

Nepal - Another bloodshed of peaceful demonstrators. It is now high time for the Security Council to Act !

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International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

Paris, April 20th 2006 - The International Federation for Human Rights expressed today its grave concern at the escalation of the repression against the pro-democracy demonstrations by the security forces in Nepal and sent a letter to the Security Council, supporting the call to immediately adopt sanctions against King Gyanendra, his senior officials and top army officers, until the repression is brought to a halt, and the authorities responsible for the grave violations of international human rights law be brought to justice.

« The repression is reaching an alarming standpoint. We have already witnessed executions last week, it only seems to escalate » said Sidiki Kaba, President of the FIDH. « All major UN officials have condemned the previous incidents, but they persist. It is now high time for the Security Council to react, or else I don't understand what they are here for ».

FIDH is particularly shocked at the shooting against peaceful demonstrators, leading to the death of at least three persons in demonstrations yesterday, according to international newswires. In addition to the deadly use of force, beatings of unarmed demonstrators were witnessed and documented by Human rights defenders present. Children, Women, lawyers, journalists and Human rights defenders would have been targetted and arrested. The United Nations human rights monitoring team was prevented from being deployed by the Nepalese government.

These executions follow previous similar bloodshed, leading to the killing of demonstrators or bystanders in Pokhara, Chitwan, Banepa and Parasi and the excessive use of force in Gongabu, as documented by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal.

These events are the latest escalation to a brutal repression that has been witnessed over the past weeks. Several hundreds of peaceful demonstrators were arrested and are arbitrarily detained for participating in non-violent demonstrations, in violation of the rights to freedom of expression and of assembly.

In a report published two days ago, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal documented serious breaches of international Humanitarian law and grave violations of human rights law between January and March this year, following the discontinuation of the cease fire by the Communist Party of Nepal.

These serious violations include attacks by the armed forces in civilian areas and the use of civilian houses and schools as shields, indiscriminate aerial bombing and shooting by the Royal Nepalese Army, use of improvised explosive devices by the Communist Party of Nepal, abductions of civilians by the Communist Party of Nepal during or in the aftermath of clashes, damage and destruction of public buildings, allegations of deliberate killing of members of the security forces in non-combat

situations, use of children.

Yesterday's events were condemned by five UN human rights procedures. They occurred following a multiplication of condemnations and calls for peace, including by UN secretary General Kofi Annan, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour, UNESCO Director General Koïchiro Matsuura.

The Nepalese Government should stop immediately this brutal repression, and guarantee fundamental human rights for all, including the rights to life; to physical and psychological integrity; to not be arbitrarily deprived of one's liberty; and to freedoms of opinion, expression, association, and assembly.

The Nepalese government and the Communist Party of Nepal are today urged to respect international humanitarian law and human rights law.