



**For Immediate Release
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Open Letter from Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter to the People of Nepal

I have followed closely Nepal's progress over the last several years, and I commend you for your continued dedication to sustainable peace and inclusive democracy.

Based on reports from Carter Center observers throughout Nepal, my colleagues and I are concerned by the current political deadlock and the slow progress in moving the peace process forward. However, I am encouraged by recent efforts to promote dialogue among political leaders, including the High Level Political Mechanism, and hope that these talks will get the process back on track. The government is to be complimented for its recently proposed Action Plan on the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist combatants, and I hope that the parties will be able to reach a political resolution on this issue soon. Finally, congratulations to the government, the UCPN(M), and the United Nations for the ongoing discharge of the disqualified Maoist combatants. I hope this will provide momentum for future positive action.

The May 28 deadline for the new constitution is rapidly approaching. I am glad to hear that the Constituent Assembly (CA) has made considerable progress and encourage Nepal's political leaders and all CA members to redouble their efforts to produce a democratic, inclusive, and broadly acceptable constitution by the deadline. At the same time, plans should be in place to ensure that the democratic process continues without interruption in order to prevent any kind of crisis on May 29.

I urge all of Nepal's political leaders to find a consensus that will allow the peace process and constitution drafting to move forward. All sides should refrain from provocative comments and actions, and should return to the principles of peace, democracy, justice, human rights, rule of law, and press freedom encapsulated in the guiding documents of Nepal's historic peace process. Continued delay may cause disillusionment among the Nepali people and could have a negative impact on Nepal's future.

I remain committed to supporting the people of Nepal as you continue along the path to sustainable peace and prosperity. Since 2005, we have seen Nepal's leaders make difficult decisions and compromises in the service of the greater principles of peace and democracy, and I am certain they will have the strength and courage to do so again at this critical time.

My thoughts and prayers are with you.