

Hon'ble Minister, your Excellencies, Secretary Mr. Kadariya, Agency representatives and Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by extending my thanks to you for accepting the invitation to attend this meeting despite your very busy schedule and current political situation. I welcome you all to this meeting.

I have the honor and privilege to inform you that Government of Nepal is organising a regional high-level meeting on rainwater harvesting. This is scheduled for 27-29 May 2009. The objective of today's meeting is to brief your excellencies and senior officials of diplomatic missions on the relevance and priority accorded by the Government of Nepal to this event, and to request your support to make this event a success.

The forthcoming ministerial meeting on Rainwater Harvesting, proposed in Kathamndu is our longstanding commitment, which was made in the last regional ministerial meeting held in September 2006, Kandy, Sri Lanka. The meeting in Sri Lanka discussed about the collection and use of rainwater in South Asia Region for common benefits of our people. It proved to be a fruitful exchange of ideas. I would like to recall here that the fifteenth SAARC Summit held in August 2008 in Colombo, Sri Lanka has also emphasized on regional cooperation in this field.

Nepal has realized the potential of rainwater harvesting technique and sees it as a very effective tool to achieve its target of providing universal access to basic water supply to all by the year 2017. People in highlands with limited physical and financial resources, people in urban areas with short supply and agricultural demand where water is not abundantly available will particularly benefit from this technology. Groundwater recharge is another potential area for rainwater utilization.

In this context, we accord a high priority to this meeting and expect your active support. I once again welcome you in this briefing session.

Thank you

