

Press note on
Asian Alliance Against Torture and Ill-treatment (A3T)

Kathmandu, Nepal

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Advocacy Forum - Nepal takes the opportunity to launch a regional level initiative of organizations working throughout Asia on prevention and accountability of torture and ill-treatment. The *Asia Alliance against Torture (A3T)* aims to mitigate and eliminate impunity against torture in Asia, including Nepal.

During the last 4 years, meetings and discussions between a group of leading human rights defenders, lawyers, and organizations from Asian countries, revealed the need for a common platform in Asia to address deep rooted problems and challenges in prevention and accountability for torture and ill-treatment in the region, and to find ways to address them by sharing experiences, knowledge and expertise. The *Asia Alliance Against Torture* is a collaborative movement to build and connect a community of human rights lawyers against torture in the region and foster the sharing of advocacy strategies and experience to make countries in Asia free from torture.

A close examination of the situation in the countries in the region reveal similarities in the environment in which torture thrives and the challenges that human rights defenders and lawyers face in bringing litigation either due to lack of local legislation, which criminalizes torture, or lack of implementation of existing law and international treaties. There are also similarities in threats and harassment that defenders face in going against powerful actors that commit torture in the region. However, despite the hurdles, there is a rich experience of human rights advocacy and litigation in the region, which provides opportunities for one country to learn from the strategies and tools used in the other and build regional jurisprudence and cooperation.

Advocacy Forum - Nepal, a proud member of the *Asia Alliance Against Torture*, has been working in Nepal on torture prevention for over a decade now and leads efforts to foster collaboration within and outside the country in preventing torture and ill treatment in Nepal. A regional level event that Advocacy Forum hosted in Kathmandu on strategic litigation brought together more than 30 lawyers and human rights defenders engaged in strategic litigation from the region to discuss impacts of strategic litigation, common challenges and experiences. The workshop also discussed different approaches, challenges and ways to mitigate them.

For more information visit: www.advocacyforum.org, Alliance : www.antitortureasia.org

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