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For Immediate Release

Nepal: Protesters Demand Integrity, Rights, Rule of Law

Interim Government to Conduct New Elections

(London, 13 September, 2025) All stakeholders in Nepal should publicly commit to uphold the rule of law and international human rights obligations as an [interim government](#) headed by former chief justice Sushila Karki takes charge following deadly violence, Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Federation of Human Rights, and Human Rights Watch said today.

Nepal has made some important gains since 2006, when a decade of armed conflict came to an end, and it is vital for the country not to slide backward, but instead focus on addressing entrenched problems of impunity, governance and corruption through a process under the rule of law.

“Anger and frustration at bad governance and corruption had been building for some time, and resulted in events that could force a generation of leaders who dominated Nepali politics since 1990 to step aside,” said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch. “To build a rights respecting future, a first step should be ending the impunity of the past, by holding suspected human rights abusers and those accused of corruption to account.”

On 8 September 2025, police officers [killed at least 19 people](#), and injured hundreds, while suppressing a youth-led protest against endemic corruption, which was sparked by anger at a sweeping [ban on 26 social media sites](#) imposed on 4 September. Many victims were young, including children. On 9 September, [the prime minister resigned](#) and the social media ban was rescinded, but angry crowds attacked police officials, politicians and their property, and set fire to government buildings. both in the provinces and in Kathmandu, the capital city, including parliament and the [Supreme Court](#)

By 12 September [officials said](#) the number of fatalities caused by two days of violence had reached 51. On 12 September, an agreement was reached to dissolve parliament and swear in Sushila Karki as head of an interim government that would conduct fresh elections.

While the protests were led by young people in a loose movement known as “Gen Z,” reports suggest that some of those involved in violence, arson and looting were “infiltrators,” acting for a variety of reasons. For instance, places of detention were attacked and [prisoners released](#), and digital records in the Attorney General’s office were [deliberately targeted](#). The exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including for political objectives, is protected under international law when conducted through peaceful means, the groups said, but the rights are not absolute and violence is not protected.

Prohibition and partial curfew orders are currently in force after the army was deployed to restore order on the evening of 9 September. In particular, given the military's past history of serious human rights violations, the army chief should not take any action that serves to undermine the rule of law, and should publicly instruct soldiers to respect and ensure everyone's human rights, and to refrain from any unnecessary or excessive use of force, the groups said. This should include a reminder that under international human rights law, lethal force may only be used when strictly necessary to protect life.

"Victims of serious abuses by the military in the past, including killings, torture and enforced disappearances, are still waiting for justice," said Juliette Rousselot, deputy Asia director at the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH). "Nepal is the largest troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping missions and the army should know that their actions now will have a bearing on any future deployment."

It will be the responsibility of the interim government to conduct a prompt, thorough, independent, credible, time-bound, transparent and effective investigation into the police's use of force, as well as attacks by violent protesters, and appropriately discipline or prosecute all those suspected to be responsible for abuses or criminal acts. Nepal's international partners, including foreign governments and the United Nations, should urge the interim government to uphold and ensure respect for the rule of law and protect the human rights achievements of recent years.

Widespread impunity for human rights violations in the past helped enable the violations, the groups said. The findings of investigations into killings during previous large-scale protests, including the Malik Commission after the 1990 People's Movement, the Rayamajhi Commission after the Second People's Movement in 2006, and the Lal Commission after the Terai protests in 2015, have never been published. Neither has there been accountability for widespread and grave abuses during the 1996-2006 civil conflict with Maoist insurgents.

"Successive Nepali governments have thwarted justice and efforts to reform institutions emerging after violent conflict in the past in order to protect alleged perpetrators from accountability for past human rights violations amounting to crimes under international law, laying the foundation for more abuses," said Mandira Sharma, senior international legal adviser at the International Commission of Jurists. "This impunity must end now."

Nepal has also endured widespread impunity for endemic corruption, which has facilitated further violations of human rights, including of economic and social rights, and undermined the rule of law. The interim government should take prompt action to investigate allegations of corruption and hold those responsible to account, the groups said.

"Nepal has witnessed shocking events in recent days and now finds itself at a turning point, where the hard work of securing human rights for all could be built upon or sent into reverse," said Isabelle Lassée, deputy South Asia regional director at Amnesty International. "It is vital that all stakeholders abide by international human rights law and standards and the rule of law, and that Nepal's international partners support that effort."