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February 8, 2006

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**APPEAL TO RELEASE GOPAL SIWAKOTI ‘CHINTAN’ AND OTHER
POLITICAL DETAINEES**

According to reliable information Mr. Gopal Siwakoti ‘Chintan’, a prominent human rights defender, Executive Director of the *Water and Energy Users’ Federation Nepal* (WAFED), International Convenor of the *NGO Forum on ADB*, along with dozens of other persons are being kept in detention by Nepalese authorities since they were arrested by police on the 2nd February 2006 from a public meeting in Baneshwor, Nepal.

Based on reliable information, we believe the detainees are being kept in one room at the temporary detention centre, which has no toilet facilities or water. We believe that no formal charges have been filed against Mr. Siwakoti ‘Chintan’ and the other detainees. However, the Police have served a three month detention order to the detainees, which, we have been informed, the detainees have refused to accept.

NGO Forum on ADB, a network of Civil Society Organisations which engage in monitoring the activities of the Asian Development Bank based in Manila, Philippines, Asian Women Human Rights Council, Jubilee South and JS-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development are deeply concerned about the continued health and safety of Mr. Siwakoti ‘Chintan’ and others detained with him. Among other things, we are concerned with the manner of detention without any basic health and sanitation amenities, which is a violation of international civil and political rights.

We are also deeply concerned that Mr. Siwakoti ‘Chintan’ and others along with him are being detained with no evidence of having committed any crime or misdemeanour or any

breach of public peace. Nor have any formal and definitive charges been served against the detainees. Mr. Siwakoti 'Chintan's' detention will severely hinder his professional activities that he is obliged to discharge in his various roles in his organisation WAFED and as the International Convenor of the NGO Forum on ADB.

We, therefore, strongly urge that:

The persons detained, including Mr. Gopal Siwakoti 'Chintan' and many other human rights defenders, journalists, peace workers, party activists and ordinary citizens be immediately and unconditionally released without any harm to enable them to continue their work unhindered.

Yours truly,

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45 Wilfred dcosta, General Secretary, Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF)
46 Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1980 (Argentina)
47 Nora Cortiñas, Mothers of the May Square-Founders' Line (Argentina)
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