

Press Release

Nepal Peace and Development Strategy: A contribution to development planning from Nepal's international development partners

KATHMANDU, January 12---Nepal's international development partners are committed to supporting the peace process. In this spirit, they have finalized a 'Peace and Development Strategy' that was presented today to the Right Honourable Prime Minister.

The Strategy was developed over the past year by a cross-section of local and international actors including UN agencies, bilateral aid agencies, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, think tanks and others. The Strategy, which has also benefitted from discussions with different parts of the government, articulates how development partners could assist Nepal in the years ahead to realize the development agenda embedded in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). It guides development planning so, when called upon, donors will be better able to assist with both the short-term challenges as well as the all-important long-term transition issues reflected in the CPA. The Strategy is, in effect, an 'offer of support' by development partners in specific areas that could help Nepal build lasting peace.

Using the CPA as a guidepost, the Strategy has identified where development partners may be called upon to provide support in the short term, including ongoing rehabilitation of the discharged, constitution formulation, support to the conflict-affected, implementation of the National Plan of Action for implementing UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security, and support to the next national elections. However, many anticipated short-term priorities depend on political decisions such as, the rehabilitation of former Maoist army combatants, establishment of transitional justice mechanisms, property restoration, improving law-and-order, and institutional reforms in the justice and policing sectors.

The Strategy also argues that action on the long-term transformation targets of the CPA cannot wait. Social inclusion, rule of law, security sector transformation, land reform, good governance, equality and inclusive growth, state restructuring, and employment acceleration are recognized as key elements of the CPA and the wider peace building process. Once the road ahead has been articulated by Nepali decision and policy makers, achievement in these areas can be accelerated by a coordinated and sustained response by development partners.

Development partners are also committed to ensuring this strategy does not become just 'another report' long on ideas but short on follow-up. A 'Plan of Action' will be released as a companion document to the strategy. The status of the Action Plan will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure the actions identified are moved along. Though all actions are ultimately contingent upon support from the Government, the Action Plan will help establish a state of readiness for development partners.

At the Prime Minister's briefing, Robert Piper, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, indicated "Nepal's development partners are ready to further support the peace building process. As development actors, we recognize the importance of the CPA's emphasis on long-term transformation, in addition to short-term political measures. We are ready, when Nepal is ready, to accelerate work on this ambitious agenda in an even more concerted fashion."

In compiling this strategy, the extraordinary challenges and opportunities in the years ahead have been placed in stark relief. Development partners are committed to working on these issues supporting nationally-led processes. The long-term nature of these issues and the high expectations that surround them suggests Nepal should get started on such long-term undertakings with a minimum of delay.

The Peace and Development Strategy is available online at:
<http://www.un.org.np/thematicareas/pds>

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