

CPA TALK 13

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The UN human rights mission exercised a large influence on the government response and contributed to the peace process more than in other similar circumstances. Politicians of all parties could communicate at ease as they belonged to a large extent to the same social and cultural elite. The American influence after the incident of 9/11 was too small for the Maoist side to play. The self-inflicted demise of the monarchy and the people's movement created the space and the opportunity to join 'a bourgeois revolution' that the Maoists believed was the unavoidable and historical way forward.

Human Security Division / Embassy of Switzerland were engaged mostly at three levels— development in conflict; promotion of human rights; and dialogue with all political forces. The most original part of the approach was to manage the development program with full recognition of the ongoing political and social conflicts, with the understanding that the management of development resources and activities could contribute to mitigate violence or to exasperate it. The international donor community established the Basic Operating Guidelines for the conduction of development activities immediately after the King's coup. This framework allowed us to operate in the conflict, avoiding – at least to a reasonable extent – to be manipulated by the conflicting parties.

During the peace process a number of challenges were being faced namely – the denial by the government authorities about the Maoist presence and their control over a large part of the countryside; the mythology that community centered development would be immune from the political influence and could be isolated from the ongoing civil war; and that the presumption, endorsed in particular by the multilateral development banks, that growth would absorb poverty and prosperity would eliminate conflicts.

TRC and CIEDP have started working to reconcile wartime issues. Truth, punishment and reconciliation become likely only after 15 – 20 years after the end of the hostilities – if the memory of abuses and injustice is kept alive. The risk of open conflict must abate and society should mature before substantial progresses can be achieved in these areas in order to consolidate the peace process.

The causes of the conflict have not been addressed and that the peace process itself has nourished new tensions and conflicts. Only a decentralized and real democracy seems to be able to respond to diffuse expectations of many communities. Moreover, it is indispensable for Nepal to achieve levels of economic growth compatible with the expansion of the welfare state and the geographical integration of all parts of the country.

[For further information regarding the book, contact Nepal Transition to Peace Institute \(NTTP-I\) or send an email to contact@nttpinstitute.org.np.](#)