

# **Key Note Address to the 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Technical Consultancy Development Program for Asia and the Pacific and FIDIC ASPAC held in Kathmandu March 11-13, 2009**

Respected Chair of the Conference and President of SCAEF, the host organizer Mr. Keshab Man Amatya,  
Right Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachand",  
Hon. Minister of Physical Planning & Works Mr. Bijaya Kimar Gachhadar,  
Highly Respected President of TCDPAP Mr. Karamath Ullah Chaudry,  
Highly Respected President of International Federation of Consulting Engineers Dr. John Boyd,  
Respected President of FIDIC Asia Pacific Grouping Mr Akihiko Hirotani,  
Excellencies  
Distinguished International and National Delegates and Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is a pleasure and privilege to address such a distinguished and august gather of international and national leaders of professionals as consulting architects and engineers in Nepal. I thank the organizers for availing me this opportunity and I wish all success for this historic conference.
2. My wife Hisila and I, being from the same fraternity as this august audience, I recognize the value of this conference in the development of the country and for the world community. Therefore, I solemnly congratulate and extend thanks to your highly esteemed organizations for organizing the TCDPAP and FIDIC ASPAC International Conference in Nepal with a very important and relevant theme "Making Globalisation Work: The Role of Consultants". I believe it is the high time to focus on the development issues and roles of development partners, since we are now embarking on building a NEW NEPAL after abolishing the feudal monarchy through heroic struggles of Nepalese people only recently.
3. I am of the view that such international Conferences provide unique opportunity to review the progress of past commitments, share experiences and set the resolutions for the future. We the underdeveloped countries highly appreciate the international organisations as FIDIC for sharing their valuable experience accumulated in last 96 years, if I am not mistaken. I was appraised that FIDIC is the world leader in consulting engineering and our construction industry is very much guided by the principles and standards lead by FIDIC.
4. Nepal, one of the poorest countries of the world and caught in the vicious circle of underdevelopment and dependency, has a huge task of poverty eradication & unemployment, promoting sustained economic growth and transforming into a industrialized economy with strong linkages with the world economic system. As you must be aware, the Government of Nepal has set goals for double digit economic growth within next three years and set to start several mega projects in infrastructure and power sector. I understand this is a Herculean task in itself. But I believe this is very much possible if we can act coherently and consistently focused on the target we set. In this revolutionary campaign, we need dedicated cooperation from the consulting community as this august gathering. Engineers, Architects and Planners are the back bone and uncontested leaders of national economic development.
5. At this point of history, I sincerely recognize that the commitments made to the people will take some time to fully translate into reality. As they say Rome was not built in a day, similarly it will take some time to clean the Augean's stable of past regimes and lay a foundation of vibrant NEW NEPAL.

It may be interesting to note that there are five ministers with engineering or architectural background in the present Cabinet. This is a clear manifestation that of how much the new republican government led by the unified CPN (Maoist) is committed to applying an Engineering Approach to the good governance and lead the path of economic development.

6. You must have known that the Government of Nepal has taken an immediate task to make smooth transition of the country into a stable political system and faster economic development. For this, we have stressed on the accomplishment of following two main tasks within the next two years:
  - First, writing a new constitution of the country and lead the peace process to a logical conclusion including restructuring of the state. This is the political agenda, and
  - Second, achieving higher economic growth rate with social justice. This is the economic agenda.
7. In consonance with these two important tasks, the government has set the following strategic and broader economic plans spanning over the short to long term plans in this year's budget, i.e:
  - Relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration,
  - Broad-based economic growth,
  - Social transformation,
  - Investing in infrastructure & power,
  - Restructuring the state, and
  - Public-private partnership in mega projects.
8. For this we have advanced the slogan of "PEACE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR PEACE".
9. Nepal is financially a poor country, but it is very rich in terms of human and natural resources, particularly in hydro-power, precious herbs and other forest based products, flora and fauna and magnificent landscape. We are also in between the two large and fast growing economies, China and India. All these provide immense opportunities for foreign investment in hydropower, tourism, infrastructure and agro-forestry based industries for the mutual benefit of both the foreign investors and the Nepalese people. For this purpose, we have recently set up a high powered Investment Board under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister in order to quickly decide on the large investment projects and provide the facilities from one spot.
10. The agenda looks more technical than political and I see the role of engineers and planners to be dominant in resolving these targets.
11. I was appraised that there will be a business session related to the infrastructure development agenda of Nepal. I hope all delegates will benefit from it and will help to develop strong partnership among us.
12. I am fully confident that this conference will be able to achieve its objectives to identify the role of consultants in the context of the Globalisation scenario induced by accession of Nepal into the World Trade Organisation. Your home work will be of much interest to us since the ability of consulting engineering force will lead the pace task will be of much interest to us since the ability of consulting engineering force will lead the pace of National Development and international partnership. Unless we have a strong and vibrant Engineering Community, the government's plans and Programs will be redundant as in previous decades.
13. In this endeavor, the Government of Nepal jointly with the Society of Consulting Architectural and Engineering Firms and Asian Development Bank is working towards development of a healthy policy for consultancy development in Nepal and very soon will be formulating a Consulting Industry Act of Nepal. I would like to ask all the distinguished international delegates to join hands with us in this endeavor and share your valuable experience and knowledge. I am sure your guidance will help to

make it dynamic, pragmatic and help to develop the consulting industry to a vibrant and sustainable one.

14. At the end, I expect that this International Conference will deliver objective solutions and bold decisions that would help to develop strong leadership for delivery of quality services required for achieving the development targets of the government and the aspirations of the people which would be fulfilled only when the engineering community becomes highly committed to its profession.
15. With this, Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates, I thank you all and extend best wishes for the grand success of the Conference, wish the international delegates happy stay in Nepal. I am sure the host organizers must have made best arrangements for the convenience of our highly respected international delegates.

Thank You..

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(Dr. Baburam Bhattarail)  
Finance Minister,  
The Government of Nepal

Date: March 11, 2009