

Address to the Nation by Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. KP Sharma Oli

Respected Brothers and Sisters,

1. I am honoured to address you as the Prime Minister of the first Government formed after the promulgation of the new constitution of Nepal. I express my sincere gratitude for the strong support and goodwill extended by you and the Hon'ble Members of the Legislative Parliament while forming the current government. I would like to assure you that the Government will remain committed to fulfill the expectations of people as well as the important responsibility laid on its shoulder at this critical juncture of history.
2. Against all odds, the historic Constituent Assembly promulgated the constitution on September 20. With this historic declaration, aspiration of people expressed in long struggle has been realized. Achievements of revolution and people's movements like federal democratic republic, social justice, proportional inclusion and secularism have now been institutionalized. We all can take pride in the constitution of Nepal that is the best in terms of both content as well as the process of making in comparison with the constitution of any democratic country. We now have the foundation to build peaceful, democratic and prosperous Nepal through effective implementation of the constitution. Peace process has fundamentally been concluded; transition period of almost a decade has come to an end and political problem has been resolved. I pay tribute to the brave martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the process and offer my high respect to the leaders, party workers and people in general for their sacrifice and contribution in the movements as well as constitution making process. I offer my sincere greetings to the Nepali people on this important moment of accomplishment of major political tasks including constitution making as per the popular mandate expressed through historic people's movement and the Constituent Assembly election.
3. It is evidently clear that Nepal has made a democratic constitution realizing the need and importance of sustainable and inclusive constitutional arrangement. The constitution has ensured equal right, opportunity, security and dignity to all Nepali people. Rights of people of all ethnicities, languages, cultures, regions and gender have likewise been ensured. Having recognized the fact that not only formal equality but also substantive equality is required for the people remaining backward or caused to remain backward since ages due to various reasons, the constitution has provided social justice, proportional and inclusive representation and special rights encompassing education, health and employment for women, Dalit, indigenous Janajatis, Madhesis, Tharus, minorities, disabled, marginalized, Muslims, disadvantaged groups, sexual minorities, workers, the poor, and people of backward regions. The allegation that the constitution has discriminated against a section of people just for belonging to specific community has been made either because the constitution has not been studied or because of deliberate misinterpretation of the constitution for the sake of vested interest and political expediency.
4. As the constitution is a dynamic document, there is ample space for its further improvement and development. I have already said before – the constitution can be amended on the basis of people's will, national interest and rationale. Proposed

demarcation of provinces can also be altered on the basis of necessity and experience. The Government is ready to advance the bill for constitution amendment, based on understanding with agitating parties in Terai-Madhes; discuss on demarcation of provinces; and make constitutional arrangement on the basis of political agreement. I, therefore, call on the agitating parties to take the ongoing dialogue to meaningful result.

5. It has been my view that agreement and understanding is essential among major political parties that played main role in the constitution making as well as all among political parties in Constituent Assembly for the effective implementation of the constitution. Realising this necessity, we have made important contribution in resolving the constitutional and political crisis the country faced; holding the election of the Constituent Assembly and subsequent formation of the government and the drafting of constitution. Even after the promulgation of the constitution, we have been emphasizing that the main state bodies including the Government have to be formed on the basis of agreement and the unity among the main political parties should be maintained. In this spirit, the gentlemen's agreement was reached among the main political parties long before the promulgation of the constitution. Unity among main political parties was and has been the wish of the people. I, therefore, believe that there will be cooperation and collaboration among political parties for the fulfilment of national responsibilities like implementation of the constitution, end of undeclared blockade besetting the country, protection of national independence, prosperity and dignity; and post-earthquake reconstruction.

Respected Brothers and Sisters!

6. As I speak to you, Nepal is passing through a historically challenging phase of reconstruction and sensitive situation. It is unthinkable in the twenty first century that a sovereign nation might face such hardships, pain and an inhumane act like a blockade just for promulgating a progressive and pro-people constitution having democratic content through an elected and inclusive Constituent Assembly after a wide public participation. However, today we are compelled to bear such an unimaginable pain. During the great festivals, Nepali people are facing the problem even to light their stoves and meeting each other to share love and affection. This has hurt me a lot. The restraint, understanding, good will and resilience shown by the Nepali people are impressive and praiseworthy. I express my hearty gratitude for this.
7. The undeclared blockade for past one and half month has badly affected national lives. The devastating earthquake of last April has shattered different districts of hilly and mountainous areas including Kathmandu valley. Due to the earthquakes, nearly nine thousand people lost their lives; 23 thousand people were wounded and hundreds of thousand people were left homeless. According to a preliminary assessment, a total loss of 700 billion Nepali Rupees was calculated and we thought that the Terai-Madhes would help sustain the loss to some extent. However, the continuing strike and unofficial blockade at the southern border has caused greater economic, social and psychological losses than even the earthquake. It has also severely affected people of the Terai-Madhes.

8. Nepal is facing a serious humanitarian crisis due to obstruction of export and import at Nepal-India border points under various pretexts. Hundreds of trucks carrying fuel, medicine, food items and other necessary goods have been stopped in the Indian side of the border. As a result, there is shortage of fuel and medicines posing risk to the lives of the patients. The unavailability of blood collection pouches has led to the shortage of blood in blood banks, which has rendered high risks to the pregnant women and patients requiring immediate surgery. Lack of medicine and nutritious food has pushed children's lives to risk. Ambulances, vehicles of the doctors and health workers are facing problems due to fuel shortage and hospitals are on the verge of closure due to lack of essential items. Fuel crisis is also leading to a painful situation of water shortage, as fuel is needed to pump it up. This sort of situation is not even prevalent during a time of war. Anyone with human sympathy must describe this kind of behaviour against a country coping with a recent devastating earthquake as painful and inhumane.
9. The undeclared blockade in the southern border has violated the principle of respect of independent country's sovereignty as provided in the UN Charter, principles of Panchasheel, the SAARC Charter, transit rights of landlocked countries as guaranteed by the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas as well as Nepal- India trade and transit treaties and has also undermined age-old friendly relations between the two countries and hurt the sentiments of the people of both countries. The behaviour of the Indian Oil Corporation not supplying the petroleum products already paid for has violated even the simple business code. I am also shocked that the supplies from the secure border points have not been resumed, let alone from the border points allegedly obstructed. There is no doubt that this situation has rendered the good relations between Nepal and India unpleasant. As this situation is beneficial to none, I am confident that this will not prolong and the understanding between two countries will be restored. Our efforts toward this direction are continuing and I urge the Government of India to contribute to this regard.
10. The closure of industries, declining tourist arrival, blocked import-export at border customs and inaccessibility of products to markets due to Terai-Madhes agitation have created a critical situation in the economy of Nepal which was shattered by the recent devastating earthquake. We are aware of the pain the business community is facing due to closure of business-industry and heavy burden of demurrage charge on imported goods. Life of workers dependent on industries has become painful. The farmers are suffering great losses due to lack of fertilizers, seeds, animal and bird feeds and other essential goods and their inability to sell milk, vegetables and fruits. Millions of children are deprived of education due to the closure of educational institutions. The community and region on whose name this agitation has been started and borders blocked have themselves been greatly suffered by these acts.
11. Our country Nepal has never remained as other's colony; and the Nepali, the people from the birthplace of Buddha, has served the world community through their important contributions from the fronts of world wars to peace-keeping missions under the United Nations. Nepal has spread the message of peace and fraternity to world over. Possessed with living history of independence and ancient civilization, we, the Nepalese, have been

able to resolve our internal problems even in extremely difficult situation. Together, we have to resolve the present difficulty too.

12. The undeclared blockade has inflicted the greatest pain upon earthquakes affected people. Hundreds of thousands of victims, who spent the whole monsoon under ordinary tarpaulins and tin sheets, now fear cold weather and difficulties it may bring up. The Government is sensitive to the risks in the life of newborn babies, the new mothers and the aged people. The construction of safe and orderly shelters for them has been badly affected by the lack of construction materials. While five hundred thousand more citizens have been estimated to have fallen below the poverty line due to earthquakes, Nepalese economy will face even greater crisis rendering more citizens to poverty and causing more damage in the development path of the nation because of multidimensional impacts of the blockade. I am very serious about this situation of socio-economic loss to the country greater than that of the earthquakes.
13. Problems of any part or community of the country are matters of our common concern. Matters relating to Terai-Madhes are also common to all of us Nepali. I am clear that it is the main responsibility of the Government of Nepal to address such matters appropriately. I believe it is the duty of all Nepali to stand for national interest and unity. I respect the allegiance of the people of Terai-Madhes to the nation and their aspirations for prosperity. I urge the agitating parties to be serious about the strikes going on in Terai-Madhes and its wide-ranging negative effects on the interest of the country and the people. I call upon the agitating parties to review the agitation which destroys the future of the hundreds of thousands of students; makes the lives of farmers more painful; keeps those labourers, who earn their evening meal from their day's labour, without food; and, in total, has serious and long-term negative impact on the possibilities of industrialization, foreign investment, planned urbanization, and speedy economic development in Terai-Madhes, which could have played the role of engine of Nepal's development.
14. I would like to draw the attention of all concerned to be serious about the complexity generated by and the price to be paid for inviting involvement of external actors on matters of our own internal affairs and differences. I must say – the agitation in Terai-Madhes has pushed the ordinary people further behind. Death of 47 people, including security personnel, in the terrifying Tikapur incident and the series of violence thereafter is extremely sorrowful. I express sincere condolences to the deceased and express sympathy to the bereaved families and wish speedy recovery of the injured ones. The process of providing Rs 10 lakh each to the family of the deceased, free treatment to the injured and withdrawing the cases against all except for those involved in grave offences has already begun. In this context, I sincerely call upon all concerned for meaningful contribution in resolving the problem through dialogue by ending the agitation while being cautious not to inflict more pain to the people's life, not to incite social and communal harmony, and not let any kind of extremism to play.

15. I urge all to remain aware against the activities contrary to the norms of democracy in the name of agitation. I have understood that protecting the life and property of the people, maintaining peace, security and order in society, and guaranteeing rule of law and human rights are primary responsibilities of any democratic state; and I am committed to this. There shall be adequate security, combined with effective presence of state, to industries and business and service will be rendered to people. The Government will remain watchful not to allow the situation of violence, anarchy, and terror to emerge by creating an environment conducive to the enjoyment of one's right with due respect to others' right and full enjoyment of freedom of movement and expression.

Brothers and Sisters!

16. You all are aware of the Government's efforts carried out round-the-clock in addressing the difficulties caused by the undeclared blockade. It has been obvious this time that due to some faulty decisions of the past, problems in the conduct of relations with friendly countries and our underdeveloped condition, we have been highly dependent on others and excessively reliant on one country and certain border checkpoints. This has further made it clear to us that dependence on others not on our own and imbalanced and one-sided trade relations not balanced and diversified trade is the situation we have been facing. This should now be an eye-opener to us all, and we should learn lessons. Our main responsibility at this hour, therefore, is to transform this 'destiny' into an opportunity, and move forward towards building an independent and self-sufficient economy.
17. I would like to sincerely thank the friendly neighbor China for providing fuel on grant in response to our request for urgent support at this difficult hour of crisis. The Government will make efforts towards importing goods including petroleum products required for the country expanding in timely manner of our trade relations with China, with whom we have had centuries old trade partnership. Roads on the Nepalese side linking China will be upgraded. Initiatives will be taken for import of petroleum products from other friendly countries as well.
18. I want to make it clear – this decision is not aimed against any country; this is a step taken to diversify and balance Nepal's trade relations. Nepal is bearing a heavy burden of trade-deficit and imbalance at present. We want to develop our historical relations with India so as not to constrain Nepal's right of access to sea and unrestricted right of transit as a landlocked country and not to have any adverse impact on export and import of goods.
19. The Government will take meaningful and result-oriented initiatives towards self-reliance in order to end dependence on others. The Government's utmost emphasis will be on self-sufficiency through development of clean and renewable energy. I have already declared that within a year, load-shedding will be ended; electric and bio-energy will be used for cooking and dependency on cooking gas will be reduced. Towards this end, the Government will expedite completion of ongoing hydropower and transmission-line projects; incentivize investments on small and medium-size hydro-power projects;

facilitate power-purchase agreement; and prioritize renewable energy. Within a year, 200 megawatts of solar energy will be produced and fed into the national grid. Work will immediately start to produce bio-gas and energy at places like Army, Nepal Police and Armed Police barracks, schools, hostels, and prisons. Concrete steps will be taken to produce energy out of waste products. Works will start to conduct feasibility studies for producing energy from geo-thermal plant and other alternative means. Production and use of electrical oven will be encouraged. Concrete plans and programs will be brought out for increasing the use of fuel-efficient and electrical vehicles, with special priority for the electrical public-vehicles in urban areas. Preparatory works will immediately begin to install electric metro-rails in the Kathmandu valley. Fuel storage capacity will be upgraded keeping in view the immediate and long-term needs. Petroleum exploration works initiated in the past will be expedited. The Government will pursue austerity policy. I would like to request fellow countrymen, brothers and sisters to use domestic products as far as possible; contribute to increase domestic productivity; be frugal in fuel use and help each other at this hour of crisis and afterwards.

20. It is an irony that despite being a predominantly agricultural economy, our continued dependency on foreign agricultural products such as food, vegetables and meat is increasing. In order to end this situation, the Government will immediately put forward plans to encourage farm cooperatives, farmers' groups, and individual farmers with a policy of not leaving arable land unused. The Government will bring out a work-plan aiming at self-sufficiency on basic foodstuff within the next two years.
21. The devastating earthquake has caused massive impact on the national economy. The Reconstruction Authority will be urgently constituted by approving, at the earliest, the bill on reconstruction under consideration at the Legislature-Parliament. The Government is committed to rapidly moving forward the reconstruction works with the cooperation of friendly countries and donor agencies. The Government is determined to immediately start the reconstruction of the housing for earthquake-affected people, damaged government and public infrastructures and cultural heritages of archaeological importance. The Land Use Policy will be implemented in this context. Special priority will be given to volunteering spirit, use of indigenous resources and people's participation.
22. "Nepali Plan, International Support: State Leadership, Hands of All Nepali" will be the motto of reconstruction. Bringing the homeless victims back to secured shelter will be made the main priority. The assistance, kindness and goodwill expressed by the friendly countries and international community at the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction last June will be mobilized in reconstruction. Special priority will be accorded in this campaign also to volunteering spirit, use of indigenous resources, state leadership and people's participation. Attention will be paid to environmental security while carrying forward the efforts of reconstruction and development. I am conscientiously aware of the climate changes and global environment and the sense of responsibility to the present and future.
23. The first instalment of Rs. 200,000 per household, as announced by the Government previously for the early rehabilitation of earthquake-affected families, will be provided

immediately. Moreover, arrangements will be made for providing loan from financial institutions on collective bond for construction of housing in rural areas. Temporary shelters will be built in mountainous and high-hilly areas to be utilized in the winter itself. Natural risk reduction and disaster management programmes will be carried forward with importance. I heartily call on all for their support, cooperation and activeness in completing this reconstruction campaign within short period.

24. National treasury is bearing pressure due to sluggishness in development works and decrease in revenue generation owing to adverse impact on macro economy by long strikes, closures and blockade. Nonetheless, the Government will carry forward solid policy and plan of action to resolve the problems of industry, enterprise and tourism sectors that are suffering difficulties due to earthquake, long strikes, closures and blockade; and to provide relief. The Government of Nepal, Ministry of Finance, will soon make public a white paper on the real picture of the impact on economy caused by strikes, closures and blockade that began after the promulgation of the constitution, and on the future course of action of the Government.
25. The Government will move forward a recovery programme together with relief taking into consideration the adverse impact on various sectors including agriculture, industry, tourism, construction, education and health in the adverse situation emerged at present. In order to make supply smooth, the private sector will be encouraged along with the mobilization of public enterprises while controlling the trends of creating artificial shortage and black-marketeering taking undue advantage of difficulties in supply system. The efforts made at the people's level for fuel supply and alternative energy will be encouraged.
26. The development strategies adopted by the Government of Nepal to date will be reviewed. The projects of national pride including construction of International Airport at Nijgadh and Kathmandu-Terai Madhes Fast Track will be carried forward while extending and upgrading Puspahal (mid-hilly) highway, Hulaki Roads, Tribhuvan International Airport initiated earlier for Nepal's development and prosperity. Moreover, the Government will be active in carrying forward such works as widening east-west highway to four lanes, conducting sanitation programmes in Kathmandu valley and other big cities by connecting with bio energy production, implementing pre-paid meter system to regulate electricity consumption, operating electric metro services in cities including Kathmandu, and operating electric rail services connecting also to border areas. Efforts will be made to generate employment in the country itself and to provide jobs to Nepalese workforce in Nepal by intensifying the development and reconstruction works of cottage, small, medium and large industries. Special programmes will be conducted for the development of the people of backward areas including Terai-Madhes, disadvantaged sections and communities by distributing identity cards. The distribution of national identity cards will be started.
27. In the context of structural transition of state-system, the Government will appropriately address the management of Civil service and Security agencies as well as safety, career development and necessary roles of the Government employees.
28. I am aware of the serious challenges before the Government to conclude above mentioned works as the first quarter of the fiscal year has elapsed. Nevertheless, I am of the view that

all possibilities must be explored and mobilized to attain the set goals for the benefit of people and the nation.

29. The Government will work to strengthen national unity which has been weakened by long transition, conflict and narrow-minded thoughts/behavior while keeping sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, national interest and dignity at the centre. National unity with social goodwill will be upheld amidst multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, multi-cultural, multi-religious and geographical diversity of the country.

Respected Brothers and Sisters!

30. We would like to maintain harmonious relations with all friendly nations including our neighbours India and China pursuant to the policy of reciprocal equality and benefit based on the United Nations Charter and principles of Panchasheel. The essence of our nationalism is protection and promotion of our basic national interests. Nepal does not nurture any animosity towards any nation. We are conscious of our sensitive geopolitical location. We are confident that misunderstandings of any nature can be resolved through dialogue.
31. Nepal stands against all forms of terrorism. I condemn the recent cowardly terrorist attack in the capital of France, Paris and I have already expressed my condolences to the people of France through their President.
32. Recalling with great value of the high-level visits from friendly neighbouring countries and the co-operation and goodwill shown in the aftermath of the earthquake, I urge all friendly nations along with our neighbours to support peace, reconstruction and economic prosperity in the country to prevent current humanitarian crisis. As I have been stating- nations may be large or small based on population or geography but sovereignty and national dignity cannot be large or small. We want- appreciation of our sovereignty and respect for the rights of Nepali citizens to craft their own constitution and to decide on their internal matters as well as respect for Nepal's national autonomy, independence and territorial integrity. Nepal does not want anything more or less than that.
33. In the past one year, there have been some important and positive decisions with long-term effects on the economic relations between Nepal and India. These include Power Trade Agreement, Project Development Agreements (PDA) to develop Upper Karnali and Arun III Hydropower projects, and agreement related to Pancheswor Project pending for a long time. It indicates the kind of economic partnership Nepal wants with India. But the present situation has serious negative impacts on the economic partnership and development potentials developed between the two countries as well as on the bilateral relationship. It is easy to understand the psychology of the posterity about the relationship between the two countries when their schools have remained closed interrupting their education in absence of transportation due to the stoppage of fuel supply from India. Thus on behalf of the Government and people of Nepal, I strongly request the Government and concerned

officials of the friendly nation India to immediately end the undeclared blockade, ease the supply of essential goods and not to create additional inconveniences in the centuries-old relations between the two countries. Recalling the goodwill expressed during the high-level visits of two countries and historical context, we are ready to make our contribution towards promoting understanding by ending distrust and suspicion between the two countries. In this context, I would like to recall the visit of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal to India and the conversations I had at the high levels.

34. The peace process of Nepal is a successful peace process concluded also with the participation of the United Nations. The work is already in progress to investigate the serious human rights violations during the conflict and to build an environment of reconciliation in the society with the formation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Commission on the Investigation of the Disappeared persons as envisaged by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The Government is committed to end impunity, protect human rights and implement all international conventions and instruments to which Nepal is a party.
35. Once again, I heartily appreciate the patience, patriotism and national dignity shown by the Nepali people at this hour of national crisis. The fact that we have seen helping hands at the moment, similar to those in the crisis following the earthquake, has manifested special culture and the characteristics of the Nepali people. Every nation comes across such challenges in its history, and becomes dignified, self-reliant, glorious and full of self-determination by overcoming them. Nepal is passing through such historic epoch today. I am confident that we will be able to overcome this crisis with your profound trust and with the support and cooperation of friendly nations. On this occasion, I would like to express gratitude to friendly nations, United Nations Organization as well as international organizations and media for expressing goodwill, support and solidarity towards us at the time of the crisis. I also extend gratitude to all civil servants, Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Armed Police Force, Nepal as well as media while appreciating their positive role in the face of difficulties.
36. This Government was formed at the sensitive juncture of conducting a campaign of rehabilitation and reconstruction in the aftermath of the disastrous earthquake. It is well known that this Government was formed while the protests and dissatisfaction in the Terai-Madhes regarding a few provisions of the constitution were going on, an undeclared blockade was clamped causing problems in supply management as well as against the backdrop of the activities detrimental to the peace and security. Thus, it is not a Government formed under normal situation. I am quite aware of the fact that the future of not only the parties affiliated to the Government but also the future of the whole nation is interwoven with this Government's role. The matters of national pride, independence, self-esteem, reconstruction and self-reliance taken up by the Government are not only of concern of the Prime Minister or the Government alone but also of the whole nation. To carry out this historic responsibility, the Government will work with full devotion, dedication and capacity. I am convinced that we will

transform the present challenge and crisis into a meaningful journey of creativity, self-reliance, and self-esteem.

Finally, on the occasion of upcoming Chhath and Lhosar I wish everyone happiness, peace and prosperity.

Thank you.

15 November 2015