



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

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ICJ High-Level Mission to Examine Human Rights Crisis In Nepal

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) begins an eight-day high-level mission today to assess the rapidly deteriorating human rights situation and the rule of law in Nepal and to discuss with the government, judiciary and civil society effective means to address the spiralling crisis.

The Mission will be led by ICJ Secretary-General Nicholas Howen and be accompanied by human rights jurist Periathamby Rajanayagam and ICJ Legal Adviser Ian Seiderman.

Nepal is embroiled in an eight-year internal conflict between the government and insurgent Maoist rebels. Over the past three years, wide-scale abuses have been committed by both sides to the conflict. Since King Gyanendra dissolved the Parliament in 2002, the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) and other government security forces have operated without effective civilian accountability and have been implicated in enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, torture and secret incommunicado detention. Well-documented abuses have resulted in impunity. The Maoist rebels have engaged in a pattern of violations of international humanitarian law, including summary killings of non-combatants.

The ICJ believes that taking practical steps to address the human rights crisis would be essential confidence-building measures on a road to a negotiated settlement of this brutal conflict.

In early 2003, the ICJ visited Nepal and concluded that a breakdown in the rule of law in the country was under way. The present mission will build on the findings and recommendations of the earlier mission.

While in Nepal, the mission team will meet with Nepali Government officials, the RNA and other security forces, the National Human Rights Commission, leading members of the judiciary and bar, non-governmental human rights organisations, human rights victims, and the international community.

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