

May 7, 2008

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala  
Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers  
Singh Durbar  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
P.O. Box 23312

Your Excellency,

Article 19 would like to commend the Nepalese Government for allowing peaceful Tibetan protests in recent weeks. However we would like to express our grave concerns over the Government's statement that force may be used to stop protests during the Olympic torch relay to Mt. Everest this month.

Since March 2008 the Nepalese authorities have arbitrarily arrested and detained more than 2000 people associated with demonstrations over China's policy on Tibet. This amounts to a significant violation of the right to freedom of expression and opinion and freedom of peaceful assembly.

The right to freedom of expression is an international human right which applies to everyone in Nepal, citizens and non-citizens. The Tibetans, and others who support them, have every right to carry out peaceful demonstrations to express their disagreement with the actions of the Chinese authorities in Tibet.

We would like to remind you that, as a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Government of Nepal is responsible for the protection of the human rights of any individual living within its borders.

We urge you and your government to respect the right to freedom of expression and opinion, assembly and movement, as guaranteed under the Constitution of Nepal, and to uphold



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obligations under international human rights instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

We therefore urge you to maintain the current attitude of allowing peaceful demonstration and not to use force to stop protestors exercising their rights to freedom of expression and opinion.

Please accept, Your Excellency, assurances of our highest consideration.

Agnès Callamard  
Director  
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