

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union
on Human Rights in Nepal**

The EU welcomes the decision by Prime Minister Koirala's Government in Nepal to extend the mandate of the Deuba Commission, which has been set up to create a cross-party consensus among the country's democratic groups and pave the way for negotiations with the Maoist insurgents. In the EU's view a negotiating process offers the best chance of resolving Nepal's problems for the longer term.

The EU has observed with growing concern the escalation of the internal conflict following the declaration of the people's war more than four years ago. Maoist attacks against representatives of the democratic State and civilians are always unacceptable and, frequently, barbarian. The avowed aim of the insurgents is to overturn the democratic order.

The EU upholds the government of Nepal's right to defend the country's newly established democracy in countering this terrorist insurgency. The EU notes that the democratic State has the sole right to use legitimate force to preserve the rights and security of its citizens. The EU believes that the authorities in Nepal must seek to establish basic security and an environment in which developmental efforts to overcome poverty can be pursued, and that the insurgency hinders the development process.

The Union notes that a number of international authorities including the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, Amnesty International and the US State Department have reported on extensive human rights abuses by both the insurgents and the Nepal police following the Maoists' Declaration of the people's war. The European Union calls on the Maoist insurgents to call an immediate halt to their violence and on the Nepalese Government to ensure that its representatives act uniquely within the bounds of the law.

The EU also recalls that it is the responsibility of the Government in Kathmandu, through effective leadership and proper governance, to investigate allegations of extremely serious human rights abuses by the Nepalese police, including extra-judicial killings, torture and disappearances, and systematically to prosecute those responsible. The Government must, in the view of the EU, issue strong and clear guidelines to the Nepal police to avoid the recurrence of such abuses in the future. The culture of impunity must be ended.

The EU therefore strongly urges both parties to redouble their efforts to create the necessary

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E-mail: press.office@consilium.eu.int

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conditions to enter into early and serious negotiations leading to a full and permanent peace.

The Central and Eastern European Countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.
