



3.4.2010

NEPAL New constitution should not enshrine anti-conversion proposals, warns CSW

A new briefing on Nepal, released today by CSW, argues the case for strong protections of religious freedom to be enshrined in the new constitution, which is due to be adopted by 28 May 2010.

The briefing contends that “as Nepal formalizes the transition from Hindu monarchy to secular republic, the right to freedom of religion and belief must be protected if the transition is to be a successful one”. It notes that “the current interim constitution fails to protect religious freedom in a manner consistent with international law”, and warns that current constitutional proposals are akin to anti-conversion legislation in five states in India.

Tina Lambert CSW’s Advocacy Director said: “Freedom of religion and belief is a fundamental right, enshrined in the human rights instruments which are binding upon Nepal. However, in Nepal’s present circumstances, freedom of religion takes on special significance because of the wider transition from a religious monarchy to a pluralist democracy. Nepal is undergoing a sensitive process of transformation, and we therefore strongly encourage the Constituent Assembly to enshrine proper protections for religious freedom, in order to safeguard the rights of all Nepal’s citizens, and to minimize the potential for religious intolerance in the future”.

Briefing available at: <http://dynamic.csw.org.uk/article.asp?t=report&id=124>