

Tenth Chief Justices' Conference of SAARC Countries
Nepal, 5-6 March 2016, Kathmandu, Nepal

Press Release

At the invitation of Rt. Hon'ble Chief Justice of Nepal Mr. Kalyan Shrestha, Hon'ble Chief Justice of Bangladesh Mr. Surendra Kumar Sinha, Hon'ble Chief Justice of Bhutan Mr. Tshering Wangchuk, Hon'ble Chief Justice of India Mr. T. S. Thakur, Hon'ble Justice Ezaj Afzal Khan representing Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, and Hon'ble Chief Justice of Sri Lanka Mr. K. Sripavan, attended the Tenth Chief Justices' Conference of SAARC countries held on 5-6 March 2016 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The Conference was inaugurated jointly with the 13th SAARC LAW Conference by Rt. Hon'ble President of Nepal Ms. Bidhya Devi Bhandari on 5 March 2016.

The Conference had extensive deliberations on various issues of common concern and judicial cooperation, including, the role of the judiciary in promoting constitutional culture in South Asia; internal and external challenges of judicial independence; promotion of access to justice; review of development initiatives from human rights perspectives; and possible role of judiciary in connecting SAARC through justice in good governance and development.

Consequent to the deliberations on these issues, the Conference adopted a Declaration, resolving and undertaking to, inter alia, take initiatives to disseminate judgments on human rights, public interest litigation, environment and commercial law through the website of the SAARCLAW, along with an alert system while uploading new judgments, publish periodic SAARC Law Reports containing landmark judgments and decisions of the apex courts of the SAARC countries, foster regional cooperation for the establishment of a SAARCLAW Arbitration Centre in Nepal, make further use of national judicial academies for mutual exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences of judges, judicial officials and law practitioners in the Region, through training and exchange of visits, share the best practices in court management among the judiciaries in the Region, further cooperate with the relevant

stakeholders including civil society in order to enhance access to justice for all, and urge the respective governments to provide to the judiciary adequate resources for strengthening its institutional capacity.

The Conference expressed sincere thanks to Rt. Hon'ble President of Nepal Ms. Bidhya Devi Bhandari for the gracious inauguration of the Conference, and to Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. K. P. Sharma Oli for his thoughtful and inspirational inaugural speech. The Conference also commended the excellent arrangements by the Government of Nepal and the Supreme Court of Nepal.

The Hon'ble Chief Justices of the SAARC countries attending the Conference expressed their sincere thanks to the Rt. Hon'ble Chief Justice of Nepal Mr. Kalyan Shrestha for his wisdom and able leadership in steering the Conference.

With the closing remarks, Rt. Hon'ble Chief Justice of Nepal Mr. Kalyan Shrestha extended sincere thanks and appreciation to the Hon'ble Justices for their constructive deliberations, and for a firm commitment toward further institutionalization of the SAARC Chief Justices' Conference, contributing to deeper judicial cooperation for peace, freedom and justice in the Region.

6 March 2016

Kathmandu, Nepal