

Press Release

Finance Minister Hon'ble Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat's Friendly Visit to Finland **February 4-7, 2008**

On the first day of the visit on February 4, 2008, Hon'ble Finance Minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat met Mr. Jyrki Katainen, Finnish Minister for Finance in his Office. In his opening statement, Dr. Mahat highlighted overall Nepal's economic situation and the socio-political scenario of the country. He further emphasized the need for increased level of assistance from the development partners including Finland to meet the growing development demands of the people of Nepal in the aftermath of the end of a decade-long conflict of the country. In response, Mr Katainen highlighted the strong economic position of Finland and showed his deep concern to the ongoing peace process and the forthcoming constituent assembly election in Nepal.

On development aspect, Dr. Mahat thanked and showed his appreciation for all the support Finland has been providing to Nepal. Dr. Mahat reiterated the need for continued support of Finnish Government for the peace process through the Peace Trust Fund. Both the sides agreed to expand mutual cooperation in the sectors like water and sanitation, environment, forestry, education, human rights, and peace process.

On the same day Dr. Mahat met with Hon'ble First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament Seppo Kaariaenen of the Finnish Centre Party and Mr. Hannes Manninen, MP, Chair of Finance Committee and Ms. Katri Komi, MP, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee. Speaking on the occasion Dr. Mahat highlighted the future economic prospects of Nepal based on the potentiality of hydro-power, tourism, and ecological diversity of the country. He made a point that sustained peace is the pre-requisite of the country to achieve continued growth and development.

In a separate meeting with Finnish Centre Party Group, Dr. Mahat met Parliamentarians Mr Hannes Manninen, Chair of Finance Committee and Ms Katri Komi, Member of Foreign Affairs Committee and presented Nepal's concerns on peace building and development of new Nepal. Dr. Mahat briefed the successful process in building consensus among the different political parties of Nepal to establish democracy through going constituent assembly election and adopting new constitution.

In all the meetings held today, the Minister, Finnish parliamentarians, and the political authorities showed great concern of Finland in supporting Nepal in building peace and prosperity of the country.

Ministry of Finance
Helsinki, Finland
February 4, 2008