ICAPP Workshop on Human Trafficking
(Kathmandu, Nepal, January 16-18, 2014)

Kathmandu Statement on Human Trafficking

We, the leaders and representatives of twenty political parties of Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, and Turkey participated in the ICAPP Workshop on Human Trafficking which was convened in Kathmandu from January 16th to 18th, 2014. The workshop was also attended by representatives of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal and twelve international, national and non-governmental organizations which have keen interest in the issues relating to human trafficking as observers.

During the workshop, we extensively shared our experiences in, and exchanged our views on, preventing human trafficking in our region, in particular illegal and inhumane transactions of women and children across the national boundaries.

First of all, we declared that human trafficking is a major crime against humanity of such magnitude and atrocity that it cannot be dealt with successfully by any government alone, thus requires a region-wide and multi-stakeholder strategy that builds on national efforts, and recognized the urgent need for the coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to deliver a comprehensive and balanced resolution to this trans-border challenge.

To promote such efforts, we laid out three major objectives as the framework of our discussion: raising public awareness on seriousness and urgency; mapping trans-border networks of cooperation; and establishing fast-track punishment system.

We confirmed our commitment to the major international initiatives, such as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children 2000, otherwise known as Palermo Protocols, and the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which mandated the U.N. Member States, international organizations and civil society groups to take coordinated action to "*prevent and combat* trafficking in persons; *protect and assist* the victims of such trafficking, with full respect for their human rights; *prosecute* trafficking of persons cases and uphold justice for its victims; and *promote* cooperation among States Parties and other stakeholders."

We also recognized the need for all stakeholders to establish organic cooperation mechanisms with other international and regional institutions, such as the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT), and the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

In particular, we endorsed the principle of humanitarian imperative and rights-based approach at all stages of combating trafficking. We agreed that it is of utmost importance to mobilize efforts of all stakeholders, both state and non-state actors, to eradicate human trafficking by reducing both the vulnerability of potential victims and the demand for exploitation in all its forms, ensuring adequate protection and support to those who fall victim, and supporting the

efficient prosecution of the criminals involved, while respecting the fundamental human rights of all persons.

We also encouraged all governments in the region to bring their national legal frameworks into conformance with, and actively participate in, these international institutions and initiatives, not only to correctly identify victims of trafficking and provide immediate and necessary help and protection, but also target the exhaustive range of traffickers and profiteers to eradicate such insidious criminal act and uphold justice.

We agreed to continue our deliberations on the following issues, among others, within the framework of the ICAPP Women's Wing in order to create synergies among all stakeholders in fighting against human trafficking:
- improvement of baseline information by collecting and sharing data on patterns and flows of human trafficking;
- development of efficient and cost-effective tools to prevent human trafficking;
- provision of equal access to, and elimination of gender discrimination in, the labor market;
- exchange of best practices, and lessons learned at international, regional, national, and local levels;
- promotion of effective rights-based responses and partnerships for joint action among state and non-state stakeholders;
- promotion of legal migration to contribute to the development of origin and destination countries; and
- coordination of efforts to enact anti-human trafficking provisions in our respective national criminal codes and impose stringent punitive measures

Finally, we expressed our gratitude to the five leading political parties in Nepal, i.e. Nepali Congress Party, Communist Party of Nepal (UML), Unified Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN-Maoist), *Madhesi* People's Rights Forum-Nepal and Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-Maoist) for co-hosting the workshop. We also thanked H.E. Prime Minister Khil Raj Regmi, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal for providing strong support for this initiative and their warm hospitality during our stay in Nepal. In addition, our special thanks go to the *Girija Prasad Koirala* Foundation of Nepal, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (*TIKA*) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) for co-sponsoring this historic event.

Adopted in Kathmandu, Nepal on the 18th of January, 2014