

Opening Remarks by Foreign Minister Hon. Upendra Yadav at the UN Regional Seminar on Promoting the Universality of the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CWC) and its Protocols in South Asia, South East Asia and the Pacific, Kathmandu, 17-18 December 2008

Mr. Chairperson  
Excellencies  
Distinguished Participants  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to have been invited to speak at the opening session of the United Nations Regional Seminar on Promoting the Universality of the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CCW) and its Protocols in South Asia, South East Asia and the Pacific being organized by the UN Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament (RCPD). I understand that this is the first such activity of the Regional Center being held in Kathmandu after its recent relocation from New York. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Center's Director and his dedicated team for the hard work they have put together to host this important regional seminar here in Kathmandu.

I am happy to note that the Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament is a useful mechanism to encourage regional and sub-regional dialogue and cooperation on peace and disarmament issues. By being involved in promoting global disarmament and non-proliferation norms, enhancing regional dialogue on disarmament, non-proliferation and security matters, and undertaking outreach and advocacy activities, the Center is expected to contribute to the larger cause of global peace and security. With the opening of the RCPD in Kathmandu, the *Kathmandu Process* of dialogue and dissemination of views and opinions on disarmament related issues that had begun in the late 1980s will attain a new momentum and contribute to carry forward the regional process of disarmament in a more effective manner.

Peace is a comprehensive concept. It is not just the absence of war. Sustainable peace is possible only when the roots of conflict are comprehensively addressed. And disarmament is a process which by promoting the sense of mutual trust and confidence among states, helps to create an environment congenial for peace, security and human well being at the regional and global levels. The United Nations, which embodies the hopes and aspirations of mankind for peace and human welfare, remains an important source of reassurance for all at the global level.

It is in the larger interest of humanity to continue efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament as an effective means for achieving global peace and prosperity. The close nexus between peace, development and disarmament needs to be understood and acted upon on the basis of global experience. In this context, the efforts of the United Nations to advocate and promote measures for peace and disarmament at the regional levels through the activities of its Regional Centers carry special significance.

I am glad that by organizing a two-day regional seminar on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the RCPD has taken up an important aspect of the disarmament efforts being made by the international community at the global level. In fact, Certain Conventional Weapons Convention is one of the principal instruments of international humanitarian law which is linked to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. It is a comprehensive convention in the sense that it has several Protocols dealing with conventional weapons of various kinds – *Non-Detectable Fragments (P-I)*, *Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices (P-II)*, *Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons (P-III)*, *Binding Laser Weapons (P-IV)*, and *Explosive Remnants of War (P-V)*.

The next two days will provide the participants from so many different countries from this region an opportunity to deliberate upon and undertake focused discussions on various aspects of the CCW-related issues which, I believe, will help to promote better understanding about them in the region.

Nepal is always in favour of general and complete disarmament. In keeping with this policy, Nepal has been a party to a number of international disarmament treaties and conventions.

Before I conclude, I wish to take this opportunity to inform this distinguished gathering that after having gone through a decade-long armed conflict, Nepal is currently carrying forward a nationally-driven peace process, and is determined to take it to a logical conclusion. We are now engaged in writing a new democratic constitution through an elected Constituent Assembly which will establish a federal structure of the State for building a New Nepal - a just, democratic, modern, inclusive and prosperous Nepal.

I wish all success to the Seminar.

Thank you.