



May 1, 2026

Honorable Prime Minister Balendra Shah
Singhadurbar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Cc: Minister of Finance Hon. Swarnim Wagle; Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Shishir Khanal; Minister for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs Hon. Sobita Gautam; Minister of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens Hon. Sita Badi; Minister of Land Management, Cooperatives, and Poverty Alleviation Hon. Pratibha Rawal; Minister of Health and Population Hon. Nisha Mehta; Minister of Education, Science, and Technology Hon. Sasmit Pokharel

Re: Human Rights Recommendations for Your Government

Dear Honorable Prime Minister Balendra Shah,

We are writing to you as three international human rights organizations which have worked to advance human rights in Nepal for several decades. Your recent election victory, which comes with the strong support of Nepalis calling for a human rights and rule of law respecting and accountable government, presents an opportunity to bring crucial reforms. Your actions can profoundly improve the enjoyment of human rights of people in Nepal for years to come.

We welcome many of the commitments in your election manifesto that would strengthen human rights, including combatting gender and caste discrimination, preventing and combating corruption, strengthening civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, and completing the transitional justice process. If successfully implemented, these policies and others would be important steps forward.

As you have acknowledged, the challenges are formidable and public expectations are high.

The 2025 “Gen-Z” protest that paved the way for your victory included a call to end social and economic inequality driven by entrenched corruption and political patronage. The excessive and unlawful use of force against protesters in September 2025 is evidence of a callous disregard for human rights. We urge you to fulfill your manifesto commitment to ensure accountability for these violations.

Ending impunity is critical to protecting human rights and will also help combat corruption. Completing the transitional justice process in line with international legal obligations and as

directed by the Supreme Court is central to this. Thousands of victims and survivors from the 1996-2006 armed conflict have been waiting far too long for justice, truth and reparation. As long as those who are responsible for serious rights violations go unpunished, there is a greater risk that violations will be repeated.

There are many other pressing human rights priorities, including those related to economic justice. You are assuming office at a time when there are great challenges to the international human rights architecture. For instance, the current crisis in the Middle East has exacerbated the threat to the enjoyment of economic and social rights of people in Nepal and around the world. Millions of Nepali workers abroad, who send home vital remittances, face threats to their incomes, wellbeing, and even their lives. We call upon your government to take an active role in promoting human rights globally, by speaking out and working with others to build international partnerships.

Please find enclosed recommendations that we consider would help to enhance the human rights of everyone in Nepal. In some areas legislative reform is needed, while in other fields Nepal already has legislation which – if implemented effectively – would significantly improve the human rights situation.

We look forward to a close partnership with your government to support these efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine Pearson, Asia director at Human Rights Watch

Mandira Sharma, director for the Asia and Pacific program at the International Commission of Jurists.

Smriti Singh, South Asia director at Amnesty International

Key Human Rights Concerns and Recommendations

Transitional Justice

We welcome your manifesto commitment to complete the transitional justice process for human rights violations and abuses amounting to crimes under international law committed during the conflict from 1996 to 2006 that resulted in tens of thousands of casualties.

The delivery on commitments for justice, truth, and reparation for victims and survivors, promised in the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, has been hampered for 20 years by political interference aimed at shielding alleged perpetrators. Your government should restart the stalled process and ensure that independent and effective procedures and mechanisms can become operative and effective.

The amendment of transitional justice legislation that was adopted in 2024 – despite shortcomings that should eventually be remedied through amendment – could, if implemented in line with international law and standards, provide a basis for a measure of accountability. The process was stalled in 2025 following the controversial appointment of commissioners who were widely rejected by victims' groups as lacking qualifications or political independence. With two prior failed attempts at transitional justice processes, it is now essential to show Nepal's willingness and ability, with international support, to adequately deal with the past and ensure accountability for grave violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. To ensure a credible and successful process, your government should address victims' legitimate concerns and ensure their genuine participation and valuable contributions.

We urge your government to:

- Act to advance the Amendment of the Enforced Disappearances Enquiry, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act to ensure that all conduct amounting to crimes under international law, including summary and arbitrary killings, enforced disappearances, torture, and other cruel or inhuman treatment including sexual violence, and war crimes and crimes against humanity, are brought to the jurisdiction of the Special Court and are not subject to amnesties;
- Ensure that the law fully reflects international human rights law and standards, including by removing the word “serious” from the definition of sexual violence and recognizing a broader range of acts of sexual violence as crimes under the law;
- Start a genuine dialogue with conflict victims including sexual and gender-based violence survivors, and civil society organizations, to chart a way forward that is acceptable to victims and survivors, including in relation to the process for the appointment of the commissioners, which should be credible and transparent;
- Establish the Special Court without delay, ensuring that it is adequately resourced to properly address the complexities of serious criminal cases;

- Establish a dedicated unit within the Office of the Attorney General to handle the prosecution of cases before the Special Court, based on full, effective, and impartial criminal investigation of serious crimes;
- Ensure meaningful and inclusive participation of women and sexual violence survivors at all levels and stages of the transitional justice process;
- Through extensive consultations with victims and survivors, civil society, human rights law experts, and other concerned stakeholders, adopt a comprehensive reparation policy that addresses the specific needs of sexual and gender-based violence survivors and other conflict victims, including medical care, psychosocial support, legal aid, and livelihood assistance. Ensure confidentiality and security for survivors in all aspects of the justice process, supported by clear legal and institutional protections.

Widespread Impunity

Democracy and the rule of law in Nepal formed the basis of constitutional, legal, and political reforms in 1990 after a people’s movement, but respect for human rights has been repeatedly undermined since then by a deeply entrenched culture of impunity. The reports of numerous commissions established to investigate human rights violations have been effectively buried and no action taken on their recommendations. These include the Malik Commission report on lethal violence against protesters in 1990, the Rayamajhi Commission report on killings during the 2006 people’s movement, and the Lal Commission report on killings during Terai protests in 2015. The Karki Commission report on deadly violence during the 2025 Gen-Z protests is only in the public domain after being leaked to the media.

We welcome your manifesto commitment to implement recommendations from the Karki Commission report that would strengthen human rights and ensure accountability. It is vital that criminal investigations proceed without political or other external interference, fully respecting the right to a fair trial. To end the culture of impunity, we also urge you to publish all the official reports on past human rights violations and abuses, and develop a comprehensive plan to implement the recommendations, as well as recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission which have been ignored by previous governments to hold all those suspected of criminal responsibility for human rights violations and abuses to account in fair trials.

Frequently, victims or their families have been offered monetary “compensation”, but not proper reparation in line with international law and standards, yet no action was taken against alleged perpetrators, and there have been no reforms to institutions responsible for repeated abuses.

Torture and ill-treatment in police custody is widespread. A 2017 amendment to Nepal’s Penal Code made torture a crime in domestic law, yet there has been no successful prosecution for torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment to date. A six-month statute of limitation on filing complaints is a major obstacle to justice. Previous governments failed to comply with a

January 2020 Supreme Court order to establish an independent mechanism to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment by security forces.

We urge your government to:

- Implement the recommendations of the report of the Karki Commission on human rights violations committed during the Gen-Z protests, appropriately prosecute those against whom there is sufficient admissible evidence of criminal wrongdoing, and implement recommendations that would help safeguard human rights and prevent future violations;
- Publish all reports on previous human rights violations and abuses, including the Malik, Rayamajhi and Lal commission reports, and appropriately implement recommendations;
- Enforce the law criminalizing torture, including by establishing an independent authority to investigate torture allegations. Abolish the statute of limitations in torture cases;
- Ratify or accede to international human rights treaties to which Nepal is not yet a party, including, among others, the Optional Protocol of the Convention Against Torture, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, as well as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and the Ljubljana – The Hague Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation and Prosecution of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and other International Crimes;
- Endorse the international Safe Schools Declaration, which aligns with the 2011 decision of Nepal’s council of ministers declaring all schools as “zones of peace”;
- Empower the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in full accordance with the Paris Principles, and take steps to safeguard and enhance the commission’s independence, resources, and authority. Implement the recommendations of the NHRC particularly as regards pursuing criminal accountability for rights abuses and violations;
- Extend a standing invitation to United Nations special procedures mechanisms.

The Rights of Women and Girls

Publicized cases of sexual violence have frequently led to calls for justice, and pledges by the authorities to protect women and girls. However, widespread instances of violence against women and girls, including domestic abuse and marital rape, persist in Nepal. Rates of reporting have increased, but large numbers of assaults are still believed to go unreported. Among those still seeking justice are survivors of [sexual violence committed during Nepal’s civil war](#).

The statute of limitations for rape and other sexual violence was extended in 2022 to two years (or three years when the victim is a minor), but these time limitations remain a barrier to justice and foster impunity for rape. [Woman and girls with disabilities](#) often face even greater difficulty in accessing justice.

Women and girls also face unacceptable [threats, blackmail and harassment online](#), as well as harassment in workplaces, schools, and colleges, on public transport, and elsewhere. The police

and court system requires further training, resources, and official will to prevent and address these crimes and ensure effective investigations and justice.

Despite being illegal, [child marriage](#) remains widespread.

The 2018 Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Rights Act (SMRHR Act) recognizes access to safe and affordable abortion services as a fundamental human right. However, abortion remains a criminal offence under the Penal Code in some circumstances, and women continue to pursue unsafe procedures. Abortion should be removed as a criminal offence, in line with international standards.

Due to flawed citizenship laws and bureaucratic obstructions, [an estimated 6.7 million people](#) have been forced to live without officially recognized citizenship status and are [at risk of statelessness](#). The fourth amendment to the Nepal Citizenship Rules (2082) brought an important change in enabling the children of single mothers to have their citizenship recognized by translating existing legal rights into workable administrative procedures. The amendment clarifies that citizenship by descent can be processed on the basis of a mother's Nepali citizenship alone in cases where the father is absent. District officials should no longer reject applications solely because the father is unknown, untraceable, deceased, or undocumented. However, families in some other circumstances can still face a denial of their human rights.

We urge your government to:

- Initiate a legislative process with a view to ending the statute of limitations in rape cases and strengthen the police, prosecutor's office, and courts to ensure justice in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including through training, and disciplinary action against officers who decline to pursue criminal investigations and fail to follow procedure requiring confidential investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of gender and sexual violence cases;
- Act urgently to address online gender and sexual-based violence, including punishing blackmail, and removing images and videos used for blackmail from the internet. Any legislation against such cybercrimes should not undermine principles of freedom of expression and other fundamental freedoms;
- Establish systems to provide legal assistance and counseling to sexual violence survivors;
- Support community-based organizations, including women's groups, organizations of persons with disabilities, older people's associations, and youth groups through flexible and sustainable funding and training. Strengthen judicial training by ensuring that the National Judicial Academy develops, adopts, and implements rules and guidelines on access to justice for women including women with disabilities, following full consultations;
- Decriminalize abortion by removing it from the penal code, bringing it in line with other legislation that recognizes the right to reproductive health, including abortion services.

Increase awareness about the legal status and availability of safe abortion services, especially in rural areas;

- Bring comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that includes a clear definition of discrimination against women in line with Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and guarantee effective remedies and reparations for victims and survivors;
- Empower the National Women's Commission, including with a complaint mechanism;
- Move forward in fully implementing the national action plan to end child marriage, with the goal of ending all child marriage by 2030 as per the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Ratify ILO Convention 190 against violence and harassment in the workplace.

The Right to Education

Currently, the more than five-decade old Education Act 1971 remains the core legislation governing the administration of Nepal's education system, which has serious shortcomings that hinder the effective realization of the right to education. Many public schools are affected by poor and inadequate infrastructure, including unsafe or insufficient classrooms resulting in overcrowding, a lack of clean drinking water, and sanitation facilities. These deficiencies are further compounded by other deficiencies relating to the quality of education, particularly the lack of adequate teacher training, professional development, and institutional support, which is directly affecting learning outcomes. At the same time, the expansion of insufficiently regulated private educational institutions has undermined equal and non-discriminatory access to education for all children.

We urge your government to:

- Begin a process of legislative reform to ensure that the right to education is realized in practice and not merely guaranteed in principle. Ensure thorough consultations with stakeholders and experts;
- Make the School Education Bill a matter of priority, to be passed during the ongoing parliamentary session;
- The Bill should include enforceable provisions to address the major systemic barriers affecting the right to education. It should establish minimum standards for public school infrastructure, including safe and sufficient classrooms with maximum pupil to teacher ratios to prevent overcrowding, adequate sanitation, drinking water, quality learning materials, and child-friendly educational environments;
- The Bill should strengthen provisions relating to teacher preparation, professional development, and continuous training in order to improve the quality of education. It should provide for the effective regulation of private schools to prevent exploitative, discriminatory, and excessively commercial practices that undermine children's equal access to education;

- The Bill should ensure that education is delivered in a manner consistent with children’s right to free, quality, and equitable education;
- Guarantee free pre-primary education (beginning with just one year) and free secondary education for all.

The Right to Health

Nepal’s right to health remains affected by inadequate public health infrastructure, weak preparedness for pandemics, unequal access to services, insufficient regulation of private healthcare providers, and poor implementation of legal and judicial obligations. Non-compliance with Supreme Court orders including directives to revise mental health laws in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopt a human rights-based approach to involuntary treatment, revise discriminatory provisions, and establish mechanisms for legal capacity, assisted decision-making, and supportive protection, as well as explicitly prepare for possible future pandemics, has significantly weakened the effective protection of health rights.

We urge your government to:

- Strengthen public health infrastructure and services, including essential medicines, hospital beds, ICU care, and accessible mental health support;
- Regulate and monitor private health institutions to prevent overcharging, denial of treatment, and discrimination, ensuring equitable access for all;
- Fully implement Supreme Court judgments and directives, including those on free treatment, emergency preparedness, health service delivery, and revision of all mental health laws in compliance with the CRPD, to ensure the right to health is realized in practice.

The Right to Social Security

Around 40 percent of Nepal’s population is under 18, but children receive only around 4 percent of the government’s social security budget. In 2009-10, Nepal introduced a Child Grant program to support families in selected districts, with plans to extend it as a universal program nationwide. However, despite the policy’s success in improving children’s welfare and its popularity where it is available, and evidence that it strengthens the realization of economic and social rights, this policy was not extended in recent budgets. The program currently provides monthly payments of Rs. 532 to families with children under the age of five in 25 out of Nepal’s 77 districts, and all Dalit children under five across the country.

We urge your government to:

- Take concrete steps to extend the Child Grant ultimately to all districts, and increase the monthly payment, with the goal of providing an adequate monthly amount to all Nepali families with children;
- Take continuous and progressive steps to ensure the achievement of universal and comprehensive social protection coverage that allows everyone, including workers in the informal sector, to access their human rights, including their rights to health, social security, and an adequate standard of living, without discrimination, including by moving away from narrow poverty targeting and towards a universal social protection system that includes social protection floors in line with ILO General Recommendation 202.

The Right to Housing

Previous governments' failure to establish a regulatory framework for the Right to Housing Act, coupled with local authorities' disregard for the law, has resulted in [forced evictions](#) that have left hundreds homeless.

The Constitution of Nepal and laws such as the Right to Housing Act 2018 and the Lands Act 1964, contain important provisions to prevent forced eviction, including by granting ownership of land to “landless squatters” (people without registered land ownership) and “unmanaged dwellers” (people who have some registered land, but are squatting on government land). Despite these, local and provincial authorities have frequently failed to uphold legal safeguards. As a result, many people living in informal settlements, including people belonging to Dalit communities and Indigenous Peoples, have been disproportionately impacted by forced evictions. The absence of the necessary regulatory framework to implement many of the provisions of the Right to Housing Act 2018 has also left legal protections largely ineffective.

We urge your government to:

- Adopt the Right to Housing Regulation without further delay to ensure the effective implementation of legal standards under the Right to Housing Act, including due process requirements for evictions;
- Align domestic legal provisions related to evictions, compensation, and resettlement with the right to adequate housing guaranteed by the Constitution of Nepal and with international human rights standards, including under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and including by ensuring that protection from forced evictions is available to all persons in Nepal without discrimination, and regardless of whether they own, rent, or occupy their homes and land;
- Ensure that there are no evictions, including mass evictions, until proper verification and eviction and resettlement measures that are compliant with international human rights standards are put in place;
- Address the root causes of extreme poverty and landlessness by strengthening institutional mechanisms such as the Land Issue Resolving Commission to ensure a fair and transparent verification and land distribution process;

- Ensure that authorities at all levels guarantee access to essential services to residents of informal settlements regardless of their tenure status.
- Ensure that victims of forced evictions receive effective remedy including timely, fair, and adequate compensation, and that resettlement initiatives are designed with the participation of affected communities.

The Rights of Migrant Workers

Remittances from migrant workers are essential to the Nepali economy and allow millions of workers to support their families. However, despite their vital contributions, Nepali workers abroad often struggle without sufficient protection from extreme heat and unsafe working conditions, and their deaths and injuries are rarely investigated or adequately compensated. Many also face exploitation including exorbitant recruitment fees, wage theft, and contract substitution. Discriminatory restrictions on women's migration for work such as deployment bans on domestic workers, even if they may be intended to protect them from abuse, force some into irregular routes placing them at greater risk. The high cost of migration drives many into debt, heightening their vulnerability to forced labor. These risks to migrant workers have only intensified during the current crisis in the Middle East.

To respond to the heightened threats during the crisis in the Middle East, we urge your government to coordinate where necessary with the governments of host countries and other origin countries, the private sector, and civil society, to:

- Ensure that Nepali workers in the Middle East have access to social security sufficient to ensure their right to an adequate standard of living, including their rights to food and accommodation, including those who may be more at risk such as undocumented workers or those without jobs;
- Ensure that workers have access to updated information including on safety precautions and support resources as the situation evolves;
- Ensure workers are empowered to stop working if they feel unsafe without fear of retaliation, particularly for outdoor workers at greatest risk of harm from attacks and debris from interceptions;
- Continue to collect information on migrants including their immediate needs, in order to address these effectively;
- Ensure the freedom of movement of workers and facilitate the return of those who want to voluntarily return by addressing financial or documentation barriers, including those created by kafala sponsorship systems;
- Ensure that workers' outstanding dues including wages and end of service benefits continue to be paid in full, and that employers pay workers according to contracts even when work is disrupted due to the conflict;
- Ensure that workers who are unable to start jobs despite paying illegal recruitment fees are adequately compensated by the recruiter;

- Ensure that workers who are detained abroad are afforded consular and legal assistance, and those detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression – such as via social media posts – are released immediately and unconditionally;
- Ensure that injured migrant workers and families of the deceased are adequately compensated.

Besides these urgent steps to protect migrant workers, we urge your government to:

- Revise existing or sign new bilateral labor agreements ensuring they include strong provisions on responsible recruitment, social security, wage protection, access to healthcare, occupational health and safety, and access to justice, with an emphasis on better monitoring and enforcement mechanisms;
- Take concrete steps to ensure migrant workers are not charged recruitment fees or associated costs to migrate, including strengthening monitoring of recruitment agencies, empowering migrant workers with accurate information and accessible grievance mechanisms. Investigate, and where necessary sanction or prosecute misconduct by recruitment agencies;
- Improve consular assistance for migrant workers and provide legal aid and other assistance to those who have been subjected to abuse abroad. Ensure that all migrant workers have access to an effective complaint mechanism through which they or their families can seek redress if they were made to work under exploitative conditions;
- Strengthen data management systems to keep up-to-date details of Nepalis abroad;
- End discriminatory restrictions on women's migration for work, and instead strengthen measures for their protection through bilateral agreements, consular assistance, and training and awareness programs;
- Prioritize the health of migrant workers overseas, including by adopting thorough pre-departure medical screenings and training programs at no cost to workers. Make agreements with host country authorities to promote stronger health protection policies such as risk-based heat protection measures, improved access to healthcare, and life insurance coverage;
- Cooperate with host country authorities to prevent migrant work-related injuries and deaths, and when such incidents do occur, ensure all deaths are promptly, impartially, and effectively investigated, recorded, and workers and their families receive full reparation;
- Take immediate steps to ensure the safe return of Nepalis fighting for the Russian Army in Ukraine and ensure access to protection, support, and remedy for potential victims of trafficking in persons, upholding the principle of non-punishment. Also ensure compensation for the families of the deceased and investigate, and where appropriate prosecute, the traffickers involved;
- Accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and ratify the International Labour Organization Domestic Workers Convention.

Freedom of Expression and Association

The Constitution of Nepal guarantees the rights to freedom of expression and association under Article 17 (2)(a) and 17 (2)(d). However, these human rights have been undermined by restrictive laws and provisions—including Section 47 of the Electronic Transactions Act, 2008 which has been used to target journalists and social media users.

We urge your government to:

- End the misuse of the Electronic Transactions Act to criminalize peaceful expression and amend or repeal the law, particularly Section 47, to remove vague and overbroad provisions, and ensure any restrictions on the right to freedom of expression comply with Nepal's obligations under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Repeal laws that make defamation or libel a criminal instead of a civil matter, in line with international law and standards, including article 19 of the ICCPR.

Caste-Based Discrimination and Minority Rights

The Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2011, criminalizes discriminatory practices, yet enforcement remains weak. Marginalized caste and ethnic groups are disproportionately more often victims of violations and abuses, including rape, excessive use of force by police, and torture and other ill-treatment in police custody. Police are often unwilling to investigate cases of caste-based discrimination. Dalit women and girls face particular difficulties in accessing justice. There are no systems to collate data to track and address discrimination.

The 2015 Constitution created the National Dalit Commission, National Inclusion Commission, Madhesi Commission, Tharu Commission, Muslim Commission, and Indigenous Nationalities Commission to uphold the rights of marginalized groups, but they have often been without a full set of commissioners, or any commissioners at all. All have weak mandates.

We urge your government to:

- Ensure that Dalits and members of other marginalized communities can fully and effectively participate in designing and implementing policies to end discrimination;
- Ensure access to justice for Dalits, in particular Dalit women and girls. Establish a transparent, accessible, and independent mechanism, in accordance with international human rights norms, to investigate negligence, reluctance, or refusal to investigate and informal mediation by law enforcement officials in caste-based offences. Draft comprehensive rules and procedural guidance for the investigation, prosecution, and monitoring of cases of caste-based discrimination for the effective implementation of the Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act;

- Amend the three-month statute of limitations for filing complaints of crimes under the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability Act, which is a barrier in reporting caste-based discrimination;
- Establish an oversight mechanism to ensure the implementation status of the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability Act, which could involve the National Human Rights Commission, National Women's Commission, and National Dalit Commission (NDC);
- Ensure that the Dalit cells in the police departments are adequately funded. Sensitize and train the police officers for the effective investigation of cases;
- Ensure that the commissions representing marginalized groups are legally empowered to subpoena witnesses, are adequately funded, have clear government support, and appoint commissioners to these bodies;
- Ensure that methodologies for collecting official data are designed with the effective participation of people from marginalized groups, and is disaggregated according to caste and ethnicity and inequality.

Gender and Sexual Minorities - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people's rights

Nepal has a record of relatively progressive legal protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, including landmark Supreme Court rulings legalizing same-sex marriage and upholding the right of a transgender woman to change her gender on official documents. However, these rulings are not consistently implemented by officials. Same sex couples have been prevented by officials from marrying, and authorities have stopped processing applications for transgender people to affirm their legal gender on identity documents. Previously, some officials had demanded medical certificates proving that individuals have undergone genital surgeries, something that is not and should not be required under Nepali law. Trans and other gender diverse people who cannot obtain documents that list their self-declared legal gender face extensive obstacles, including in accessing education, health care, and employment.

We urge your government to:

- Implement Supreme Court rulings to ensure that same-sex couples are able to marry without resistance by officials;
- Implement a clear policy for legal gender recognition in line with international human rights law and standards and global medical best practices. Ensure that no medical proof should be required for Nepalis to change their legal gender. Create a quick, transparent and accessible procedure for processing paperwork related to legal gender recognition as an interim measure while an appropriate and rights-respecting legal gender recognition policy is created.

Rights of People with Disabilities

People with disabilities in Nepal, particularly those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, continue to face systemic barriers to access to justice and health services. Current laws and practices remain medicalized, discriminatory, and exclusionary, failing to recognize legal capacity, autonomy, and decision-making rights. Forced institutionalization, involuntary treatment, and lack of supportive mechanisms persist, denying equal participation in legal processes and access to human rights–based mental health services.

We urge your government to:

- Recognize the full legal capacity of persons with disabilities and adopt an assisted decision-making framework to support autonomy and participation in legal and health decisions.

Criminalization of Poverty

In Nepal, a number of laws and policies effectively criminalize poverty, punishing individuals for inability to pay fines, or survival-related behaviors like street vending. These criminal laws fail to adopt a human rights-based approach, disproportionately impacting marginalized and low-income communities, perpetuating inequality and social exclusion. Instead of addressing the root causes of poverty, the legal system imposes criminal liability on individuals for conditions beyond their control.

We urge your government to:

- Review and reform or repeal laws that effectively criminalize poverty, including provisions that criminalize non-payment of fines, and survival-related behaviors like street vending, to align with human rights standards. Ensure effective implementation through law enforcement training, robust monitoring, and accessible legal remedies for affected individuals.
- Adopt human rights-based alternatives that prioritize social support, access to essential services, universal and comprehensive social security coverage, and poverty alleviation measures over punitive measures.