



PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

NEPAL: JUSTICE STALLED FOR CONFLICT-ERA CRIMES

The Government of Nepal has failed to fulfill its commitment to provide justice for the victims of the country's decade-long armed conflict, Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Human Rights Watch (HRW), and TRIAL International said today.

The organizations echoed statements by victims and human rights groups about the Nepal government's inaction on addressing conflict-era human rights violations, and a lack of transparency in the appointment of commissioners to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to the Commission on the Investigation of Enforced Disappearances.

"We have seen no evidence that so far that the authorities of Nepal are serious about fulfilling their obligation to investigate conflict-era violations and bring perpetrators to justice", said Raju Chapagai, South Asia Researcher at Amnesty International. "If the commitment to human rights obligations was as unflinching as claimed by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, the government would have acted diligently to deliver on its transitional justice responsibilities."

UNKEPT PROMISES

After being elected in 2018, Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli renewed promises that the legal framework governing the transitional justice process would be brought into conformity with Nepal's international human rights law obligations, as the Supreme Court had repeatedly directed. However, the government never amended the law, and instead pushed forward – without adequate consultation – with the establishment of a committee to recommend appointments to the transitional justice bodies. *"The failure of the government to deliver on its commitment to ensure truth, justice and reparations for the victims of conflict-era abuses shows a dismaying disregard for the protection of human rights,"* said Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director at HRW.

The organizations call on the government to: **1)** suspend the current process, and initiate a consultative and transparent process for the nomination and appointment of commissioners; **2)** follow through on commitments to amend the 2014 transitional justice law to ensure that the legal framework is consistent with international human rights standards and Supreme Court rulings; and **3)** adopt and publicize a plan for taking the transitional justice process forward.

"The legitimacy of Nepal's transitional justice process lies both on a transparent and consultative appointment process for commissioners, and a strong legal foundation to allow the commissions to fulfil their mandate," said [Helena Rodríguez-Bronchú, head of TRIAL International's Nepal program](#). *"Societal consensus is crucial for both factors."*

TRIAL International is a non-governmental organization fighting impunity for international crimes and supporting victims in their quest for justice. TRIAL International takes an innovative approach to the law, paving the way to justice for survivors of unspeakable sufferings. The organization provides legal assistance, litigates cases, develops local capacity and pushes the human rights agenda forward.

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NEPAL TURNS A DEAF EAR TO REPEATED CALLS

Amnesty International, ICJ and TRIAL International had previously submitted their analysis of the draft transitional justice legislation circulated in 2018, and had made recommendations on ensuring compliance with international human rights law. In April 2019, United Nations experts also wrote a joint letter to the foreign minister reminding the government of its commitment to amend the law, and calling for a transparent process for appointing new commissioners after the terms of the previous commissioners expired.

“The lack of progress in holding perpetrators accountable for the suffering inflicted upon victims, their families and Nepali society as a whole, is appalling,” said ICJ Asia-Pacific Director Frederick Rawski. *“Nearly 13 years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, political leaders inside and outside of government are still playing games by politicizing the process. It is about time that they showed some courage, and took action to ensure access to justice, instead of continually looking after their own short-term self-interests.”* |

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