



# Shantika Pahalharu

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS FOR PEACE



Glimpses of Interaction Programme, Jointly Organised by Friends for Peace and Diyalo Pariwar in Narayangadh, Chitwan.

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## Editorial

Despite mounting national and international pressure for peaceful resolution of the ongoing conflict, the cycle of violence goes on unabated. The government and the Maoists appear hell-bent on pursuing the course of violence with the hope of achieving armed victory over the other. In the vicious cycle of insensible violence more and more innocent people are loosing their lives, facing displacement, or abduction. The growing insecurity in the country has affected normal life, traveling and productive activities of the people. The recent spate of clashes and mounting casualties among both the government security forces and the Maoist combatants points towards a potentially explosive escalation of violence in coming days. The loss in terms of development infrastructure and other collateral damage is now beyond calculation. The growing violence has brought the country to the brink of a failed state. Worse, the insurgency now threatens to spill over the Nepalese border precipitating external armed intervention.

As the conflict scenario widens throwing national politics of the country out of gear, it has started to draw more and more international attention. The democratic process derailed after October 4, 2002, too, does not appear to be moving nearer to the right track again. In the absence of elected parliament and the leading role of political parties in the governance, the country faces the danger of institutionalisation of the rule by ordinance.

As a research organisation committed to work for a peaceful settlement of the conflict, Friends for Peace (FFP) has carried out a series of researches on various issues concerned with the ongoing

conflict. The research issues are concerned with the comparative study of conflict resolutions of other countries, security sector reform, discourses on constitution making, regional approach on conflict resolution and various aspects of Nepal-India relation in the context of conflict. So far it has carried out about 20 pieces of research some of which are already published and others are in the process of publication. The outcomes and conclusions of all the researches and consultations have bolstered FFP's conviction about the indispensability of a peaceful settlement of the conflict. FFP has always focused on creating a knowledge base for forging consensus among constitutional forces and bringing the belligerents to negotiation table. It will not deviate from its course even in the future.

Of late, some promising signals have started to appear on the Nepalese political horizon. The government has taken initiative to set up Peace Commission, various national and international organisations have openly spoken their minds in favour of democratization of the country and the peace negotiation between the insurgents and the government. More importantly, the conflict-hit people together with local peace NGO's have also been coming vocal against the prolonged armed conflict. These are indeed the silver lining in the seemingly dark political sky of the country. In the coming days FFP will concentrate its effort to strengthen these peace initiatives by consolidating its research findings and disseminating them to ever wider audience belonging to peace constituencies at home and abroad. From this issue Shantika Pahalharu will be published as a quarterly newsletter.

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## Revisiting the Past Six Months

The establishment of Friends for Peace (FFP) is one of the numerous peace-building efforts made by the civil society.

Established during the time of crisis generated by the Maoist insurgency, this organisation has been developing itself as a forum for conducting discussions, workshops, interactions, studies and researches on topical, social and political issues and disseminating their conclusions. The interactions and workshops, held in districts such as Chitwan, Bardia, Bara, Parsa, Syangja, Sunsari, Dhankuta etc and in Kathmandu in the past, have called for creating an environment conducive to initiate well-informed dialogue and discussions among intellectuals, political parties and student sections and to start a national debate on issues that contribute to establishment of peace in Nepal. Furthermore, it has raised the contentious issues

like Security Sector Reform, Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Constituent Assembly, Geopolitical Specialties of Nepal and Regional Approach to Conflict Transformation and Study of Peace Process of Conflict Ridden Countries etc.

This organization plans to build up and publish in the next six months the studies and researches carried out during the past.

During the past six months, FFP organised 18 interactions and consultative meetings in different parts of the country and three national level workshops on issues of conflict transformation and peace process. In the future, interactions, workshops and discussion programmes will be regularly (every month) conducted. There is a plan to initiate a debate on major studies and researches by disseminating their content through briefing papers.

### Activities

#### Researches

Research on the role of spirituality and religious communities in conflict transformation and peace building has been conducted by Keshab Pd. Chaulagain. This research tries to look into the spiritual scriptures and preaching of different religions on peace issues. It presents short analysis of religious conflicts in countries like East Timor, Mozambique, Cyprus, India and Indonesia etc. It also analyses their respective role in future peace processes in Nepal.

Research on comparative peace process of conflict ridden countries has been conducted by Ananda Aditya, Bishnu Raj Upreti and Poorna Kanta Adhikari. It makes a comparative study of conflict transformation and peace process in 12 countries of Asia, Africa, Europe and South America and tries to sum up the experiences of these countries and draws lessons relevant for Nepal. This research revolves around the issues of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation. It is in the process of publication.

Research on water resources development and conflict has been conducted by Ajay Dixit. There have been two major events in Nepal after the restoration of democracy one was the World Bank pulling out of the Arun III Hydropower Project in August 1995 and the other was signing of Mahakali Treaty in 1996 which was projected as a landmark instrument to herald a new future for Nepal.

This paper attempts to draw some lessons from these events and explores a less dispute-ridden path to develop and manage water resources. It suggests that future cooperative path needs to be based on a pluralistic policy, which can help solve problems while building trust. This research report is under publication.

Research on India's role in future peace process by Shyam Shrestha has been completed. The paper was presented at a national workshop on 23 August, 2004. The inputs received there were incorporated and it is in the process

of publication. The research has analysed the political history of India-Nepal relation and the possible role of India in Nepal's future peace process. Furthermore, the paper has furnished recommendations for involving India in resolving the conflict.

Research on effects of open border on the conflict by Hari Roka has also been completed. This paper explores the historical and cultural relation between Nepal and India. It deals with the issues and problems of sharing open border with India and its impact on Nepal in the context of growing maoist insurgency. The researcher has attempted to analyse some border disputes also.

#### Workshops

FFP organized an interaction programme on November 18, 2004 on "Regional Security Concerns in the Context of Growing Maoist Insurgency in South Asia". The resource person was Prof. S. D. Muni from the Department of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He spoke on growing Maoist insurgency in South Asian region and the role of India as a neighbour in resolving the ongoing conflict. Altogether 55 people including civil society leaders, politicians, lecturers and students participated at the interaction.

On December 5, 2004, a half-a-day workshop on "Discourses on Constituent Assembly and Regional Approach to Conflict Transformation in Nepal" was organized. Two papers were presented at the workshop to facilitate the discussion on contentious issues. The first paper was on "Geopolitical Specialties of Nepal and Regional Approach to Conflict Transformation" by Rajan Bhattarai and the second was by Prof. Krishna Khanal on "Nepal's Current Discourses on Constituent Assembly: An Analysis". There were 89 participants at the workshop who offered useful inputs to the papers. These papers will be published after incorporating the comments and suggestions.





## Future

FFP will be organizing interactions and consultative meetings every month to discuss the contemporary issues of concern in the context of conflict dynamics in Nepal.

The following areas have been identified for future research:

- Penal Reform in Nepal.

- Landmines and its Impacts
- Impact of Maoist Insurgency in Party Building Process: An Assessment
- Role of UN in Peace Process in Nepal
- Women and Militarization
- Documentation of Peace Initiatives

## Lessons from Peace Initiatives in Sri Lanka

An interaction programme was organized on October 5, 2004 by Friends for Peace to discuss what Nepal can learn from Sri Lankan conflict which has in its roots linguistic, ethnic, religious and political causes. The resource person was Dr. Jehan Perera, Media Director of National Peace Council in Sri Lanka .

Although the conflict in Sri Lanka has distinct physical and situational features and qualities, the conflict there is not much different from any other conflict in the world. The countries experiencing conflicts, including Nepal, can learn from a review of the peace initiatives made there, the impediments faced by Sri Lanka and its background, after identifying the roles played by different actors in the success or failure of such initiatives.

The Sri Lankan conflict specialist and Nepalese participants (civil society leaders, politicians, professionals and students) summed up the following conclusions as lessons from the peace initiatives in Sri Lanka.

- (1) In 2000, both the government of Sri Lanka and the rebel leaders reached the conclusion that neither of the parties could win the war and agreed to a ceasefire with the mediation of a third party. Hence, all conscious citizens and the warring sides in Nepal should reach the consensus that a military solution is not possible.
- (2) The establishment must demonstrate the spirit of sacrifice for resolving any conflict. Such a spirit of sacrifice cannot be expected from the rebel side.

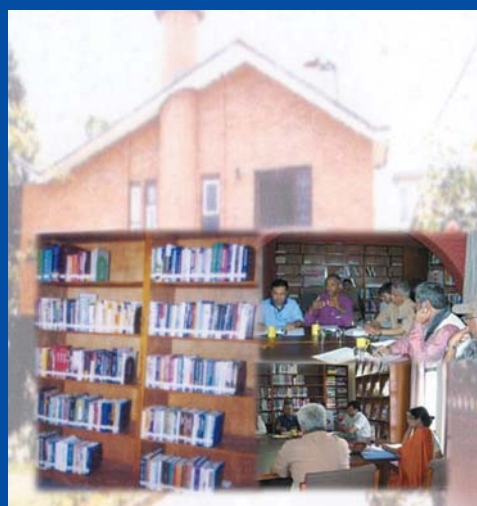
- (3) As the vested interests of various groups take over if the conflict prolongs, the points on which the warring sides have reached an agreement are kept confidential until the peace agreement is signed. As long as the decision-making process is excessively centralized and opaque, the peace-building process remains difficult and suspicious.
- (4) During the conflict, the political leadership has to play a crucial role in raising people's awareness. Because of high media coverage of political leadership, they are much more powerful than NGOs and civil society.
- (5) The civil society should always initiate dialogue on the vision of an alternative social structure. They have an important role to play in wielding pressure on both the sides to come to the negotiation table and explore alternatives to conflict.
- (6) As peace dialogue, even if short-term, provides opportunities, 'Bad peace is better than a beautiful war'. Ceasefire is imperative to properly move ahead in peace process.
- (7) International mediation helps to create an environment of confidence between warring sides.
- (8) To maintain peace, an optimistic attitude is needed.
- (9) As war entrepreneurs are likely to disrupt dialogue, we must always be alert.
- (10) The geo-political situation of the country in conflict and the role of neighbouring countries have to do in both intensifying and resolving conflict.



## Library on Peace and Conflict Transformation Opens for Public Use.

FFP has established a library with a view to provide necessary knowledge and information for researchers, intellectuals, students, negotiators, facilitators and stakeholders of conflict. It contains more than two thousand books, journals, reports and papers on security studies, terrorism, international politics, constitution, peace studies, criminal justice and human rights etc.

To make library use easy and accessible, the lists of books and others materials have been kept in computer database. Furthermore, the list of resources is also available in the website [www.friendsforpeace.org.np/library.htm](http://www.friendsforpeace.org.np/library.htm). The library is open from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm for five days a week.



## Security Sector Reform in Nepal: Challenges and Opportunities

The above research has been jointly carried out by Prof Dhurba Kumar and Hari Sharma. This research is about the notion of security sector reform. Security sector reform in Nepal is a crucial agenda of negotiation but has been seldom raised as an issue outside it. The questions of accountability and responsibility of Royal Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Security Council have been raised. Nonetheless, the issue of integrated reform agenda is yet to get national attention. It has been an internally resisted but an externally induced subject of inquiry as the donor are now re-thinking development and its intricate relationship with human security.

Security sector is the armed apparatus of the state that has maintained legal monopoly over the instrument of violence – order, threat or actual use of force by the consent of the people in the interest of national security. In Nepal, security sector comprises essentially the armed forces, paramilitaries, police forces, intelligence and secret services as the core operational arm of the state concerning national security. The essential organs of the state under which this core security sector functions, are the security management and oversight agencies comprising the executive and legislative bodies, judicial, law enforcing, financing and auditing agencies and the civil society.

The concept of security sector reform, called SSR in short form, is very new in the sense that it was previously left to the authority of the given state to maintain and manage it. It is defined as a process of engaging security apparatuses of the state making them more responsible to the citizens and their welfare. It has political, institutional,

economic and social dimensions ensuring both responsibility and accountability of the security sector to democratic civil authority. SSR is an approach substantially different from state centrism and normatively integral to the concept of human security. It is a process of making the security sector more accountable to the people so that the safety and welfare of the population would be ensured not denied. Thus SSR typically relates to the nature of the state, the type of regime and the pattern of civil-military relations the state in question sustains. A central element of SSR remains democratic governance which is, however, not the case in Nepal today.

Being the first study of its kind in Nepal, it is therefore not definitive. It is more conjectural and explorative. At the time when the government is putting more people in uniform and buying weapons and ammunitions, security sector reform has never been a priority. Underlying the motive of this research is to generate debate in the society on reform agenda.

There are four parts in this study. Part I of this paper traces the set up of security sector in Nepal, origin of SSR, thinking among the donor communities and assesses the UNDP and OECD approaches to SSR in comparative terms. Part II explores concepts and its applicability in Nepali context. Part III assesses the operational modules of security sector and the institutions directly related to the authority of these sectors. At last, Part IV contemplates the possibility of resolution of conflict. It also explores the possible ways and problem of SSR in post conflict transformation.

## Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nepal and its Ramifications

This study was commissioned by Friends for Peace to Hiranyalal Shrestha with the aim of initiating discussions and debates on the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nepal and its ramifications for the country. The researcher has tried to accord legitimacy to the study by collecting some primary data through field surveys at checkpoints at Kakarvitta/Pani Tanki, Rani/Jogbani, Birgunj/Raxaul, Sunauli/Nautanwa, Krishnanagar (Maryadpur)/Badani, Koilabas/Jaruwa, Nepalgunj/Rupaidiha, Dhangadhi/Gaurifanta and Gaddi (Belauti)/Banbasa in order to present a glimpse of statistics on small arms and light weapons.

Based on the available data, the paper estimates that the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) has 100,000, the Armed Police Force (APF) 16,000 and the Nepal Police has 50,000 weapons. Similarly, private security guards have 5,000, bank security guards 2,000 and civilians have 35,000 licensed arms. An informal survey of the Maoists estimates 57,000 illegal guns existing in Nepal, 10,000 of which are estimated to be within the Kathmandu Valley.

Similarly, it is estimated that the Maoists have accumulated around 25 thousand weapons, which were forcibly snatched from local citizens, looted from police posts, from the local arsenals of the RNA in Dang and Beni, and were supplied by smugglers from across the border. Furthermore, it is estimated that nearly 50

thousand members of the people's militia have been engaged in exploding socket bombs, pipe bombs, pressure cooker bombs and laying landmines, etc.

The fact that the government has raised the budget for security expenses by 300 per cent during the past few years is also indicative of a large-scale augmentation in the number of weapons.

According to the field data, the bulk of the weapons are smuggled into Nepal from the bordering India's illegal arms bazaar. A small number of weapons are also imported from Pakistan and China. The weapons in the possession of local citizens include 18 per cent *katuwa* (home-made guns), 17 per cent *bharuwa* (muzzle-loader), 16 per cent .12 bore guns, 16 per cent .22 bore guns, 16 per cent air guns, 13 per cent rifles and 4 per cent shotguns.

In this connection, the use of landmines has greatly increased in Nepal over the past six years. Out of 2,481 victims of landmine blasts between 1998 and June 2004, 1,031 have died.

It has become evident from the data furnished by this study that the widespread misuse of weapons has already created an extremely precarious situation. To control this, the need for putting pressure on Nepal for ratifying the UN Action Plan Against Small Arms, introducing effective legal provisions and stopping illegal trade in small arms and light weapons appear imperative.



# The present situation is not conducive to peace building

**Daman Nath Dhungana is a former Speaker, House of Representatives and a facilitator in the previous two rounds of talks between the government and the CPN (Maoist). Recently, Sujata Thapa had an interview with him on the present conflict situation, peace talks and his role as a facilitator. The excerpt of the interview follows:**

*How do you analyze the present political situation?*

The primary issue today is peace. So we have to see if the political situation is oriented towards establishing peace. I don't think the political situation is geared towards establishing peace. Everyone is trying to use the current violence and conflict to their advantage. And not a single party is directing its organization towards peace. The present situation is not conducive to peace building.

The situation of violence and killings is painful. I wish no one violated the fundamental human rights like the right to life, right to live with one's family without fear and right to employment. I wish the situation in which innocent people are killed from both sides in fake encounters, during transfer from jail, with accusation of spying, after abduction and in ambush is stopped forthwith.

The problem today has more to do with the tendency of undermining the civilian perspective than the crisis itself. The peace process is not going anywhere because those who do not want peace are on peace committees. The people should identify them. They should also try to eliminate specific hindrances that are coming in the way of the peace process like (i) unwillingness to transfer power to the people; (ii) the absence of guarantee that the rebels will lay down arms even after acceptance of the constituent assembly; (iii) the government's noncommittal stance on the peace process; (iv) the absence of Nepali civil society's "National Peace Agenda" (v) the search for an external guarantor to remove the mistrust generated by the above mentioned causes.

*In the last couple of months some initiatives have been taken. The government has formed a High Level Peace Committee and the civil society has formed Civil Peace Commission. What role do you think these initiatives have played or will play, in conflict transformation and the establishment of peace?*

It is better to do something than nothing. Many initiatives were made in the past. Peace initiatives start to proliferate once conflict and violence intensifies. So it's better to examine if the peace initiatives are being



**Daman Nath Dhungana**  
*Former Speaker, House of Representatives*

directed earnestly towards the establishment of peace or if they can bring about encouraging results. In the current conflict, the main issue is people's sovereignty. If these peace initiatives can bring sovereignty back to the people for good, then the gun-toting Maoists will find themselves in discomfiture. They are saying that power is not with the people. So unless we start the process of bringing sovereignty back to the people no initiative, even though it may bring about small changes, can address the main agenda of the conflict. The idea that power should be with the people was raised in 1950. After the democratic change in

1950, sovereignty remained with the people. But the Royal coup in 1960 wrested back people's sovereignty. The 1991 Constitution declared that sovereignty is with the people. But power is not with the people since October 4, 2002. The constitution is in a state of coma. Regression is anti-constitutional activity. This government works to serve the agenda of October 4. Its main function is to fulfill the wishes of the king.

*Is it that the Maoists have taken to arms only because power is not with the people?*

Well before October 4, 2002, the Maoists were saying that real power has not been transferred to the people and that power will come to the people only through an armed people's revolution. That is why they resorted to arms. We agree that those in power have not been responsible to the people; that there was rampant corruption; that there was a lack of good governance; and that people with national responsibilities had failed to rise above petty individual needs. But after 1991, the people had started to exercise certain democratic rights. That is not possible at present. There is no possibility of holding elections without disturbances. All these point to the fact that power is not with the people. But this does not mean that power can be transferred to the people only through the use of arms. One can bring about big changes without resorting to arms. The Maoists took up arms in the name of people's revolution while the main forces of the people's movement



started to betray the people. All these helped the reactionaries usurp the rights conferred by the changes of 1990 on the people in the pretext of Maoist crisis. Instead of giving these reactionaries more room to play, the main parties in the movement [against regression] should request the Maoists to come to the table to reinstate sovereignty back to the people or join the decisive constitutional struggle. All should join hands. There is no denying the fact that power can be transferred to the people through mass solidarity also. The progressive forces supporting the 1991 constitution should convince the Maoists that they are also with the people. Only then will the Maoists come to the negotiation table. The objective of our desire for negotiation is to confer rights to the people and lift them to the position of decision making. Let's do that immediately from our side. The Maoists will give up bullets and come to the politics of the ballot or conclude that they cannot sustain the armed struggle. Only because we are divided and weak, the united Maoists are looking strong. Our mean rivalry for selfish individual gains has been increasing the dedication, sacrifice and influence of the Maoists creating a base for a progressive movement. Therefore, one has to understand that the key to the resolution of the conflict is with the state. If the state, government and parliament are popular, patriotic and have the people's backing, the Maoists can do nothing. And in a responsible democracy it will be hard to find them.

For many people, it has been a matter of curiosity and disagreement to know that the Maoists resorted to an armed struggle instead of a peaceful and legal movement even in a freer environment of 1996. One of the main reasons behind their resorting to arms is that people hardly got to enjoy their rights. More important than that are the facts that the main parties broke the promises they made to the people after 1990, and failed to contextually understand the rise of the Maoists and the violent path they may take to.

*How can the international help in conflict transformation and the establishment of peace be positively used?*

We can put the enthusiasm and willingness of the international community in helping us to productive use only if we have the ability and are honest and united. In the present situation we don't even have the ability to receive the kind of help they are willing to give. Before asking for international help we have to prepare an agenda of national consensus on peace and against violence convincing the international community that we can reach an agreement within a democratic framework in shortest possible time. We should form a government and parliament that is responsive to the people. We also have to make national commitments and guarantee the continuity of democracy. I often feel that the talk of democracy is not enough. We should reorient the people to the objectives of democracy, build their confidence and develop a mechanism of empowering people. We should come together to implement a national agenda. We have not been able to inspire the people because of our internal wrangling, misbehavior and the lack of our will to implement it honestly. The Europeans have also come forward to

help us. Their support could have helped us improve the deteriorating situation of violence, conflict and human rights immensely, but we haven't been able to make full use of their support. We have been spending that resource in fulfilling vested interest, meeting non-civilian purpose and loosing to leakages rather than in meeting national agenda. We are concentrating on increasing military power rather than civilian power. We have to praise their efforts for helping us in talks, but there is the danger of our becoming more and more dependent on them if we keep seeking their help without trying to sort out our internal problems. We have to convince the international community that we have started to become clear about our national policy and agenda to encourage further international help. No one is willing to believe us because of violence and dictatorship. We should be the one to start the first step to improve the situation of the country, but we are not doing that. That is why our well-wishers and friends are, in a sense, disappointed with us. Since we are showing no sign of improving, they are cautioning us that we are going towards becoming a failed state.

*What should be done to correct the internal situation and forge cooperation for peace?*

We should launch a united campaign to formulate and implement a national plural democratic system based on a wider national consensus. Every party has its own ideology, interest and compulsions. That is natural. But every one should come to an understanding. The Maoists and other future insurgents also have to come to terms. To come to an agreement someone has to compromise on certain positions. There are, however, certain things that cannot be compromised. For example, I cannot come to an understanding, compromising my position on liberal democracy and the constituent assembly. But the peace process can be made more flexible if one party convinces the other. The Maoists are firm in their position on the constituent assembly. However, to the liberals, it is a matter of principle. Even without the Maoists the country would have gone for a constituent assembly—sooner or later. The rights granted by the constitution of 1990 do not appear sufficient now. The king has usurped sovereignty of the people. It is impossible to address the voices and the aspirations of the dalits, Janjatis, women and other marginalized groups without going for a constituent assembly. Similarly, there are issues of local autonomy and federalism. Voices for an inclusive democracy and restructuring the state are growing strong. All these issues cannot be addressed without going for a constituent assembly. We cannot have widespread participation and create a sense of public ownership without developing forces which can defend the constitution. The constituent assembly gives a sense of ownership to the people; they feel that they have contributed to the writing of the constitution, that their voice has been heard. This is the best thing about a constituent assembly and the real energy behind the constitution.



It is not that the voices and feelings of women were not addressed by the 1991 constitution. Something good would have come out of it if we had worked according to the spirit of the constitution before October 4, even though it was not prepared by a constituent assembly. But the situation has changed. Feelings and aspirations of the people are swirling like waves in the sea. We cannot satisfy or convince them without giving them a fair representation. We can balance the power equation and retrieve the lost faith only through a constituent assembly. Now it has become absolutely necessary to address the kind of hurdles that might crop up while going for a constituent assembly. The more delay we make the faster we will go to a civil war. And a time may come when we will have to long for foreigners to not just mediate but force us into a ceasefire. To prevent us from reaching that state we need a constituent assembly. Only the constituent assembly will provide true representation of mind and soil. Only the constituent assembly will reawaken us. If we cannot go for a constituent assembly we should go for a decisive movement. At the moment, there is space for an agreement. If we lose this opportunity, the constituent assembly will come only after a long time and much bloodletting. For the sake of future Nepal, the young generation is urgently seeking an answer to the question: "Can democracy and Monarchy exist together?" To satisfy the younger generation is much more difficult than to quell the Maoists. There are other new

issues that need to be addressed. For example, the feeling of alienation among the people of Terai should be taken into account.

*Many organizations are coming forward to work for peace. What should be the role of these organizations in such time?*

These organizations are people's instruments brought into existence by necessity. They will keep working as long as their need is felt. We should not think otherwise of them; they need to be taken positively. All these organizations should be objective-oriented and responsible to the people. They have to be transparent and get mobilized for peace and democracy. Their effectiveness will depend on the extent to which they have been able to reach to the people or how the people have been viewing them. I do not want to enter into details of their effectiveness. I believe that every organization, committee or group is helpful to peace and democracy. Let me talk about the government's lack of policy and its pathetic state. Not everyone should be allowed to receive aid from foreign countries or international organizations and do whatever it wants with it. Discipline and monitoring is urgently needed. I feel that our tendency to depend on foreign aid for everything is leading us to increased dependence. There should be monitoring and regulation, not control, on foreign aid. Freedom doesn't entail giving one a free rein.

## Interaction Programme

A half a day interaction programme was organized by FFP on 'Regional Security Concerns in the Context of Growing Maoist Insurgency in South Asia' on November 18, 2004. Dr. S D Muni, an expert on Nepal as well as a professor with long experiences on conflict in this region was the guest speaker. Mr. Laxman Aryal chaired this programme, Mr. Daman Nath Dhungana was the commentator and Mr. Gauri Pradhan facilitated this programme.

Dr. Muni expressed his view that the Maoists of Nepal must be credited for raising international concerns about conflict with their strong organizational capabilities. However, Dr. Muni also strongly opined that military was not the solution to this problem which had its roots in the socio economic trends and status of Nepal. He pointed out that Maoist groups in Nepal and India may have ideological similarities but there were structural differences. Similarly, he also said that if the Maoists in Nepal had been given some space when they first came up, then this problem

would not have come this far. Until Sept. 11 attack on twin towers, the Maoists were not even taken as a major security problem. Even after the attacks they were directly labeled as terrorists which Dr. Muni opines is only a way to ignore the problem and not to address it properly.

In the issue of third party involvement which was discussed at length at this programme, Dr. Muni clearly expressed that he was not in favor of such an action and he gave concrete examples of failure of third party involvement. However, he also said that this was an internal issue of Nepal and that the Nepalese people must decide on their own.

Mr. Aryal and Mr. Dhungana opined that considering the strong cultural ties between India and Nepal, the latter would need India's positive role and help in defining a political solution to this problem. Mr. Dhungana also urged the government to make its stand clear on the issue of constituent assembly before calling the Maoist to the table for peace talks.



## General Assembly

Friends for Peace (FFP) is a non-governmental, non profit making organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1997. FFP, a research and resource organization, was established in May 2004. After six months of its establishment the first general assembly was held on November 21, 2004. At the assembly, Secretary General Mr. Gauri Pradhan presented the progress report and Treasurer Mr. Padma Lal Bishwakarma presented the financial report. The Assembly was chaired by Mr. Laxman Prasad Aryal.

Eleven member Executive Committee and ten member Advisory Board was formed. The Executive Committee is composed of Mr. Laxman Prasad Aryal - Chairperson, Dr. Meena Acharya - V-Chairperson, Mr. Gauri Pradhan - Secretary General, Mr. Padma Lal Bishwakarma - Treasurer,

Dr. Harka Gurung - Member, Mr. D. B. Gurung - Member, Mr. Hamid Ansari - Member, Mrs. Purna Shova Chitrakar - Member, Mrs. Mandira Sharma - Member and Dr. Bishnu Raj Upreti - Member.

Likewise, the members of Advisory Board are Mr. Daman Nath Dhungana (Former Speaker, House of Representatives), Mrs. Sahana Pradhan (Chairperson, Women's Security Pressure Group), Mr. Shailendra Kumar Upadhyay (Foreign Relation Expert), Mr. Padma Ratna Tuladhar (Human Rights Leader), Dr. Mathura Prasad Shrestha (Human Rights Leader), Mr. Himalaya Shamsheer Rana (Chairperson, Nepal Nagarik Manch), Mr. Kul Chandra Gautam (Assistant Secretary General, UN), Dr. Prabha Basnet (Member Secretary, Social Welfare Council), and Mr. Khagendra Prasad Bhattarai (Former Chairperson, T. U. Teachers' Association)



### Publication

#### Upcoming

The research papers are in the process of publication. They will be available to the public in the printed form and on our website.

- **Dhurba Kumar and Hari Sharma** carried out a research on security sector reform. This research paper analyses the problems of security sector reform and recommends ways for developing a well organized security sector accepting democratic control and civilian oversight.
- A research paper for broadening the debate on small arms and light weapons in Nepal has been completed by **Hiranya Lal Shrestha**. This consultation paper is under publication in the form of booklet.
- A research on comparative study on peace building process of 12 conflict ridden countries of the world has been completed by **Ananda Aditya, Bishnu Raj Upreti and Poorna Kanta Adhikari**. This paper draws the experiences of countries in conflict and tries to identify the best course for peace building in Nepal. It revolves around the issues of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation.

#### Published



**The Sri Lanka Experience**  
(English & Nepali Version)

**Peace Initiatives in Dolakha and Ramechhap Districts: A Rapid Assessment**  
(English & Nepali Version)



**Future Peace Negotiation: Challenges and Opportunities**  
(Nepali Version)

#### Mailing Address for Feedback and Suggestion



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