



**Christian leaders pledge to pray and work together  
for transformation in South Asia**

**Transform World South Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal, 21-24 October 2009**

The Transform World conference was the first ever gathering in South Asia of Christian leaders representing the eight South Asian nations and their Diasporas.

The 70 participants were deeply encouraged as they heard of God's remarkable work across the region and as they met their counterparts from neighbouring countries. They sensed a new mandate for South Asia and a commitment to pray for each other, to go on developing relationships and to find new ways to serve each other and share resources between their different countries and ministries.

They expressed this commitment in eight affirmations (see below).

From the beginning there was a sense of belonging together.

"I felt very much at home; we understood each other so well. I realised there is so much synergy and potential for sharing resources."

Nepal's Tourism Minister, opening the conference, expressed his feeling that "you love each other, appreciate each other, applaud each other, you care for each other".

For some this was a first experience, especially those from India and Pakistan.

"It was an eye opener to learn about Pakistan."

"I love India and have prayed for it since I was young. Today I prayed for the first time for Pakistan."

Not only these two countries but all the others had the opportunity of praying for each other.

The conference recognised the contribution of the Diaspora in shaping this identity as South Asian followers of Christ.

Country case studies gave an understanding of transformation taking place across the region, with new freedoms and rapid church growth in some places, along with severe restrictions and intense pressure in several contexts. Each case study provoked questions and lively discussion as valuable lessons and insights were shared – why had some countries or ministries advanced so much in certain areas?

All the South Asian countries are experiencing change and some face considerable uncertainty. Nepal hopes for transformation through its new constitution, with reconciliation and understanding between communities: "We want this to be a country of equality, a country for everyone", said the Minister.

The conference recognised the church's task to engage with political and cultural leaders, decision makers and opinion formers, bringing Biblical values and praying for transformation of individuals and society through changed minds, while calling all to salvation in Jesus Christ alone. A panel session explored the changing political and social situation in each country and the church's response.

It was an extraordinary privilege – and a huge encouragement to the Nepalese church – for a small delegation to be invited to meet the Prime Minister, who expressed support for religious freedom in Nepal. The group presented a statement of support (see appendix) and expressed their commitment to pray for Nepal and its leaders.

The commitment to on-going prayer for each country and for the region as a whole was probably the most significant outcome of the conference. Along with this was the recognition that the way to develop true partnership is through building relationships, between country groups and between ministries and individuals across the countries.

Much of the time was spent in nine focus groups, seeking to identify common challenges and opportunities and find ways of sharing resources and working together. Numerous ideas and some specific plans emerged from these groups and from individual contacts, such as

- \* Health care projects in Pakistan plan to meet counterparts from India – using Nepal as a neutral place.
- \* A seminary in Colombo has requested an Indian from Abu Dhabi to come and help its extension students with small businesses to improve their business so that they are better able to have time for their study
- \* Sri Lanka pledged to increase its links with the Maldives
- \* An Indian dentist will develop a network for health professionals across the region
- \* The need for relevant foundation discipleship material was expressed: another participant already has material which can be shared.
- \* Nepal and Bhutan ministries plan to help each other with personnel
- \* The women from Bangladesh plan to invite women from India to visit them.
- \* Several business projects were discussed with a view to partnerships
- \* A seminary in Colombo agreed to develop a curriculum for teaching stewardship

The participants left conscious of a developing new identity, committed to "think regionally", to go on building relationships and to seek, through sustained prayer and witness, God's transformation in South Asia.

Again it was the Minister who set the tone in his opening welcome:

"If you can transform the world like this, in the name of Jesus, to follow his path and instruction, then you will have a great world, a great people, with reconciliation and understanding."

## **TRANSFORM WORLD: SOUTH ASIA 2009**

### **Affirmations**

We, the 70 delegates of the Transform World: South Asia 2009 are grateful to God for the opportunity to participate in this first ever gathering of Christian leaders representing the eight South Asian nations and their Diasporas in Kathmandu, Nepal from October 21-24, 2009. We have been greatly encouraged by our coming together to learn, to be informed and to build relationships across national borders.

### **We affirm**

- that God is on a mission of transformation which extends beyond our own individual country representation to all the nations of the South Asian region, calling us to participate in His mission.
- that we recognize and express commitment to serve the Church within our own countries in her own journey of transformation and also to serve each other between our different countries, giving and receiving as faithful stewards.
- our commitment towards developing a South Asian regional identity which calls the Body of Christ from countries represented here and also the Diaspora scattered across the globe.
- that as we call our peoples to salvation in Jesus Christ alone, we recognize that our transformational journey includes intentional engagement with national, political, cultural and other influence and opinion makers within our region.
- our recognition that in certain contexts of South Asia, the Church is facing intense pressure for the sake of Christ and we pledge our solidarity, assistance and prayer on her behalf.
- that prayer is the undergirding of our service and ministry; and we therefore commit ourselves to sustained individual and collective prayer.
- the contribution of the Diaspora towards our identity as South Asian followers of Christ and we welcome gladly our ongoing engagement together.
- that we need to continue strengthening our personal and corporate relationships in the Body of Christ across cultures and national boundaries.

As we return to our countries of service, we humble ourselves before God Almighty, and seek His direction and blessing on our lives and ministries. We commit ourselves towards the fulfilment of the Great Commission and look forward with eager anticipation to the glorious appearing of our Savior to receive His Bride – the global Church of Jesus Christ! Amen.

**Transform World: South Asia 2009**  
**October 21-24, 2009**  
**Kathmandu, Nepal**

**To**

**His Excellency The Prime Minister of Nepal**  
**Rt. Hon'ble Madhav Kumar Nepal**

We, the Chairman, Steering Committee members and Delegates of the Transform World: South Asia 2009 conference, being held in Kathmandu, Nepal from October 21-24, 2009 would like to greet His Excellency the Prime Minister of Nepal and thank Him for the warm hospitality of his nation for the purpose of this conference.

About 70 servants of Jesus Christ from eight SAARC countries have gathered in the city of Kathmandu, to consider ways and means to share the message of God's love in our respective nations. We are convinced that Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace and offers heavenly blessings to His children who seek Him and follow in His ways.

This message of God's love is transformative. It affects all domains of human society and activity. We believe that God is interested in transforming our nations, communities and societies so that they reflect his peace, purposes and plans. Mission is transformational – where individuals are being called to be conformed to the image of Christ, and Churches are being challenged to be renewed and reformed to align with God's greater purposes.

Through the pages of the Holy Bible, God articulates His concern for the poor, the marginalized and the downtrodden. His compassion reaches to the sick, to the realm of the children and family, to business enterprise, to education and empowerment and also to our unique and precious cultures. He however reigns in righteousness and justice and requires that his followers also embody these values. As He is over all, his love and wisdom is promised for godly rulers and leaders who seek Him with their full heart. We are aware that God Almighty, the Lord Jesus Christ loves Nepal and the people of this great country. We are therefore encouraged knowing that God will bless you, help you, guide you and strengthen you in the important task at hand – in restoring and renewing peace and stability in the land of Nepal.

We commit to pray for the people of Nepal and also to work towards God's peace in this country. We have gathered as friends of Nepal representing several nations in the region and the diaspora. As servants of Jesus Christ, we pray His peace, blessings and grace to continuously surround His Excellency the Prime Minister and family, the Council of Ministers, other leaders and elders in the country and to our brothers and sisters in the great land of Nepal.

Prof. Dr. Ram Gidoomal CBE  
Chairman, TW South Asia 2009

Mr. S. P. Kalaunee  
Local Host Committee

October 22, 2009

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