**Universal Periodical Review of the** **Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal**

**4 November 2015**

**Intervention by the delegation of Estonia**

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of **the** **Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal** to the UPR’s 23rd session. We thank Nepal for their work in preparing the report and also for the additional information provided in the opening speech.

Estonia acknowledges the important steps Nepal has taken in the country’s democratization process. We congratulate the Government of Nepal and all parties for the adoption of Nepal's new Constitution which should lay the foundation for Nepal’s future political stability and economic development. In light of protests that began in the final weeks of Nepal’s protracted constitution drafting process, we would like to call on all parties to discuss the outstanding concerns of Nepalese citizens in an atmosphere of dialogue and compromise.

Estonia is concerned about reports that journalists and human rights defenders were subjected to physical attacks, death threats, harassment and reprisals by security forces, police, armed groups and youth wings of political parties.

We are also concerned that despite some steps taken the issue of violence against women and children, including sexual violence and abuse, is a burning problem. With this regard Estonia also notes with regret that women and girls, particularly those of Dalit origin, still suffer from harmful traditional practices. We call on Nepalese authorities to investigate cases involving such practices and to punish those responsible, provide protection and rehabilitation to victims and expedite the adoption of the bill to criminalize harmful practices.

Estonia would like to make the following **recommendations**:

- to establish a special mechanism responsible for independent child rights monitoring;

- to ensure the right to freedom of expression online/offline in law and in practice, including by decriminalizing defamation, and to investigate all cases of threats and attacks against journalists and human rights defenders;

- to ensure that the **right to freedom of assembly** and association is protected and remove all restrictions placed on the right to peaceful protest;

- to ratify the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court** **(ICC)** and incorporate its provisions into national legislation; and to accede to the **Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Court** (**APIC**).

Finally, Estonia fully supports the Government and the people of Nepal in the reconstruction of the country following the devastating earthquakes in April and May of this year and commends the relief efforts of the Government of Nepal that were carried out in a non-discriminative manner.

We would like to wish the delegation of Nepal a successful review meeting.

Thank you!