

His Majesty's Government
Prime Minister's Office
Peace Talks Coordination Secretariat

Date: 29 July 2003

Subject: Third Round of Talks

The Coordinator
CPN (Maoist) Negotiating Team
Through: Facilitators.

Dear Sir,

With regard to the letter sent on behalf of CPN (Maoist) on 27 July, the viewpoint of His Majesty's Government (HMG) is as follows:

1. In view of the seriousness and sensitivity of the subject matter, HMG would like to draw the attention of the CPN (Maoist) again to the fact that it is appropriate to seek a solution to the problem through direct talks, not by means of the exchange of letters.

2. HMG has been implementing the agreements reached during the last two rounds of talks. Implementation of the decisions on making public the status of Maoist cadres and doing homework for annulling the Terrorist and Destructive Activities Control and Punishment Act has already begun. The government has already expressed its commitment to release the three central-level leaders from prison.

3. In easy and normal circumstances, army stays in barracks. But, during difficult and extraordinary circumstances, the idea of restricting, controlling and restraining the role and jurisdiction of the Royal Nepal Army, which is entrusted with the responsibility of national security, can never be in the interest of the country. Based on this principle and pursuant to the meaning and spirit of the code of conduct, we would like to reiterate the commitment of HMG not to mobilize army and undertake military action against the Maoists except for defence; not to let a situation of confrontation arise between the Royal Nepal Army and the rebel army; and to maintain process and means for effective monitoring for this purpose.

On this matter, HMG is ready to act in accordance with the understandings reached during the previous informal meetings, or also to implement any other alternatives to be agreed upon by mutual consent.

4. It is known to all that a statement has already been released by the Royal Palace stating that the executive power is vested in the Council of Ministers in accordance with Article 35 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal.

5. The Royal Nepal Army is an integral part of the state. The army operates under the policy and directives of HMG in accordance with the Constitution. The Royal Nepal Army has been honestly observing the cease-fire and the code of conduct, and will continue to do so. The army is always committed to the implementation of the decisions made during the talks. Such commitment is expected from the rebel army side as well.

6. The counter-terrorism agreement between HMG and the United States of America is a part of the global campaign against terrorism. The USA has concluded such agreements with many countries in the world including India. Nepal has signed regional and international conventions against terrorism and has been extending full support to global campaign against terrorism. Against this background, it is quite natural for Nepal to sign such an agreement with the USA as well. There is no reason for non-terrorist groups or persons to be apprehensive about the agreement.

The relations of the Royal Nepal Army concerning training and joint exercises are not limited to any single country. Royal Nepal Army officers and cadets have been receiving training in countries such as India, UK, USA, China, France, Germany, Israel, Malaysia, etc. Similarly, military personnel from various countries receive training in Nepal. The Royal Nepal Army has been participating also in joint exercises with the army of various countries. The Royal Nepal Army and the US Army, too, have been exchanging such trainings and exercises.

In addition to various countries in the world, the USA has been conducting such joint exercises also with the military forces of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in South Asia. There is no presence of foreign military in Nepal except those visiting temporarily in connection with training and joint exercise. At present, there are no military experts and advisors of any other country in Nepal.

7. As the Maoist side had presented its political agenda during the meeting in the past, HMG, too, will present its political agenda on the table during the forthcoming round of talks itself.

There is no alternative to giving continuity to the peaceful dialogue in order not to let the chain of violence, murder and terror resume, as desired by the general public. It is the firm belief of HMG that solution to various demands and conditions, currently raised and those that can be raised in the future by the Maoist side, can be sought through dialogue. Therefore, HMG urges the CPN (Maoist) to participate in the third round of talks within the month of Shrawan 2060 (i.e. within 16 August 2003), as proposed earlier by HMG, without any further delay. If the situation deteriorates despite the persistent commitment and tireless efforts of HMG to give continuity to talks, the responsibility for that shall obviously lie with the Maoist side.

Thank You.

Kamal Thapa
Spokesman and Member
Negotiating Team, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

1. HMG firmly believes that a solution to the Maoist problem can and should be sought by means of peaceful dialogue. HMG has been making all its efforts to prepare a conducive atmosphere for talks. In this connection, HMG has released today three Maoist leaders, namely Ravindra Shrestha, Bam Dev Chhetri and Muma Ram Sharma, pursuant to its commitment to preparing a credible environment for talks and implementing the decisions made in the past. Similarly, Maoist activist Gyanendra Tripathi alias Sanjaya Sharma has also been released today. Ravindra Shrestha, Bam Dev Chhetri and Gyanendra Tripathi have been released from various prisons in Kathmandu in witness of the facilitators of the Government-Maoist Peace Talks, and Muma Ram Sharma has been released in witness of local human rights activists and journalists in Gorkha. Prior to this, the government has, following the cease-fire, set a total of 1513 Maoist prisoners free at various districts in connection with releasing prisoners.
2. Similarly, towards implementing the decisions made during the talks held in the past, the government has been doing necessary study and investigation to make the status of the Maoist cadres public. In the first phase, the government has today made public the status of 36 Maoist cadres after necessary study and investigation. A list of those cadres is attached herewith.