



JOAN B. KROC  
INSTITUTE FOR  
PEACE & JUSTICE  
UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

## **“Securing Peace: Transition and Reform in Nepal”**

**IPJ Nepal Project  
April 26 – May 3, 2009  
Executive Summary**

## Executive Summary

From April 26 – May 3, 2009, the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ) held a series of programs and meetings with key leaders across the political, civil, and security sectors in Nepal. The purpose of the visit was to conduct an assessment of security priorities, and to host two participatory seminars bringing together actors from diverse sectors. The stated goals of the trip were to 1) advance academic understanding of the complex political and security dynamics surrounding the political administration; 2) facilitate a deeper dialogue between and among key actors and power brokers in the Nepal security sector; and 3) demonstrate IPJ's capacity to model and promote civilian-military cooperation to address complex international security challenges.

This program grew out of roundtable discussions held by IPJ in 2008 between Nepali civil society, political parties, and security sector actors. At that time, participants asked for the space and tools to address tough issues of army integration, the restructuring of security forces, and general security sector reform. In line with these requests, IPJ invited Conflict Management Partners (CMP)\* to join in developing the program presented in Spring 2009. IPJ led a team of facilitators (practitioners and academics)\*\*, which included a USD Marine Officer NROTC Instructor, two internationally recognized Nepali NGOs, and conflict resolution specialists. The team of experts and the makeup of the seminar participants reflected and modeled diverse engagement of defense, diplomatic, and development sectors.

### Seminars:

#### **April 27-28, Kathmandu, Nepal**

#### **“Managing Security Differences: Advancing Difficult Security Issue Conversations”**

This seminar had 30 participants representing the security sector (including retired Brigadier Army Generals, People's Liberation Army (PLA) members, and police), political parties (including Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist, Nepali Congress, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum/ Terai Madhesh Democratic Party, and Nepal Workers and Peasant Party), and civil society (NGOs, journalists, and business leaders). This “whole community” participation illustrated how a more robust and engaged civil society can identify and promote common interests even when their daily practical roles are quite different. Focusing on conflict prevention, transformation, and peacebuilding, the seminar provided tools and experience in negotiation to advance the skills and understanding of how to move difficult army integration, rehabilitation, and security reform conversations forward in Nepal.

Since the issue of integration of former combatants and the role of the national army was front page news during our time in Nepal, there was a great deal of interest in the materials and experiences offered by the team. One retired army general now working with Maoists noted that he could “use these tools to provide structure for our conversations,” and he added that it would be important to “bring top leaders and decision makers into such training to enrich them and give them practice” in negotiations. One of the political participants added that it was important to hear the opinions of the “non-political stakeholders” in order to help advance this discussion.

### **April 29-30, Pokhara, Nepal:**

#### **“Security and Peace Conversations: Engaging the Whole Community”**

This participatory seminar had a slightly different mix than the seminar held in Kathmandu. Among the 32 participants, the security sector representatives at this seminar were primarily from the police and armed police force rather than from the army. The seminar did include PLA members, but there were no personnel present from the Nepal Army. While the format of the training was similar to the Kathmandu seminar and focused on negotiation skills, the backdrop theme of this seminar focused on Community Oriented Policing (COP), since a historic challenge in many districts is distrust of police. Presentations by Major Ruedi and other members of the team provided factual international experiences with COP. A simulation presented during the training served to connect the COP concept with a Nepali specific scenario, and participants previously only accusatory toward one another did establish trust. Collaboration among community members, political leaders, the police and security, and the former PLA combatants brought very positive comments and requests for more programs. Evaluations following the program indicate that while 100% of the participants found the program relevant and the process of negotiation helpful, there was a desire for even more sectors (Nepal Army, women, youth, Dalits, Madhesis) to take part in the same training experience.

#### **Additional Activities**

Following the two major seminars, team members facilitated a dialogue on human security with 30 high school students in coordination with Today’s Youth Asia. The goals of the session were to explore how the youth experienced security and security challenges in their daily lives, distinguish between national and human security models, and introduce the whole community approach to promoting their concept of daily security. Throughout the visit, team members also held interviews regarding the implementation of the peace process and challenges ahead. Team members met with several Constituent Assembly and Central Committee members from the following political parties: Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist; Nepali Congress; Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist; Nepal Workers and Peasant Party; and representatives from the Madhesi community

#### **Future Opportunities**

Overall, the program met the many of its initial goals. Despite the recent setbacks due to political power struggles, there is still a strong desire within and across parties and societal sectors for additional training in the future. The IPJ team received further invitations to work with the ministries and parties and the next step will be to secure funding to continue to assist as requested in Nepal.

\* Conflict Management Partners (CMP) works globally in facilitating and supporting multi-party negotiations in private sectors and in various significant conflict environments.

\*\*The team of facilitators included the following: Dee Aker, Ph.D., IPJ Interim Director and Nepal Project Director; Chris Groth, IPJ Graduate Intern (USD International Relations MA 06); Gardner Heaton, Senior Consultant, CMP; Eric Henry, Founder and Managing Partner, CMP; Major Jason Ruedi, Marine Officer Instructor, USD Department of NROTC; Shobha Shrestha, Program Officer, Peace and Governance Foundation, South Asia Partnerships-Nepal (USD P&J MA 08); Upendra Malla Tara, Founder and Director of Manabiya Srot Bikas Kendra Nepal (MSBK), Pokhara, Nepal; Laura Taylor, doctoral student in peace studies, University of Notre Dame, and former IPJ Senior Program Officer, Nepal Project (USD P&J MA 05).