN is a national organization that advocates for the protection and equal status of Dalits, or so-called untouchables within the Hindu social hierarchy. The DCN has significant goals to achieve, as previous attempts to eliminate caste-based discrimination in Nepal have failed. Though outlawed by word in the country's current constitution, poor enforcement of the law allows it to continue in deed.

Dalit are routinely outcast and denied services and access to national institutions despite the multiple regulations that specifically preclude this discrimination. The Civil Code of 1963 outlawed any form of caste-based discrimination in the country. The Constitution of the then Kingdom of Nepal (1990) and the former Interim Constitution of 2006 guarantee equal fundamental rights and prohibit discriminative treatment to any of its citizens on grounds of origin, race, color, and caste. Yet the continuation of oppression justifies the Dalit Confederation of Nepal's mandate to address the unequal treatment and prejudice against the Dalit. The organization has chapters in every state and controls a small voting constituency - when its members are permitted to participate in elections. International donors, outside South Asia, mostly fund the DCN's operating budget.

Bishwakarma is studying law, jurisdiction and political theory at the University of Kathmandu. After interning for the DCN during her second semester, Bishwakarma was invited to lead the national student advisory council of the organization. Since arriving in the city she has shown herself to be an effective advocate and strategist for the Confederation. She has organized two annual DCN student conventions for over 800 Dalit students and allies, and represented the student advisory council in meetings with the Minister of Youth and several international donor agencies. Bishwakarma is in a position to direct the attention of a widespread student body. She is a bright and engaging young woman who is seen as the darling of the Dalit activist community.

In the media: The DCN's most recent student convention was one of the largest public gatherings of minorities in Nepal. Public attention was fixated on the students after a number of stores in the neighborhood of the conference center where the convention was hosted were vandalized on the second night of the event. Local newspapers were filled with social commentary decrying the DCN gathering and the supposed actions of the DCN student representatives. In retaliation, the DCN students staged a sit-in on the steps of the National Congress building as a sign of nonviolent protest to the negative attention.

Prabat Pokrel
Bankrupt Entrepreneur

Prabat Pokrel was selected by his peers in the business entrepreneurial sector to represent their grievances. He became the natural and somewhat accidental choice of the public and business community when his recent bankruptcy jettisoned the businessman into the media spotlight. In reaction to the closure of his family teashop, Pokrel painted over his shop banner with loud anti-government slogans, which garnered the attention of multiple media outlets. He has since continued his role as a charismatic critic of what he views as government-sanctioned graft. Pokrel is not the first businessman to be squeezed out of the commercial sector, nor is he the first to note that the corruption of the system played a central role in his economic misfortune.

Though the business community has no official organizational status, there exists a network of provincial and local leadership bodies among commercial enterprises in Nepal. Middle and lower-class businessmen hold little political power and suffer the most from Nepal's corruption. These businessmen are increasingly well organized and have begun to employ a network of business leaders to spread their message of dissatisfaction with the government. Pokrel's radio interview served as a catalyst for a flood of animosity from members of the commercial sector. In the wake of this public outcry, the CA offered to invite a representative of the low-income private business sector to join the official members of the GMIC, and Prabat Pokrel was unanimously selected. As the unofficial spokesmen of a large constituency of the economy, Pokrel will command a presence even in the absence of a formal commercial organization.

In the media: Following Pokrel's public spectacle on his storefront banner, he was invited for an interview on Radio Janakpur in which he proclaimed the popular sentiment of exasperation and indignation with the Nepal government. He claimed that high food costs, taxes and forced bribery had run him out of business. As a result of this interview on Radio Janakpur, Prabat Pokrel has become a national hero to many and the unofficial face of the disgruntled business sector. His showmanship and ability to talk plainly about the issues make him the perfect focus of media attention.

Bhola Sada
Landless tenant and village elder
Landless Terai Rights Forum

The Landless Terai Rights Forum (LTRF) is a civil society organization made up of landless agricultural laborers and fishermen from the Terai region in the south of Nepal. The Forum seeks to address the oppression and discrimination that force the landless families of the Terai region into poverty and restricts their rights as citizens.

The Landless Terai Rights Forum began in 1989 when a series of evictions left landless tenant families without refuge or compensation. A representative of the community waited for an audience with the provincial governor to ask for aid when he met a union organizer from Delhi. Within months the Forum was registered as a formal not-for-profit and today has over 55,000 members. Little progress has been made for land reform but the Forum is beginning to command

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the attention of the international community. It has formed an alliance with Habitat for Humanity and is seeking financial and legal assistance from UN Habitat.

Bhola Sada is a landless tenant in the Terai plain and a village elder from the Surket Valley. He was chosen to represent the Landless Terai Rights Forum as a long-standing member of the organization and a respected local leader. Sada has spent a lifetime farming crops in the Terai region and as a village elder he has seen every dispute and heard every complaint regarding land rights. He is well versed in government and indigenous land-related law.

In the media: The Landless Terai Rights Forum's recent association with UN Habitat has caught the attention of the international media as housing advocates and politicians alike prepare for the upcoming World Urban Forum. Habitat for Humanity also included a special report on the LTRF's plight in Nepal in their annual advocacy publication *The Shelter Report*. Both of these alliances resulted in the LTRF being catapulted onto the world stage as the current poster child for housing rights. Advocates in wealthy western countries have started to bother western governments to address the issue, which in turn puts political pressure on the Nepal government to respond.

Munmun Badi

Activist and trafficking victim

Women Seeking Refuge

Women Seeking Refuge (WSR) is a women's shelter and activist organization which maintains a contentious presence in Nepali society. As a resource for women in need of safety and protection, the organization provides some sanctuary for the oppressed and abused victims of harshly patriarchal communities. Supported by international and domestic NGOs, the organization houses women and children in need of protection and provides them with legal and medical services. WSR is both an advocacy group and a safe house - roles that draw negative attention from certain members of the community. Critics of WSR are upset with the organization for attempting to upset the status quo. Harassment, intimidation and attacks on WSR employees are common, as with other women's rights organizations.

In light of the difficult operating environment for women's organizations, political progress on the equality and protection of women is slow. There are less female than male representatives in the Constituent Assembly (33%) and the prospects for women's empowerment at the local level remain dim in many districts. However, the presence of certain international organizations that have been invited to the GMIC charter summit may change the stakes.

Munmun Badi is an activist with Women Seeking Refuge and also a trafficking survivor. She was trafficked from her rural hometown into a brothel in India at a young age and spent years in sexual slavery before escaping and returning to her home country. Her resolve and presence of mind, clarified by her gruesome experience, make her a formidable advocate for gender parity.

In the media: In a rare show of interest, local media covered a recent attack on WSR's administrative offices in Nepalgunj. A man-made fire consumed the entire building injuring four program staff and a maintenance person. The physical and financial damages sustained were made worse by the psychological toll the attack had on the organization. Several women ran away from the safe house following the attack and two staffers quit. Local media reported on the act of arson itself but failed to include the context of the attack.

Devi Pariyar

Community Spokesman

Environmental Refugees of Dhe, Nepal

Nepal's Mustang region is located in the Tibetan plateau, near the country's border with China. Within this region lies the largely dry and arid village of Dhe. Last June, twenty-three households from the village of Dhe became the country's first recognized environmental refugees. They were forced to move in response to the drying up of their water sources – a problem blamed on warming temperatures in the region. The village had been facing an acute shortage of water over the last six to seven years, with irrigated land reduced to less than 50 percent of previous levels.

The majority of Dhe's population relies heavily upon animal husbandry to make a living, but decreased irrigation has made life extremely difficult in recent years. The green that once graced the surrounding fields has virtually disappeared, and as hunger rises, many people in the region are being forced to move.

Devi Pariyar grew up in the region and has recently been displaced along with her family. A trusted member of her community, Pariyar is now acting as a liaison between displaced families and aid organizations. She says that the relocation of her people is merely bandaging a wound that is growing worse with Nepal's changing environments. Having lived in the region for over 25 years, she has seen her region changed drastically. Her priority objective is to seek government measures that help her community in a sustainable fashion, and action that will address what she sees as the root of the problem – global warming.

In the media: Environmental refugees have not gained much support within Nepal, but internationally the issue has risen to the world's attention. Communities affected by the issue are still few and thus retain the ability to capture the international media spotlight. Student blogs on global warming in Nepal grabbed the attention of developers at Google, who created a 24-hour live coverage of the water statistics in Dhe. This site is linked to several environmental organization websites and receives more than 300,000 hits per day. In addition, Dhe was included in an expose on nighttime television news programs (Al-Jazeera, BBC and NBC) and in several of the current bestselling books on changing environments

Maya Singh

Threatened Journalist

Radio Janakpur

Maya Singh is an investigative journalist that has made a name for both herself and Radio Janakpur by consistently reporting on the corruption plaguing the country. In Nepal, this is risky business. Journalists have come under increasing attack, resulting in extortion, kidnapping and even murder. In 2010, three media owners were gunned down. One of these, the head of a popular independent weekly, was shot while riding his motorcycle home from work. The frequent attacks have caused the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) to become involved in investigations into their deaths. At least six journalists have been killed for their work since 2000, according to CPJ research. The organization places Nepal on a list of 13 countries where journalists are murdered on a recurring basis and governments fail to prosecute the killers.

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Despite the dangers of the Job, 30-year-old Singh continues to defy expectations in Nepal. In addition to her talented investigative reporting, Singh stands out as a woman in a dangerous field currently dominated by men. But her status has not shielded her from threats. Last year a pipe bomb exploded outside her home, causing damage to her family's motorcycle. She is one of many journalists threatened by regional political factions for not portraying events as they would like her to. However she's used these threats -along with her media savvy- to alert the international community to the limits of press freedom in Nepal. At this summit, Singh will look to secure the protection of media freedom in Nepal and to receive assurance that all parties will fight the culture of impunity lending itself to threats against the media.

In the media: As part of Radio Janakpur's consistent coverage of corruption and human rights violations, Maya Singh includes mention of all assaults and attempted assaults on journalists and media organizations. Radio Janakpur has a daily segment on the Home Front news hour in which it summarizes media-specific government and police interventions. When Singh was briefly jailed following a police raid and Radio Janakpur substituted another live journalist in place of her Home Front news hour, so many requests came in for the media segment that a Radio Janakpur colleague, Nirmal Rijal, made a special effort to cover it in Singh's absence.

Prakash Pande

Commissioner

Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority

The Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority's (CIAA) overarching goal is to establish the rule of law in Nepal by reducing improper conduct and corruption. It plays the roles of ombudsman, investigator and prosecutor as the government's official body to combat corruption.

As Nepal's foremost corruption fighting agency, the CIAA started recently to put an emphasis on cultivating ties with the civil society, including the Nepal chapter of Transparency International, professionals, intellectuals, and citizens from different socio-economic backgrounds. The Commission has been trying to cooperate with the parliament, the office of the Chief District Officer, and the police on anti-corruption efforts. To convene a summit that addresses the issues of corruption and governance without inviting a representative from the CIAA might run the risk of suggesting it was not a crucial weapon in the war against corruption.

Nepal's former Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal appointed Prakash Pande as Commissioner in 2008. Before his appointment, Pande worked for different anti-corruption bodies abroad, including Transparency International.

In the media: A dissatisfied two-time complainant to the CIAA, Tika Bhandari, appealed to his brother-in-law, an editor at the Himalayan Times newspaper, to write a scathing editorial on the insufficiency and incompetency of the CIAA. Bhandari made a public spectacle of himself and drew attention to the editorial by papering the local governmental agency building with copies of the article. Following the publication of the editorial, a flood of angry incoming letters to the Himalayan Times attested to public support of Bhandari as hundreds of Nepalese corroborated his story of having suffered neglect by the CIAA.

Advisory Committee Plenary Session Participants

Ben Wallace

Asia Development Chairman

UK Department for International Development

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) is Great Britain's department for promoting development and reduction of poverty. DFID has invested in a range of development programs in Nepal over the years, the majority of which include support for livelihoods and economic growth. But despite its ongoing support, it knows well that the governance, justice and security sectors remain weak and open to corruption in Nepal. This poses a threat to the Himalayan nation, as half of its development budget in 2010 came from foreign donors.¹

Ben Wallace, DFID's development chairman for Asia, identifies Nepal's marginalized communities as among those suffering the most from a poor security apparatus. He would like to continue funding projects aimed at helping marginalized people, and seize on the momentum of investments already made in protecting these communities.

Wallace has spent considerable amount of time traveling throughout the country and researching the many issues facing its people. As such, his support of carefully chosen domestic advocacy groups, which work to create awareness of caste and gender discrimination, has been among DFID's most successful efforts. He is also highly regarded and trusted by Nepal's Dalit communities.

In the Media: There have been a number of media reports in recent months citing the grumbling of international aid workers in Nepal. One such worker thought to be from DFID, anonymously stated that some at headquarters were beginning to review its commitment to Nepal given the country's slow and incomplete efforts to address corruption. The source said, "Given the number of needy people in the world, why are we wasting so much energy on a country that refuses to get its act together and increase rule of law?"

Ben Wallace, the organization's most senior staff in the country was asked about the report. "Obviously we at DFID continue to look at how our investment in people and development is best spent, but our commitment to the Nepalese at this complicated time remains strong."

Yves Bjorn

Development Commissioner Chairman

Danish International Development Agency

The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) was set up by Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide humanitarian and development assistance to countries in the Developing world. DANIDA has a history of funding projects aimed at protecting human rights, and developing livelihoods for Nepal's most disenfranchised. Because of the feudalistic culture that continues to influence daily life in much of the country, DANIDA is particularly interested in the role that land plays in peace and development. The majority of Nepalese remain based in

¹ IRIN – Nepal: Political Stalemate Threatens Foreign Aid

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agrarian societies, which means that land is the sole determinant of income, protection, status and access to government programs.

Yves Bjorn heads DANIDA's Asian development programs. Before this post, he oversaw a program seeking to help the 40% of people in Nepal without land of their own. Many of these people are struggling with hunger and are without access to government programs like healthcare and schooling. A former attorney, Bjorn assessed that political and judicial corruption is now compounding difficulties in registering land in the names of new owners.

In the Media: A major farming project being managed by DANIDA in the Saptari district was recently protested by an environmental group. The activists claim that the project, aimed at providing landless farmers with government land they can till and supervise, is being cleared of centuries-old tree growth. They say the foreign organization is creating problems as it attempts to fix old. Yves Born was quoted as saying, "We take the considerations of all Nepalese quite seriously and will look into these claims accordingly."

Charles Stratford

Asia Director

United States Agency for International Development

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent US federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the US Secretary of State. USAID works to support long-term and equitable economic growth and advance U.S. foreign policy objectives. USAID currently has four ongoing programs in Nepal, striving to reinforce recent gains in peace and security, stabilize the transitional government, strengthen the delivery of essential social services, and address the global challenges of food insecurity and climate change. In each of these areas, USAID puts an emphasis on supporting Nepal's youth and socially disadvantaged populations, which are critical to sustaining peace.

Charles Stratford has been working with USAID for over ten years. He graduated from American University with a dual Master's degree in Public Policy and International Development in 2001. Stratford was accepted into government work as a Presidential Management Fellow and began his career with a position as a USAID program officer for the South Asia desk. He was offered a permanent position to work on the Democracy and Governance program in 2004. Given his excellent track record and expertise in the Asian region, Stratford was promoted to Director of the Asia region in 2007. He has lived in Singapore, Indonesia and India for the past seven years. He speaks Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, English, and some Mandarin.

In the Media: Several of USAID's local partners have created a difficult scenario for the Agency as they've been implicated in misuse of funds and bribery scandals over the past year. The bad press could not come at a worse time. USAID is facing an accountability fiasco under a difficult congressional budget situation, and calls for greater investment in domestic development. Recently country director Charles Stratford attended a local program on civic engagement in Nepal. When asked whether the media embarrassment will threaten his agencies funding, Stratford replied, "That's always a concern for us here. "Just as we demand our local partners to be accountable for funds, so must our agency be to the American people."

Ken Brockman

Chief Technology Officer; Director, Corporate Social Responsibility

Google U.S.A.

Google Inc. has made billions of dollars developing technologies that organize the world's information. Considered one of the most powerful companies in the world, the American multinational corporation is involved in many ventures outside of its well-known search engine. Google has been involved in philanthropic efforts since its founding, with projects including social initiatives in China, earthquake relief in China and education initiatives in Vietnam, Nepal and Cambodia. The company's corporate social responsibility efforts have been well regarded in some circles for their innovation and generosity.

Google CTO and Corporate Social Responsibility Director Ken Brockman is hoping to expand on these efforts but feels that the international community, particularly socially conscious businesses, must provide initial assistance if real reforms are to take root in Nepal. Brockman lobbied for a chance to contribute to the advisory council for Nepal's Governance Monitoring and Implementation Commission. He is well aware of how lawlessness and impunity abound in much of the country, and believes they are having consequences for the people. As a mountaineer and outdoor enthusiast, he has been extremely vocal about environmental issues. As a scientist, he is very concerned with technological development and the movement of information. Having led the team that delivered the company's much-lauded Google Earth Live application (software that monitors the earth in real time), Brockman is respected by information activists, scientists and environmentalists. His decision to encourage NGOs to use Google's latest technology by giving them free use, won him quite a few friends. This 15-year veteran of the technology giant hopes to prioritize technology investment and freedom of information.

In the Media: Ken Brockman was recently interviewed by the UK's FHM magazine, in an article titled, 'The World's Next Richard Branson?' "Young, talented and fiercely competitive..." the article states, "Brockman is now making the world his CPU, and calling on everyone around him to grab a mouse and start clicking." Brockman tells FHM that he believes that with the democratization of information, anything is possible. Brockman goes on to say, "Right now I'm interested in seeing just what that means."

Clay Burton

Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

GE Capital, Global Banking Solutions

General Electric (GE) is an American multinational conglomerate based in New York. Ranked the second-largest company in the world by Forbes in 2009, GE holds operations in fields ranging from energy and technology infrastructure to capital finance. As Nepal struggles with electricity outages, poor banking procedures and corruption, General Electric has been brought to the advisory council in order to consult on measures to enhance transparency in its financial sector, and help develop technological solutions to support it to that end.

Clay Burton is the newly promoted vice president of GE Capital, the financial services wing of General Electric. Burton has had a long career with GE. He spent the majority of his career directing overseas manufacturing for the company, and was responsible for strategizing investments that helped grow GE's Indian manufacturing operations ten-fold within the last five

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years. India proved to be a cost effective place to manufacture GE's global products, and is close to becoming the company's largest market in Asia. Through his work in India, Burton became familiar with Nepal's market, political tensions and infrastructure deficit. He says he aims to use GE's expertise in financial services to increase transparency in all sectors, and help gain the trust of multinational corporations that could grow Nepal's economy through investment. He also has multiple upcoming production contracts that could find a home in Nepal, and the ability to offer technical assistance on hydropower and improvements to Nepal's electrical grid, if the conditions were right.

Burton is also aware of the numerous incentives that will make GE's investment attractive to Nepal. In addition to its reputation as a leader in financial tools, Burton's Corporate Social Responsibility programs are appealing. Burton took part in an initiative in India's West Bengal state that used the company's logistical and human resources to bring educational support to villages considered to be remote. The project was enormously successful in several communities, which became a boon to the GE and the government's reputation.

In the Media: General Electric Co. is currently planning to invest more than \$2 BN into efforts in China through 2012. More of the conglomerate's production has been shifted to China from the U.S., and it continues to build new partnerships. GE shut a Virginia light bulb factory last year and relocated those 200 jobs to China, as U.S. workers were deemed too expensive and lacking skills for creating new energy-efficient bulbs.

Carlotta Dahlgren
Leader, Emergency Peace Support Project
World Bank

The World Bank (WB) provides financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The Bank's mission is to combat poverty with passion and professionalism in order to achieve long-term results, and to help sustain themselves and their environment by providing resources, sharing knowledge, building capacity and forging partnerships in the public and private sectors.

The WB actively supports governments to help them become more transparent, more accountable to citizens, and more effective in developing their economy. In 2010 alone, the WB gave 10 percent of its lending or about US \$6 billion to assist countries in improving the performance and accountability of their core public sector institutions and rule of law. After the enactment of the 2007 Governance and Anticorruption (GAC) Strategy, the WB's programs and operations across countries and sectors have increasingly incorporated support for governance and anticorruption. Hence, the Bank's projects build in improved mechanisms on corruption risk assessment, disclosure, oversight, and monitoring, to guarantee that development funds are used for their intended purpose. As such, bilateral donors have played a critical role in helping the Bank implement its governance agenda. The work accomplished in Nepal through WB loans is being prolonged with funds from the Governance Partnership Facility, a multi-donor fund with contributions from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Norway.

In May 2008, the WB approved a four-year Nepal Peace Support Project in order to consolidate the peace process, and appointed Carlotta Dahlgren as the project's leader. Dahlgren is responsible for making sure that the broader goals of empowerment, security, and social inclusion are all met within the timeframe.

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In the Media: Carlotta Dahlgren's career has been tied to an unfortunate event that took place 11 years ago. Dahlgren launched a project in Nepal aimed at bringing in American nurses to train Nepali women in rural areas. However funding meant to finance salaries of the American nurses and purchase program supplies was horribly mismanaged. By some estimates, as much as 33% of the funds ended in the pockets of government officials. The World Bank terminated Dahlgren's project once it became public. Now that Dahlgren is overseeing the Nepal Peace Support Project, she's facing enormous scrutiny from all parties. She knows that any further controversy will end her current career, but sees the challenge as an opportunity to clear her past once and for all.

Jay Brothers

Director of Global Programs

Transparency International

Transparency International (TI) is a prominent global civil society organization established in 1993 that focuses on eliminating corruption around the world. TI is a non-partisan organization, therefore does not conduct investigations of alleged corruption or expose individual cases, although it occasionally cooperates with organizations that do. However, TI's main activities consist in monitoring and publishing reports on political and corporate corruption. TI's Nepal chapter was founded in 1996 and is located in Kathmandu. For 2009-2010, TI ranked Nepal 143rd out of 180 countries on its Corruption Perception Index (CPI) with a score of 2.3 out of 10. Such a poor score reflects the acute state of corruption in Nepal. More importantly, it harms Nepal's reputation at the international level.

Jay Brothers is TI's current director of global programs. He studied law at the University of California-Berkeley and has a degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Oxford University. Before he joined TI, Brothers worked as a lawyer at a New York law firm, as a research fellow on international trade law issues in Paris, and as a consultant for the United Nations. He has also worked with several human rights organizations. In 1997 Brothers started to work part-time at TI to help with preparations for the 8th International Anti-Corruption Conference, and continued to work at TI afterwards in various departments and on a range of topics. Over the last few years, Brothers has worked with governments, companies and civil society organizations to develop and implement tools for fighting corruption.

In the Media: Jay Brothers has a personal connection to his work. In several interviews he's referenced an event he was a part of as a young teenager in Nepal. A close friend of Brothers was shot dead by police breaking up a bank robbery. Following a bribe by a high-ranking police officer involved in the case, the investigation was dismissed and no compensation was given to the family. He's credited the experience with giving him the drive to continue in a difficult and what some see as a disillusioning field.

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Owen Franks

Print Journalist and South Asia Representative

Media Freedom Network

The Media Freedom Network (MFN) is a confederation of international news organizations advocating for the protection of media rights throughout the world. The MFN believes that the ability to speak freely is the hallmark of a democratic society. The organization, celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, operates with a rotating director and temporary envoys in different countries and regions throughout the world. Though representatives of the MFN rotate, their motto remains the same: “protecting the right to report protects the rights of all.”

Owen Franks of the Guardian International recently took over MFN’s regional seat from BBC’s South Asia Correspondent, Barnaby Henshilwood. Franks, admittedly new to Nepal and the region, has years of experience reporting on East Africa. He recently suffered his own media intimidation while covering Uganda’s presidential elections. His widely read reports won him acclaim among the MFN community. He says he is keen to join the Advisory Council, and has been appalled by media attacks in Nepal reported by the New York Times and BBC. He aims to consult donors on political and regional problems facing Nepal, and to push for protection of media freedom in the country.

In the Media: Owen Franks has reported objectively on events throughout the world, and has rarely brought his personal opinion into the fold. But following his deployment to Uganda, The New York Times published a heart-felt op-ed wherein Franks stressed that free media is the only essential pillar to free society. Having seen how truth shifts events for the greater good, Franks called on readers to remember the words of Thomas Jefferson, “where the press is free and every man able to read, all is safe.”

Lien Chan

Assistant for South Asian Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China

Over the years, China has provided a significant amount of financial and technical assistance to Nepal, which has greatly contributed to Nepal's development. In addition, China has invested heavily in Nepal, especially in the mining sector, as well as in infrastructure, establishment of industries, human resource development, and health. To keep the economic ties formal, Nepal and China established the Inter-Governmental Economic and Trade Committee (IGETC) in 1982. Most of the trade between Nepal and China is conducted through Tibet and Hong Kong. Some tension has existed historically over Tibet, and Nepal has emerged as supportive of China's control over the area.

Lien Chan is a member of the Chinese Communist Party. He studied at the University of Bath and the London School of Economics, and held a post at the Chinese Embassy to the United States, and served as China’s Ambassador to Bangladesh as well as several positions within the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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In the Media: China recently re-joined Nepal in international headlines, as Nepali authorities disallowed Tibetan voting in their country. Thousands of exiled Tibetans in Nepal had hoped to vote in the 21 March election for Tibetan leadership. Nepali leadership was reported to have been acting under pressure from Beijing, and therefore deemed the much-anticipated election ‘unlawful’.

China objects to an election for a Tibetan government in exile that it does not recognize, and a Dalai Lama whom it regards as a source of trouble. The Chinese Foreign Ministry has not made direct public comment on the issue, but has in the past said that Nepal is a sovereign country and can make its own decisions.

Sudha Raj

Foreign Undersecretary

India's Deputy Minister of External Affairs

Nepal and India are tied by centuries of history, culture, tradition and religion. The two countries additionally uphold a common socio-cultural ethos. Sharing similar religious and caste social structures, thousands of miles of border and legal as well as illegal trade, India and Nepal have a complicated relationship. With the establishment of SAARC, Nepal-India's bilateral focus has shifted towards strengthening and expanding their relations based on mutual understanding of each other's interests.

Alternate and frequent visits by Nepali and Indian leaders at different levels of the governments have assisted in bringing closer the two societies. However, while Nepali Prime Ministers have traditionally taken their first trip outside Nepal to India, current PM Jalanath Khanal made his first trip to Cambodia, claiming that he wanted to see how Cambodia was solving its border issue with Thailand. This departure from tradition ruffled India's political elite.

Sudha Raj has had an impressive diplomatic career, serving in many different capacities. A staunch supporter of the rights of India's castes and tribes, she has published four books on the subject and represented India at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in China in 1995. Raj is a member of the National Integration Council and has served on several Parliamentary Goodwill Missions around the globe and to the United Nations.

In the Media: Indian Foreign Ministry has recently stated that India-Nepal relations have yielded mutually beneficial dividends for both countries, but that India would like to see improvement. “India's security is intertwined with Nepal, and India wants democratic order in every country people wish it.”