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Statement by

**Hon. Bhim Bahadur Rawal, Minister for Home Affairs
of Government of Nepal and the Leader of the
Nepalese Delegation at the Sixty-fifth Session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

New York
27 September 2010

Mr. President
Mr. Secretary General
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to extend our sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to the President of the 65th Session. I also thank President of the 64th session for his excellent stewardship of the session.

His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations deserves our sincere appreciation for his commitment and dedication.

Mr. President,

The message of the High-level Plenary Meeting of last week is still reverberating around this Assembly: continuation of poverty and hunger in today's world, where we have made great strides in all our endeavors, is unacceptable and they must be brought to an end without delay. It is quite disheartening to note that the number of poor people has surpassed one billion. And they are concentrated in selected regions and groups of countries, mostly in LDCs.

The commitments expressed by the leaders attending the high-level plenary meeting last week have rekindled our hope that it will be a different world in 2015. Otherwise, the Millennium Declaration and many other vital documents will only remain a compilation of lofty promises. Let's hope that we match our commitments with our deeds.

International peace and security is our shared desire and a common responsibility. Challenges to international peace and security are multiple and complex. In an ever changing world, the sources of threats are different and so are the actors. Political and social conflicts have been aggravated by abject poverty and disparity. Therefore stabilization of global peace and security also demands ensuring freedom from want and hunger as a basic human right and enabling people to realize their full human potentials. Thus, we believe that development, peace and security are inextricably linked with each other.

Mr. President,

Nepal has consistently and unequivocally called for general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction under effective international control. Nepal stands for complete elimination of nuclear weapons in a time-bound manner. The operationalisation of CTBT and an early conclusion of a Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty should be our priority. We support the non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

In this context, we welcome the signing in April earlier this year of the Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Arms. We welcome the successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review conference. However we call for reinvigorating the Conference on Disarmament, as a multilateral body, to start discussions on substantive issues. We also appreciate the Secretary General for his efforts to advance nuclear disarmament on the basis of the five-point action plan he has proposed.

Nepal strongly believes that regional mechanisms complement efforts to promote the global disarmament agenda. The UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (RCPD), which we are proud to host, must be strengthened to revitalize the “Kathmandu Process” to facilitate dialogues and deliberations for confidence building in the region.

Mr President,

In today’s world, ravaging conflicts are a constant threat to international security. Despite progress on many fronts, violence and civil wars continue unabated. It is a matter of concern that intra-state conflicts and extremism have grown consistently over the years. We should work collectively. Consistent with the principles and charter of the United Nations, we should all contribute to resolve these conflicts through peaceful means and also help stabilise the situations with peacebuilding efforts.

In the Middle East, we are encouraged by the recent direct dialogue between the Israelis and Palestinians. We look for the success of dialogue, which will lead towards an independent Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel. We would like to see a peaceful resolution of the disputes through dialogue in the Korean peninsula.

Terrorism is a threat to all and it knows no geographical boundary. We unequivocally condemn it in all its forms and manifestations and call for resolute international actions to fight against it. Nepal has been implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Nepal is party to the SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, 1987 and its Additional Protocol.

Mr. President

Legitimacy, universality and common ideals have been the defining features of UN. Continued adherence to its core principles and purposes will reinforce sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non interference and peaceful settlement of disputes. The inspiring values and the lofty ideals that underpin the UN Charter remain as relevant as ever. We live in an era of continuous change. The economic landscape is also changing with the emergence of new yet vibrant growth poles. Globalization has changed the pattern of economic relations, though its benefits are not widely and equitably distributed.

The effectiveness of the United Nations depends on our collective will to act and to deal with the global issues resolutely. In the face of new and emerging challenges, there is urgency that the ideals of the UN should be translated into action effectively and in a coherent manner. Therefore, the theme of this year’s general debate “enhancing the role of the United Nations in global governance” captures this essence.

We underline the centrality of the United Nations not only in maintaining peace and security but also in promoting international cooperation for development. Its role in shaping policy debate on and establishing global norms in economic and financial matters must not be sidelined. Reform agenda needs to strike a right balance to promote stability in the broadest sense. Just as security

and peace are critical for the international community so is the development agenda. It must receive a focused priority within the UN system.

The UN Reform should be pursued in a systematic and holistic manner to further enhance its global standing. The realities of the contemporary world call for a change in the composition and working methods of the Security Council. We support expansion of membership in the Council in both the categories to reflect the current realities of the world. We also call for transparency in its working methods. We welcome the recent efforts to structure the debates with a view to start negotiations by taking into account the views of all the member states.

We welcome the ongoing discussions on the Revitalization of the General Assembly as envisioned by the founders in the context of the balance between different organs of the United Nations. The role of ECOSOC must be enhanced in promoting global economic relations and advancing development agenda in close cooperation with Breton Woods and other relevant institutions. The Development Cooperation Forum and Annual Ministerial review are a welcome change in the body. We need to make the UN more effective in ensuring coherence and consistency in global economic financial and trading systems. We call for special support for countercyclical measures, social safety nets to protect vulnerable and fiscal space to mitigate the crises. We should particularly make them responsive to the needs and concerns of the vulnerable countries like LDCs.

Mr. President,

Nepal welcomes the adoption by the 64th session of the resolution on system-wide coherence with a view to strengthening and streamlining the operational activities of the UN in the field of development. We also welcome and strongly support the establishment of the UN-Women, as a single consolidated entity to deal with issues pertaining to gender equality and empowerment of women.

Global peace and stability is our cherished goal. Guided by this principled objective, Nepal has extended unflinching support to all major UN initiatives for the maintenance of international peace and security through its active and consistent participation in UN Peacekeeping operations around the world. In 2008, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our association with UN peacekeeping operations with a view to further consolidating our contributions to the cause of international peace and security. Today, more than 5000 Nepalese peacekeepers are working in 13 different peacekeeping missions around the world. Nepal's involvement in UN peacekeeping mission has been one of the remarkable features of its international engagement. We continue to participate with dedication.

In line with our solemn commitment to the UN Charter and contribute to promote its ideals, I have the pleasure to announce in this august Assembly that the Government of Nepal has put forward the candidacy of Mr. Kul Chandra Gautam, advisor to the Prime Minister of Nepal on the Peace Process and International Affairs for the President of the Sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The gradual increase in the number of peacekeeping missions is a pointer to a somber fact that conflicts around the world have increased in recent years. The sustainable way to resolve conflict is to look at it comprehensively and remove the factors that generate and sustain conflicts.

Nepal's commitment to human rights is resolute. We are party to major international human rights instruments. We are fully aware that the protection and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms strengthens the sustainability of peace and progress. National Human Rights Commission, independent judiciary a vibrant civil society and the media have all played an important role in promoting awareness and protecting human rights in Nepal.

Mr. President,

Our fellow South Asian country Pakistan suffered tragic loss of lives and destruction due to unprecedented floods recently. Similarly, fellow LDC Haiti faced devastating earthquakes. These disasters have wiped out hard earned gains and therefore we call for full sympathy and support to them in this hour of need.

The climate change has become a challenge to human existence with multidimensional threat to human lives and all living things, global ecosystem and human civilization. It has a direct impact on our efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger and preserve ecological balance.

My country, which is least developed and landlocked with mountainous terrain, is highly vulnerable to climate change. The Himalayas remain as the perennial source of fresh water for over a billion people living in South Asia. Global warming has precipitated melting of snow in the Nepal Himalayas and about two dozen of our glacial lakes could outburst any time causing huge loss of lives and property. Moreover, we face extreme weather events, floods, soil degradation and desertification. Because of their fragility, mountain countries face special vulnerability to climate change. Countries like Nepal make least contribution to climate change yet we bear disproportionate impact. And it is the poor and vulnerable people among us who face its severe effects. We cannot wait for action forever. At the national level, we are pursuing afforestation programs, promoting use of alternative sources of energy as well as hydropower generation. There is an urgent need to make progress on climate negotiations through ambitious and comprehensive outcome in Cancun, Mexico later this year. The international community should agree on a new, predictable, transparent and substantially enhanced resource mobilization and a fast-track provision to ensure resources for mitigation, adaptation, transfer of technology, Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) Plus and capacity-building in the least developed countries. Priority must be given to them to withstand its sweeping impacts on their livelihoods.

Mr. President,

International responses to the special needs and concerns of LDCs have been of limited success. The implementation of the Brussels Program of Action has produced mixed results. LDCs' overall performance in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals stand well below their expectations despite some progress. It is primarily because we continue to face structural handicaps and constraints as well as critical resource gap in our development efforts.

Mutually reinforcing and exacerbating food, energy, economic and financial crises together with the adverse and disproportionate impacts of climate change have further worsened the

conditions of LDC. Limited economic activities, stagnant growth, infant stage of industrialization, heavy reliance on subsistence agriculture as the mainstay of national economy and lack of employment opportunities in other sectors have made the poor countries highly vulnerable to external shocks.

These challenges cannot be overcome without renewed and scaled-up global partnership for development. Fulfillment of all the ODA commitments in a predictable transparent, and accountable manner, enhanced provision of duty-free and quota free market access for all LDCs and early conclusion of Doha Round with an ambitious, balanced, equitable, and development oriented outcome and early harvest of the provisions meant for the LDCs will help generate economic growth through equitable trade. Enhanced debt relief measures, increased flow of foreign direct investment and transfer of technology and investment in building long-term productive capacity will be critically important to ensure resources for financing sustainable development in LDCs.

The United Nations will host the Fourth Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul next year. The Conference must aim at having an ambitious, comprehensive, forward-looking and result-oriented outcome. As the chair of the LDC coordinating bureau, I call upon the international community to make the Istanbul outcome a turning point in addressing the multidimensional challenges and constraints that LDCs are facing today. The success of the Conference will be measured by its contributions to make a difference in the conditions of the millions of poor in our countries.

Nepal is also a land locked country. Our development challenges are therefore further compounded by this reality which increases our cost of international trade substantially. Therefore specific supportive measures to improve infrastructure and trade facilitation in line with Almaty Program of Action for the LLDCs will be critical to promote their development needs.

Mr. President,

I would now briefly touch upon the political situation and the ongoing peace process in my country. Nepal is passing through arduous transition from a ten-year long conflict to sustainable peace and stability with a nationally driven peace process. From June 2006 when the peace process started, we have come a long way, with some ups and downs which is only natural for a complex peace process. Yet, our national determination remains strong and unwavering and we are fully committed to bringing the ongoing peace process to its meaningful conclusion by resolving all outstanding issues.

Looking over a longer term perspective, Nepal has achieved some remarkable progress since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord on 21 November 2006. The promulgation of the Interim Constitution, the election to the Constituent Assembly and subsequently the declaration of Nepal as a federal democratic republic stand as notable achievements.

The 601-member Constituent Assembly of Nepal stands today as one of the most inclusive assemblies, where women constitute one third of its total members. The Assembly has the

representation from different ethnic groups, backward regions, traditionally marginalized communities, among others.

Nepal's peace process, historic and unique as it is, is not only confined to the issue of signing of peace accord and elections to the Constituent Assembly. The next important task in the process is to write a new Constitution for the newly-born republic. This will consolidate gains made over the years in establishing people as the real sources of sovereignty and state authority and guaranteeing multi party democracy, human rights, federal structure and inclusive governance. Therefore it encompasses much broader agenda leading towards a historic transformation of Nepal's political, economic and social structure. People of Nepal are nurturing a hope for a better future which they rightfully deserve. Political transformation needs to be complemented by social transformation and economic prosperity. While ensuring political stability, we are making efforts to revive the economy with new and focused initiatives for the acceleration of economic activities, including through the celebration of Nepal tourism year in 2011. We hope that the visitors would enjoy our flora and fauna of Nepal including tourism to Lumbini in Nepal, the birthplace of Lord Buddha. For this as well as for reconstruction and acceleration of our economy, we look forward to ambitious recovery measures with support from the international community.

We have made some progress recently in addressing the core issue of integration and rehabilitation of the former Maoist combatants. In this context, I am pleased to inform this august Assembly that there has been an agreement between the Government and the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to complete the process within four months under the control and supervision of the Special Committee, formed on the basis of national consensus as per the Constitution. We anticipate the fulfillment of outstanding basic tasks of the peace process within coming four months with positive contributions of national stakeholders and goodwill and support of the international community. Earlier this year, we also achieved a remarkable success with the help of the United Nations in releasing the disqualified minors living in the cantonments based on the Action Plan signed on 16 December 2009.

The United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) has been involved in Nepal in support of Nepal's nationally driven peace process. We express our appreciation to the United Nations for its consistent support for Nepal's peace process.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, Nepal's commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter is total and unflinching. For us, the United Nations is the best expression of multilateralism. It has served the international community in the past, continues to work as a lynchpin of international relationship today and we have no doubt about its indispensability. But it needs to do more in this globalised world. Global problems require global solutions. That is possible only through multilateralism based on inclusiveness and equity. We look for an enhanced and coherent role of the United Nations in dealing with all global issues, but in particular those that affect the lives and livelihoods of the poor people around the world.

I thank you all.