



**Welcome Speech delivered by Justice Prakash Osti, Hon. Commissioner,
National Human Rights Commission, Nepal in the inaugural session of the
International Conference on Protection of Rights of the Migrant Workers
12 – 14 November 2019,**



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Rights Commission, Nepal in the inaugural session of the International Conference on
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*Hon. Chairperson Justice Anup Raj Sharma, National Human Rights Commission, Nepal,
Chief Guest of the Inaugural Ceremony Rt. Hon. Vice-president Mr. Nanda Bahadur Pun
'Pasang',*

Hon. Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali;

Hon. Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security Mr. Gokarna Bista;

UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Valerie Juliand

*Hon. Chairperson of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institution Dr. Carlos Alfonso
NegretMosquera;*

*Former Chairperson of National Human Rights Commission, Nepal Justice Kedar Nath
Upadhyaya and former Commissioners of NHRC, Nepal;*

Representatives of Nepal government

*Chairpersons, Commissioners and Representatives of National Human Rights Institutions from
different countries;*

Foreign diplomats, development partners and UN representatives;

Human rights defenders and civil society members, experts, academia and media personnel;

Representatives of private businesses;

Ladies and gentlemen.

Good Afternoon!

National Human Rights Commission, Nepal is highly honored and greatly pleased to welcome our distinguished participants to this Conference in the land of Sagarmatha (the Mount Everest) and the birth place of Gautam Buddha, the peace advocate.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

There has been a strong desire of a world where all human rights are respected and all human beings are free from abuses and discriminations. There are examples where such desires have turned into reality but a large number of populations of globe is still far from such experience.

Amongst the world's population, a large number is moving abroad mainly for the employment with a desire to strengthen their financial status, living standard or personal skills. Many migrants have been benefited from the opportunity to work abroad but for others it remains merely unfulfilled desire. Migrant workers are facing human rights abuses in a routine basis because of unfair recruitment practices; lack of effective laws and policies or the effective implementation of existing policies; an inadequate mechanism in protection and remedy; and lack of information and access to justice. The challenges that the migrant workers facing today are the

global phenomenon. Especially, women migrant workers are facing multiple challenges on the top of that. A significant number of them have faced variety of challenges in their home to destinations countries during their migration and employment cycle. We have learned that the migrant workers from especially from the global south are facing similar abuses ranging from exploitation to forced labour or act of human trafficking.

There have been number of efforts being taken place to increase protection of rights of the migrant workers globally. Last year, an important instrument The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) has been adopted in order to strengthen protection of rights of the migrant workers. The GCM anticipates the active roles of NHRIs in implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM objectives. Then, the Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) in March held in Morrocco this year asserted NHRIs' role in implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM objectives. GANHRI has emphasized its role to be a comprehensive and coherent.

In the last two decades, over four million Nepali have migrated abroad for the sake of work. Rights of the migrant workers is one of the priority issues for National Human Rights Commission of Nepal. We have been working in collaboration with the Government of Nepal, the business sector, trade unions and civil society for the better protection of the Nepali migrant workers and their family. NHRC, Nepal has been working in cooperation and collaboration with NHRIs in other countries.

National Human Rights Commission, Nepal has organized an international conference on migrants' rights in 2012. The Conference adopted the Kathmandu Declaration as its outcome. Further to that, rights of the migrant workers remained amongst the key issues which were discussed in the International Conference on Human Rights organized by NHRC, Nepal in Kathmandu in 2018. NHRC Nepal aims to contribute in an international cooperation for the protection of rights of the migrant workers. NHRC, Nepal, therefore, organized this international Conference.

This International Conference envisage to come up with the practical outcomes and aims to agree not only a Conference Declaration but also a plan of action to implement Declaration which will enhance better cooperation between NHRIs, governments and civil society.

The key objectives of the Conference include:

1. Assessing the major challenges and opportunities to protect the rights of the migrant workers in south-south migration.
2. Suggesting measures to implement the broader objectives of the GCM through a cooperative framework.
3. Strengthening the Inter-NHRIs cooperation with multi-stakeholder approach in respect to rights protection.
4. Enhancing partnership and cooperation with particular focus on fair and responsible recruitment process and access to justice.

I am confident that the measures will be identified at the end of this Conference for constructive engagement of Governments, civil society organizations, and social partners with NHRIs.

Finally,

I would like to welcome our Chief Guest Rt. Hon. Vice President of Nepal, Ministers, the heads and representatives of the Government of Nepal, diplomatic missions and development partners, National Human Rights Institutions, media and Civil Society Organizations, human rights experts, UN agencies, academicians and all.

Thank you once again!

12 November 2019

Kathmandu