Press Release

Hon. Minister Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat held meetings with Hon. Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senator the Hon. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific at their respective offices in the Australian Parliament House here today. During the meetings, issues of bilateral and mutual interests were discussed.

Hon'ble Minister Dr. Mahat expressed that the relations between Nepal and Australia are very good and added that they should be enhanced further in the days to come. Hon'ble Minister requested his Australian counterpart Hon. Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs for making arrangement in issuing visa to the Nepali students and the visitors willing to visit Australia from the Australian Embassy in Kathmandu, increasing development assistance to Nepal, resumption of assistance which was cut earlier, increase Australian investment in energy, infrastructure and other potential areas. In her response, regarding the visa matter the Hon'ble Minister Ms. Bishop said that she would look into the matter positively and would consult with the concerned Department to arrive at appropriate decision.

Hon'ble Minister Dr. Mahat said that given the size and economic power of Australia in South East Asia and the Pacific, Australia can increase its support to Nepal, the country which is severely affected by a massive earthquake last year. He also appreciated Australian Government and the people of Australia for their spontaneous support to the earthquakes affected people in the phase of rescue, recovery and relief operation and expressed sincere thanks for the commitment Australia has made for reconstruction and rehabilitation works.

Both the Ministers acknowledged the contribution of the Nepalese Diaspora in Australia to the economy of both Australia and Nepal and promoting people to people contact between the two countries. Hon'ble Minister Ms Julie Bishop said that Australia is willing to enhance investment in the energy sector of Nepal. Both the Minister exchanged their views in enhancing the level of interactions through the exchange of bilateral visits. Hon'ble Ms Bishop also inquired about the progress made in the reconstruction and rehabilitation works to which Hon'ble Minister Dr. Mahat explained the ground reality on this matter. He said that Government of Nepal has been supporting the earthquake affected people paying attention that there would be no duplication of works. Both the Ministers expressed satisfaction on the successful Australian projects in Nepal that were undertaken in the past. Discussions were also held to support the candidature of each other countries in multilateral fora. Hon'ble Dr. Mahat also invited his counter part to visit Nepal at her convenient time.

Similarly, Hon'ble Dr. Mahat and Ms. Hon. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, exchanged their views on future cooperation between Nepal and Australia, issue of Bhutanese refugees and the matter pertaining to the sharing of Nepal's experiences in disaster management.

Later on, the Speaker of the Australian Parliament welcomed and acknowledged the presence of Hon'ble Minister Dr. Mahat in the Parliament House.

Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs also met Ms. Penny Wong, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate and Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon' Mark Butler MP, National President of Australian Labour Party and Shadow Minister of Climate Change and Energy, Hon. Mark Dreyfus, QC, MP, and Shadow Minister for National Security, Hon Chris Bowen MP, Shadow Treasurer, Hon. Shane Neumann MP, Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection at the Parliament today.

Earlier, Hon. Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat arrived at the Kingsford International Airport, Sydney on 23 November 2016. Hon. Minister was received by Mr. Rajendra Pandey, Charge d' Affaires, a.i., of the Embassy of Nepal and the representatives of Nepali communities in Australia.

Embassy of Nepal
Canberra, Australia

24 November 2016