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1. This is indeed a distinct honor for me to be a part of this august inaugural session of the *Judicial Workshop on Cybercrimes and Electronic Evidence* for Nepali Judges and high-level officials, jointly organized by the National Judicial Academy, Nepal and Sri Lanka Judges Institute. We are greatly privileged and honored to have with us His Lordship Chief Justice Hon'ble Priyasath Dep and their Lordships Hon'ble Justices of Supreme Court and Justices of the Court of Appeals of Sri Lanka. This gives me immense pleasure to note the presence of Academic Coordinator from Sri Lanka Judges Institute, Experts from Sri Lanka CERT, and delegates from Council of Europe and European Union in this program.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of you to this historical and cultural city, Kathmandu.

2. This event marks a milestone in the discourse of Nepal's judiciary as the program of this type is taking place for the first time in Nepal with relatively novel dimensions like **cybercrime and electronic evidence** amidst judicial professional and learned speakers, participant judges and senior officials from Nepal and abroad.
3. The development of information and communication technology has brought all corners of the world to a single platform and has changed the world into a global village. This is why, we term this century the 'age of information technology'. This development is contributory to the bliss and pleasure of the humankind. It has also furnished ample amount of electronic evidences, which have been very instrumental in tracing crimes and criminals. However, the seamy side of information technology is that it has become a breeding space for various forms of cybercrimes.
4. Cybercrime is a huge and an overarching territory ranging from some sporadic individual crimes to organized network, crimes in any form of digital dimension, internet-based illegal activities, online fraud resulting in various crimes like money laundering, terrorism,

banking and socio-cultural offences. It has posed a big challenge to the entire world irrespective of economy and level of development of the country.

5. Nepal is not an exception when it comes to the threat of cybercrimes. The tremendous increase in the number of internet and computer users, and the fast growing changes in the information technology have brought about a revolution in Nepalese social-economic dynamics. It is, on the other hand, seen to have adversely affected the society through cybercrimes. Users of information and communication technology seem prone to violate the laws and rules related to the cybernetics. Moreover, the users of social networks are excessively increasing, which also have threatened to the laws related to the information technology.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. There were no specific laws in Nepal to deal with the issues of cybercrime until the enactment of Electronic Transactions Act, 2004, which to some extent addressed the issues. Mutual Legal Assistance Act, 2014 has also enabled us to examine the evidences upon the request of foreign states and to request the foreign states for the examination of evidences required for us.
7. Similarly, the case management and the online services related to the justice delivery in Nepali judiciary are progressing every year with new kinds of services and practices. Recently in 2017, we have launched Plan of Actions related to the reform of judiciary and among them the concept of '**Smart Justice System**' is related to the application of information and communication technology. We have been trying to launch the online registration of cases, testimony of witnesses through the videoconference, message alert system and other services. Last week, the Supreme Court of Nepal has launched its 'mobile app' for the service of court users. This way, Nepal is adopting electronic means in its judicial systems.
8. Cases related to the cybercrime and electronic evidences require technical and legal human resources. Legal officials may not be well informed and well skilled with the technical knowhow, and the technical experts may lack legal knowledge. To meet this gap, the workshop of this kind will obviously be contributory to enhance the skill and generate professional human resources. In this context, the training focused for imparting the

knowledge related to the methods, practices and laws on the cyber crimes and electronic evidences will be highly valuable for Nepali legal and judicial professionals. I am confident that the training will have productive and fruitful sessions, and Nepali judges and high level officials will immensely be benefitted from this program.

9. It gives me satisfaction to note that the bilateral collaboration of Nepali judiciary and Sri Lankan judiciary in exchanging experiences and knowledge is very effective in the novel issues like these. In this backdrop, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Sri Lanka Judges Institute and National Judicial Academy, Nepal for introducing this kind of collaboration for capacity development of the legal and judicial professionals. I strongly believe that the judiciary and correlated institutions of Nepal and Sri Lanka will have long lasting cooperation and coordination in future. Nepali judiciary is also pleased to extend cooperation with Council of Europe and European Union in the pertinent mutual issues related to law and justice in the days to come. I am of the belief that the program will be an impetus for the stakeholders of justice to sensitize with the national and international knowledge and experiences about cybercrime and electronic evidence.
10. Finally, as a Chair of the Governing Council of National Judicial Academy, I, once again take this privilege to express my sincere appreciations to their Lordships: Hon'ble Chief Justice Priyasath Dep, Justices from the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals of Sri Lanka, and all other distinguished academic and professional delegates from Sri Lanka and Europe for their valuable presence at this four-day-long training program.
11. I wish all dignitaries a pleasant stay in Kathmandu and the program a great success.

Thank you

17 August 2017

Kathmandu