

21 | **23-Point Agreement between the Top Leaders of the Seven-Party Alliance**

December 23, 2007

A meeting of the top leaders of the seven parties was held today, December 23, 2007, at the Prime Minister's residence, Baluwatar. Although the parties had different views on the various topics that were discussed, the following decisions were reached between the top leaders of the seven parties by focusing on the central issue of national resolution to hold the elections by mid-April 2008.

1. The following amendments shall be made to Subtitles and Sub-article (1), (2), (3), (3a), (3b) of Article 159 of the Constitution:
 - a) Nepal shall be a federal democratic republic.
 - b) The republic shall be implemented at the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly. Should the King pose a threat to holding the Constituent Assembly election, a two-thirds majority of the Interim Legislature-Parliament can promulgate the republic by voting for the proposal. In such a case, the Council of Ministers shall take the decision for presenting the proposal and shall table the proposal before the Legislature-Parliament.
 - c) The King shall not be vested with any right regarding governance of the country.
 - d) The Prime Minister shall carry out tasks related to the governance of the country.
 - e) Until the promulgation of a republic, the Prime Minister shall carry out all the duties of the head of state.

2. The Article concerned of the Interim Constitution shall be amended to maintain the current 240 constituencies under the first-past-the-post electoral system, to maintain 335 members instead of 240 to be elected through the proportional electoral system and to maintain 26 members, instead of 17 nominated by the Council of Ministers based on consensus. If *Adivasi/Janajatis* do not find their representation amongst the 26 nominated members through election, amendment shall be made for their inclusion.
3. Provision necessary for the appointment of a General Secretary to the Legislature-Parliament shall be included in the Constitution.
4. In view of the merger of Nepali Congress and Nepali Congress (Democratic) to form Nepali Congress, necessary amendment shall be made to the Constitution.
5. Amendment shall be made to the Constitution to make necessary provision for appointments to the Legislature-Parliament, substituting the members who have died, tendered resignations or who have been expelled.
6. The following commissions and committees shall be formed by the Government within a month, based on consensus:
 - a) Commission for the Investigation of the Disappeared
 - b) Truth and Reconciliation Commission
 - c) State Reconstruction Commission
 - d) Study and Recommendation Commission for Scientific Land Reform
 - e) High-Level Committee for Monitoring the Effective Implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Accord and other Agreements
 - f) A High-Level Peace Commission shall be formed as per the Comprehensive Peace Accord. The Ministry of Peace shall work in coordination with this Commission

7. Create mechanisms in local bodies on the basis of consensus. Decision regarding this shall be made by a coordination committee comprising top leaders.
8. As per the Comprehensive Peace Accord, relief shall be provided to the families of those killed in the armed conflict by mid-February. With regard to the disappeared, relief shall be provided based on the report of the Investigation Commission. A preliminary report shall be submitted within a month from the commencement of the investigation by the Commission.
9. The private and public houses and land captured by the Maoists during the armed conflict shall be returned to the individuals and agencies concerned within one month. A district-level mechanism shall be set up under the chair of Chief District Officer to implement this agreement in the district. The displaced shall be rehabilitated in their own house/land with dignity.
10. Request shall be made to the National Human Rights Commission to monitor [the implementation of] points 8, 9 and 10 [of this agreement].
11. The amount remaining to be paid to the verified combatants of the Maoist Army as per the agreement shall be paid in installments by February 12 (Magh-end), and the allowances thereafter shall be provided on monthly basis. Arrangements shall be made for the immediate release of those disqualified in the verification after paying them the amount due as per the agreement.
12. Regarding the integration of the verified combatants of the Maoist Army, the Special Committee formed by the Council of Ministers as per the Interim Constitution shall further the process after deliberations.
13. The commissions that were provided for in Article 154 of the Interim Constitution but not yet formed shall be formed within a month.
14. The Maoist prisoners detained during the armed conflict under different charges, and currently in different jails in Nepal shall be released by January 14 and the charges filed against Maoist leaders and cadres withdrawn. Similarly, efforts shall be made

at diplomatic level for the release of Nepalese Maoist prisoners detained during the armed conflict in foreign prisons. All cases filed in the past against political parties and politicians on political grounds shall be withdrawn.

15. For the formation of a new constitution incorporating the principles of federal republic state and multi-party democratic system, a coordination committee comprising the top leaders shall be formed to support and coordinate the Interim Governments' efforts to hold the Constituent Assemble election. The committee shall appoint its coordinator on rotational basis and shall be free to determine its work procedures.
16. Creating conditions for the maintenance of law and order situation in the country, easy and accessible supply of daily needs of the people, good governance, control of corruption, and holding Constituent Assembly election in a free and fair manner shall be the utmost priorities of the Interim Government.
17. None of the political parties and their affiliated organisations shall engage in activities that will disrupt or have an adverse effect on the forthcoming election. They shall refrain from the use of force, the use and display of arms/weapons, collection of tax by setting up toll gates, and forcible collection of money from tourists, teachers, employees, business community, traders or any other person; and shall immediately put an end to all acts of physical violence, abduction, forcible takeover of property, etc.
18. The cadres of all political parties shall be allowed to peacefully carry out their political activities and campaigns in an atmosphere free of fear and intimidation of any kind.
19. A commitment is hereby made by all parties to fully comply with and implement all points agreed to of the Comprehensive Peace Accord.
20. The Government of Nepal shall take initiative to raise international support to immediately meet its financial obligations, including reconstruction, re-provision, rehabilitation and resettlement of the victims of the conflict.

21. All seven parties shall hold public meetings in seven different places of the country to appeal to the people to participate in the election.
22. With the signing of this agreement, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) shall join the government with immediate effect.
23. The first and foremost agenda for all of us is to hold the Constituent Assembly election. Through the meeting of the seven parties, we have already taken the decision to hold the election by mid-April (end of Chaitra). We heartily appeal to all political parties, civil society, all professionals and other compatriots to help conduct the election in a free, fair, and fear-free atmosphere.

Acting President of Nepali Congress Mr Sushil Koirala	Sd.
General Secretary of CPN (UML) Mr Madhav Nepal	Sd.
Chairman of CPN (Maoist) Mr Prachanda	Sd.
President of Janamorcha Nepal Mr Amik Sherchan	Sd.
President of Nepal Majdoor Kisaan Party Mr Narayan Man Bijukchhe	Sd.
Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Anandi Devi) General Secretary Mr Shyam Sunder Gupta	Sd.
President of Samyukta Bammorcha Mr C.P. Mainali	Sd.