13th SAARCLAW Conference and 10th SAARC Chief Justices’ Conference:

SAARCLAW Nepal Chapter hosted a well-organized, well attended and a successful 13th SAARCLAW and 10th SAARC Chief Justices' conference. The conference was inaugurated by the Hon’ble President and Prime Minister of Nepal.

SAARCLAW is striving to bring the Legal Fraternity in South Asia together. The member countries of SAARC and its legal community have often felt the need to be closer and work together for better life and effective understanding through shared learning in the field of law reforms, enforcement, and justice administration, good governance with special advantages for regional cooperation, development and growth. There is a growing need amongst the member countries to focus on regional infrastructure as a means to facilitate meaningful connectivity for regional trade and free flow of ideas, goods, services, technology and resources as lack of connectivity will hinder regional development in all dimensions. The Legal Community of SAARC region has explored the possibility of enhancing connectivity in SAARC through law, justice, good governance and development. SAARCLAW Conference and Chief Justices Conference is one of the major steps of SAARCLAW to turn the vision and mission of the organization into reality. SAARCLAW organized 13th SAARCLAW Conference and 10th Chief Justices Conference on the 5th-6th March 2016 at Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu, Nepal. The conference was inspired by the theme of SAARC Conference of head of the states and government that was held in February, 2015 at Kathmandu. The theme of the conference was “Connecting SAARC through Law, Justice, Good Governance and Development”. The conference was attended by the Chief Justices or its representatives from and the legal fraternity from South Asia. Kathmandu Declaration has been adopted by the Chief Justices or their representatives in 10th Chief Justices' Conference held in Kathmandu, Nepal, 5-6 March 2016.
INTERNATIONAL IDEA (INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE):

An MOU for a period of five years has been entered into with the International IDEA on 14th June, 2016. The signatories being Mr. Yves Leterme, Secretary General on behalf of International IDEA and Mr. Muhammad Mohsen Rashid, Secretary General on behalf of SAARCLAW.

WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL:

An MOU has been entered into with World Vision South Asia Pacific Regional Office (WVSAPo) effective from 15th December, 2016. The signatories being Mr. Jan De Waal, Regional Leader on behalf of World Vision South Asia and Pacific Regional Office and Mr. Muhammad Mohsen Rashid, Secretary General on behalf of SAARCLAW.

SOLIDARITY CENTRE

An MOU has been signed with the Solidarity Centre on 22nd September, 2016 at the Regional Secretariat, Kathmandu Nepal. The signatories being Mr. Muhammad Mohsen Rashid, Secretary General SAARCLAW on behalf of SAARCLAW and Ms. Charito Riley, Country Program Director, Solidarity Centre on behalf of Solidarity Centre.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY SAARCLAW

Conference on “Accelerating Efforts to End Child Marriage in South Asia through Joint Action with Regional and National Human Rights Institutions and in Partnership with Key Regional Partners”, organized by SAIEVAC on 2nd – 3rd June, 2016.
“Regional Consultation on the SDG Alliance 8.7 – South Asia Launch” organized by SAIEVAC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (MoLHR), National Commission for Women and Children and the NAGC (SAIEVAC National Mechanisms) and the Royal Government of Bhutan on 19th – 20th July, 2016

“Sub-Regional Workshop for lawyers on Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and Access to Justice for Migrant Workers” organized by Solidarity Centre in collaboration with LBB Sri Lanka Chapter on 1st–2nd August, 2016.

“2nd Regional Convening on using law to promote accountability to end Child Marriage in South Asia” organized by SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat and Centre for Reproductive Rights (CRR), hosted by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW), [SAIEVAC National Mechanism], Government of Nepal on 19th-20th September, 2016, held in Pokhara, Nepal.

“4th South Asia Reproductive Justice and Accountability Initiative (SARJAI) Regional Workshop” organized by Centre for Reproductive Rights (CRR) on 22nd-23rd September, 2016 held in Kathmandu, Nepal.

SAIEVAC-SAARCLAW Conference on Review of Joint Research “Mapping of Legal Instruments” and “Legal Review on Strengthening Responses On Trafficked and Missing Children in Bangladesh, India and Nepal” conducted in India on 19th- 20th April, 2016.

A “Seminar on Importance of SARCO (SAARC Arbitration Council) as Regional Arbitration Centre for Development of Trade & Investment & The Context of Arbitration in Nepal” conducted by SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) in collaboration with Nepal Council of Arbitration (NEPCA) and Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI)
4.1 Courtesy Call on Hon’ble Minister Shri D. V. Sadananda Gowda, Minister of Law and Justice, India on 19th April, 2016

4.2 Courtesy Call on H.E. Arjun Bahadur Thapa, Secretary General, SAARC on 2nd June, 2016.

4.3 Courtesy call on Mr. Hon’ble Mr. K. P. Sharma Oli. Hon’ble Prime Minister of Nepal on 2nd June, 2016.

4.4 Courtesy call on Mr. Agni Prasad Kharel, Rt. Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs on 2nd June, 2016.

4.5 Courtesy call on Hon’ble Mr. Justice Mr. K. Sripavan, Chief Justice of Sri Lanka on 13th June, 2016.

4.6 Courtesy call on Mr. D.M. Swaminathan, Hon’ble Minister of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Affairs, Sri Lanka on 14th June, 2016.
4.7 Courtesy call on Mr. Mangala Samaraweera, Hon’ble Minister of Foreign Affairs on 2nd August, 2016

4.8 Courtesy call on Mr. Sagala Ratnayaka, Hon’ble Minister of Law & Order and Southern Development/ Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister on 1st August, 2016

4.9 Courtesy Call on H.E. Rt. Hon’ble Ms. Bidhya Devi Bhandari, President of Nepal on 23rd, September, 2016 in Nepal.

4.10 Courtesy Call on Hon’ble Mr. Nanda Bahadur Pun, Vice President of Nepal, on 23rd September, 2016 in Nepal.

4.10 Courtesy Call on Hon’ble Minister Bimalendra Nidhi, Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal and Minister of Home Affairs, Government Of Nepal, on 23rd September, 2016 in Nepal.

NEWLY ELECTED EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS (2016-2018)

PRESIDENT:
Mr. Mehmood Y. Mandviwalla  
Country: Pakistan  
Email: mehmood@mandviwallaandzafar.com, mehmoodmandviwalla@gmail.com

TREASURER
Ms. Pelden Wangmo  
Country: Bhutan  
Email: paydayw@gmail.com, paydayw@hotmail.com

SECRETARY GENERAL
Mr. Muhammad Moihsen Rashid  
Country: Bangladesh  
Email: mnr_51@hotmail.com, mrashid@mohsenandmoihsen.com

VICE PRESIDENTS:
Mr. M. K. Rahman  
Country: Bangladesh  
Email: mkrahman1951@gmail.com

Hon’ble Mr. Justice Norbu Tshering  
Country: Bhutan  
Email: notshering@yahoo.co.uk

Prof. Habib-ur-Rahman  
Country: Pakistan  
Email: habiburrahman@cyber.net.pk, habib@habiburco.com

Mr. Hamant K. Batra  
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Prof. Habib-ur-Rahman  
Country: Pakistan  
Email: habiburrahman@cyber.net.pk, habib@habiburco.com

PERMANENT/LIFE MEMBERS:
Hon’ble Mr. Justice Sonam Tobgye (Retd.)  
Country: Bhutan  
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Hon’ble Mr. Justice Kalyan Shrestha (Retd.)  
Country: Nepal  
Email: kalyanjee@gmail.com

Mr. K.K. Venugopal  
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Ms. Tania Amir  
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Hon’ble Mr. Justice Sonam Tobgye. (Retd.)  
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Mr. K. K. Venugopal  
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Email: kkvenu@iasdl01.vsnl.net.in, kkvenu@vsnl.com

Mr. Amir UL Islam  
Country: Bangladesh  
Email: info@aalabd.com
SAARCLAW Regional Secretariat has been established in Kathmandu, Nepal with the support of Asian Development Bank, Philippines in January, 2016.
SAARCLAW Website that was launched in Year 2011 has a new look. It has a more user friendly, pleasant and professional interface. The new and updated photo slideshow along with the data feature keeps the visitor well-informed about the latest developments in the region. Please visit us: www.saarclaw.org

Kathmandu Declaration Adopted by the 10th Chief Justices’ Conference held in Kathmandu, Nepal, 5-6 March 2016

Whereas, independence of judiciary is the foundation of democracy, rule of law, human rights and social justice; and

Whereas, the judiciary, as the custodian of the constitution, has a prominent role to play in promoting and nurturing its values; and

Whereas, there is a need to promote constitutional culture through collective consciousness among the SAARC nations; and

Whereas, judicial reform is a multi-dimensional and continuous process, which requires a holistic approach; and

Whereas, cooperation between the judiciaries in the Region, through the sharing of judgments on human rights, public interest litigation, environmental and commercial cases, also facilitates access to justice for all; and

Whereas, the establishment of a SAARCLAW arbitration center in the Region, would further facilitate economic and social development and justice;

Now, therefore, the 10th Chief Justices’ Conference, attended by Hon’ble Chief Justice of Bangladesh Mr. Surendra Kumar Sinha, Hon’ble Chief Justice of Bhutan Mr. Tshering Wangchuk, Hon’ble Chief Justice of India Mr. T. S. Thakur, Hon’ble Chief Justice of Nepal Mr. Kalyan Shrestha, Hon’ble Justice Mr. Ejaz Afzal Khan representing Hon’ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, and Hon’ble Chief Justice of Sri Lanka Mr. K. Sripavan,

Do hereby Resolve and Declare the following through the Kathmandu Declaration:

1. Take initiatives to disseminate judgments relating to human rights, public interest litigation, environmental and commercial law through the website of the SAARCLAW, along with an alert system while uploading new judgments.


2. Publish periodic SAARC Law Reports containing landmark judgments and decisions of the apex courts of the SAARC countries.

3. Foster regional cooperation for the establishment of a SAARCLAW Arbitration Centre in Kathmandu, Nepal.

4. Make further use of national judicial academies for mutual exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences of judges, judicial officials and law practitioners in the Region, through training and exchange of visits.

5. Share the best practices in court management among the judiciaries in the Region.

6. Further collaborate with the relevant stakeholders including civil society in order to enhance access to justice for all.

7. Urge the respective governments to provide adequate resources to the judiciary for strengthening its institutional capacity.

And, we do hereby further resolve to forward this Declaration to the SAARC Law for such action as may be considered necessary.

(Mr. Surendra Kumar Sinha)
Hon’ble Chief Justice of Bangladesh

(Mr. Tshering Wangchuk)
Hon’ble Chief Justice of Bhutan

(Mr. T. S. Thakur)
Hon’ble Chief Justice of India

(Mr. Kalyan Shrestha)
Hon’ble Chief Justice of Nepal

(Mr. Ejaz Afzal Khan)
Hon’ble Justice representing Hon’ble Chief Justice of Pakistan

(Mr. K. Sripavan)
Hon’ble Chief Justice of Sri Lanka

Given in Kathmandu on Sunday, the 6th of March 2016.

Supreme Court Link: http://www.supremecourt.gov.np/web/index.php/index