

## **Press Statement**

### **Position of Human Rights Organizations Working in the Field of Transitional Justice: A Process That Has Lost Victims' Trust, Confidence and Legitimacy Cannot Deliver Transitional Justice**

**Kathmandu, 4 June 2025**

Due to the lack of a proper consultation with civil society organizations, transitional justice process in Nepal faces a serious legitimacy crisis. The recent appointment of the officials for the two transitional justice commissions has, in general, failed to establish credibility. It is our considered position that the way the officials have been appointed cannot advance this complex and sensitive process in a just and trustworthy manner.

We also unequivocally make it clear that ignoring, dismissing, or showing persistent intolerance toward the legitimate concerns raised by victims since even long before the appointments were made and attempting to create and exploit divisions among them is yet another attempt to continue derailing the transitional justice process.

This process can move forward only if it earns the trust of the victims' community. Otherwise, public confidence in the state will further erode, and debates around transitional justice will shift elsewhere—potentially toward models such as a Citizens' Truth Commission or hybrid model transitional justice mechanism. We urge all responsible stakeholders to be mindful of this risk.

The sudden publication of a notice to collect complaints—without any regard for the sensitivity of victims of rape and sexual violence, their psychosocial condition, socioeconomic barriers, privacy, and dignity—and the failure to respond sensitively even after serious concerns were raised about this by the victims and rights holders' groups, disrespectful statements by Commission officials attacking the self-esteem and dignity of the victims, and the absence of any attempt to restore meaningful consultation with victims all the while strategically pushing for a mechanical approach – all of the above together send a clear message that commissions formed without credible appointments cannot earn legitimacy, nor can they be effective or meaningful. Instead, they will only be the repetition of the past blunders with the wastage of the country's precious resources and time.

We therefore strongly urge the Government of Nepal to immediately take the necessary initiative to engage in dialogue, consultation, and deliberation with the victims' communities who have repeatedly expressed their disagreement with the way appointments were made, in order to identify an appropriate solution and restore the legitimacy of the transitional justice process.

We also urge the international community and the United Nations not to provide any financial or technical assistance, as in the past, to the government and/or the TJ commissions that have lost legitimacy until and unless the government reverts the process back to the right track from the very point where an environment of lack of trust and confidence with the victims arose, and as long as there is no guarantee of putting the victim communities, their self-esteem, participation, ownership and satisfaction at the heart of the process.

## **Signatories:**

1. Accountability Watch Committee (AWC)
2. Advocacy Forum-Nepal (AF)
3. Amnesty International Nepal
4. Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP)
5. Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD)
6. Forum of Women Journalists and Communicators (Sancharika Samuha)
7. Himalayan Human Rights Monitors- HimRights
8. Human Rights for Justice
9. Human Rights Organizations Nepal (HURON)
10. Human Rights and Justice Centre (HRJC)
11. Justice and Rights Institute Nepal (JuRI-Nepal)
12. Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)
13. Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre Nepal (LACC)
14. Law and Policy Forum for Social Justice (LAPSOJ)
15. Nagarik Aawaz (NA)
16. National Alliance of Women Human Right Defenders
17. Nepal Forum for Restorative Justice
18. Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative
19. Sankalpa
20. Tarangini Foundation
21. The Story Kitchen
22. Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Nepal (TPO)
23. Voices of Women Media (VOW Media)
24. Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)