

Political Transition in Nepal: Challenges and Limitations to Post-Conflict Peace-Building

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Abstract : Since the process of decolonization in 1940, several countries in South Asia have witnessed intra-state conflicts owing to ineffective political governance. The conflicts have remained protracted as the countries have failed to make a holistic transition to a democratic state. Nepal is one such South Asian country facing a tumultuous journey from monarchy to republicanism. The paper aims to focus on the democratic transition in the context of Nepal's political, legal and economic institutions. The presence of autocratic feudalistic and centralised state structure with entrenched socio-economic inequalities has resulted in mass uprising only to see the country slip back to the old order. Even a violent civil war led by the Maoists could not overhaul the political relations or stabilize the democratic space. The paper aims to analyse the multiple political, institutional and operational challenges in the implementation of the peace agreement with the Maoist. Looking at the historical background, the paper will examine the problematic nation-building that lies at the heart of fragile peace process in Nepal. Regional dynamics have played a big role in convoluting the peace-building. The new constitution aimed at conflict resolution brought to the open, deep seated hatred among different ethnic groups in Nepal. Apart from studying the challenges to the peace process and the role of external players like India and China in the political reconstruction, the paper will debate on a viable federal solution to the ethnic conflict in Nepal. If the current government fails to pass a constitution accepted by most ethnic groups, Nepal will remain on the brink of new conflict outbreaks.

Keywords : democratisation, ethnic conflict, Nepal, peace process

Conference Title : ICCRM 2017 : International Conference on Conflict Resolution and Management

Conference Location : Bangkok, Thailand

Conference Dates : November 29-30, 2017