



## Nepal's leaders must move peace process forward, says UN political chief

12 March 2010 –Now is the time for Nepal's leaders to move the stalled peace process, which ended a bloody decade-long civil war, forward, the top United Nations political official said today, voicing optimism that a solution will be reached.

A peace accord in 2006 ended the fighting between the Government and the Maoists. After conducting Constituent Assembly elections in May 2008, Nepal abolished its 240-year-old monarchy and declared itself a republic.

But the peace process remains largely stalled, threatened by tensions and mistrust between Maoists, the Government and the army.

"All of us understand that this is a Nepali process," B. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, said today at the end of his three-day visit to the country, voicing the UN's support for peace efforts.

"It seems to me that after talking with [a] very wide range of people that there is strong hope and strong understanding of what needs to be done to get there, to settle the peace issues," he stressed.

"Nepal's leaders understand exactly what has to be done and now is the time to move it forward," he told reporters at the airport in the capital, Kathmandu. "They need to do it."

The two outstanding areas, the official pointed out, are the integration and rehabilitation of former Maoist fighters and the drafting of the constitution, scheduled to be promulgated by 28 May.

Acknowledging that it will not be easy, he said that "it's now important that there is [a] sufficient amount of will and [a] sufficient amount of energy that's put into it and the compromise to reach the decisions that need to be reached."

In an [address](#) yesterday to the Nepal Institute for Policy Studies in Kathmandu, Mr. Pascoe underscored that the UN is "privileged" to be a part of the peace process in Nepal, which in turn has made "remarkable contributions" to the Organization's peacekeeping missions around the world.

He stressed the impartiality of the UN Mission in Nepal ([UNMIN](#)) and pointed out that in spite of the UN's vast experience in dozens of conflicts, its "footprint" in the nation is purposely light, at the Asian nation's request.

"In the face of this situation, we are dismayed that some commentators try to hold the Mission responsible for situations and shortcomings that by the very insistence of the parties themselves, the mission has little or no capacity to control," Mr. Pascoe said. "This is absurd and should come to an end."

He underlined that "UNMIN is here to help. It should not take the blame for those who fail to shoulder their responsibilities to make the peace process work."

UNMIN was set up at the request of the Government in 2007 to support the peace process, as well as to monitor the management of arms and armed personnel of the former Royal Nepal Army and the Maoists. Its current mandate runs until 15 May.

During this visit, Mr. Pascoe held talks with Nepali Congress President Girija Prasad Koirala and other congressional leaders, as well as with Pushpa Kamal Dahal, chairman of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), and Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal.

He visited a Maoist cantonment in Chitwan, central Nepal, where he saw first-hand the work of UNMIN arms monitors and met with the camp's leaders.

Today, he met with Defence Minister Bidya Devi Bhandari, Foreign Minister Sujata Koirala and the Chief of Army Staff.

Upon his return to New York, Mr. Pascoe will brief the Security Council on the state of Nepal's peace process.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=34065&Cr=nepal&Cr1=#>