



Peace and a New Constitution Matters for Every Nepali

Seminar with Bishnu Raj Upreti, Executive Director of the Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR)

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Time: 24 November 2014 13:00-15:00
Place: PRIO, Hausmanns gate 7, Oslo
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Nepal's peace and constitution-making processes are inherently interconnected. The success of Nepal's peace process is largely determined by the promulgation of public ownership of the new constitution. Many potential benefits of the peace process have to be institutionalised, such as the creation of a federal republic, measures to enhance social inclusion, restructuring of the bureaucracy, and security sector reform. The success or failure of the process is determined by a range of factors including feelings of insecurity on the part of key political decision-makers, the extreme positions (far right and far left) and vested interests of major political parties, the covert play of regressive forces, the emergence of resistance and counter-forces within political parties to prevent change, external interests, and the deviation of political leaders from their commitment to implement provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (such as security sector reform, land reform, transitional justice, federalisation, and the inclusion of women, *dalits* and other socially excluded groups into the mainstream). Far left political forces like the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) are now rejecting the constitution-making of the Constituent Assembly (CA), and demanding to dissolve the CA and let an all-party-conference make the new constitution. Extreme opinions are gradually expanding, such as the demand for reinstating monarchy and reverting to a Hindu Kingdom. The making of a new nationally-owned constitution is extremely complicated, and requires the concerted efforts of signatories of the CPA and the progressive political forces of Nepal. However, everyday reality is marked by increasing ethnic radicalism, social militarism, criminalisation of politics and politicisation of crime.

Speaker's bio: **Bishnu Raj Upreti**

Bishnu Raj Upreti holds a PhD in Conflict Management from the Netherlands (1998-2000) and a Postdoc (2001-2003) from the United Kingdom. He is currently working as Executive Director of the Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR), and Team Leader of research programmes on Sustainable Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC), and Making Women Count for Peace: Gender Empowerment and Conflict in South Asia, both multi-country research initiatives. Dr. Upreti is a senior researcher of conflict management, peace, state-building and unconventional security (water, food, health, environment and political security issues). He has written and/or co-edited 40 books on conflict, peace, state-building and security, and his work is frequently published in peer-reviewed international journals and anthologies. Besides research, he teaches conflict studies courses and supervises PhD and masters students at the School of Arts and School of Management of Kathmandu University. He is also engaged in Nepal's peace process with policy-makers, politicians and the media (nationally and internationally). Dr. Upreti is a Member of the Board of Trustees of the International Foundation for Science (2014-2017) and a Member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for Unconventional Security Affairs, University of California, Irvine (2009 to date). His corresponding e-mail address is: bupreti@nccr.wlink.com.np