

WHY SHOULD NEPAL TALK ABOUT DISARMAMENT?

'Disarmament' refers to measures, usually formal agreements used to reduce or completely eliminate use and access to weapons. Amid global narratives, multilateral disarmament and arms limitation remain as key components in maintaining international peace and security. The United Nations especially, prioritizes reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction and emphasizes the need for public awareness and regional mechanisms within global peace and international security frameworks.

Nepal, with its own history of decade long armed conflict (1996-2006) that left more than 13,000 dead, 1300 missing and more than 2,00,000 internally displaced, has closely witnessed the devastations that armed violence can cause. However, going through courses of transitional justice, security sector reform (SSR), disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) as part of the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) 2006, Nepal has been able to create several national-level authorities overseeing disarmament matters domestically and internationally.

LET'S LOOK AT SOME IMPORTANT INLAND EVENTS POST-CIVIL WAR AND THEIR TIMELINE

NEPAL CREATED THE NATIONAL AUTHORITY ON DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS (NADA) AS A NATIONAL-LEVEL AUTHORITY THAT COMPLIES WITH STATE OBLIGATIONS RELATED TO DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND TREATIES

2006



2007

AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF POST-CONFLICT DDR, THE MAOIST COMBATANTS WERE MOVED TO CANTONMENT SITES AND SMALLER SATELLITE CAMPS WITH THE HELP OF UN MISSION IN NEPAL (UNMIN). REPORTEDLY, ALL WEAPONS WERE REGISTERED AND STORED IN A SEALED CONTAINER

ARMS AND AMMUNITION ACT (1962) WAS AMENDED WHICH IS STILL IN USE

2007



2012

AS A PROVISION OF THE CPA AND SUBSEQUENT POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CONFLICTING PARTIES, MAOISTS ALLOWED NEPAL ARMY TO TAKE CONTROL OF SEALED WEAPONS, THEREBY COMPLETING THE DISARMAMENT PROCESS.

Nepal is also the signatory of several regional and international treaties and conventions on disarmament, and they are listed as follows:

TREATIES	YEAR	SIGNATORY	RATIFIED
GENEVA PROTOCOL	1925	1969	
OUTER SPACE TREATY	1967	1967	1967
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)	1968	1968	1970
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION	1972	1972	2016
CONVENTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATION TECHNIQUES	1976		
CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS	1980	---	---
PELINDABA TREATY (AFRICA NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE)	1986		
TREATY ON CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE (CFE)	1990		
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION	1992	1993	1997
BANGKOK TREATY (SOUTHEAST ASIA NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE)	1995		
COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY	1996	1996	
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION	1997		
UN PROTOCOL AGAINST THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS THEIR PARTS AND COMPONENTS AND AMMUNITION (FIREARMS PROTOCOL)	2001		
CENTRAL ASIA NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE TREATY	2006		
CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS	2008		
ARMS TRADE TREATY	2013		
TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS	2017	2017	
PARTIAL TEST BAN TREATY	1963	1963	1964
SEA-BED TREATY	1971	1971	1971

Although signatory to many treaties on disarmament affairs, Nepal's current status and stand in peace and security discourses and its role in deescalating strategic rivalries in Asia-Pacific region is undermined. Hence, wider discussions on region-oriented approaches must be ensued to advance non-proliferation and disarmament discourses to achieve sustainable peace and security.

Source: Arms Imports (SIPRI trend indicator values)
Ansorg, & Strasheim, 2019
Civilian Firearms Holdings, 2017
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs