

Kathmandu Resolution

We, the Heads of delegations and representatives of the Members of the Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA), namely Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

HAVING assembled for the 12th Conference of this Forum in Kathmandu on 4-5 September 2024.

EXPRESSING abiding commitments to realizing the overarching objectives as enshrined in the Charter of the FEMBoSA to promote close contacts and cooperation among the Election Management Bodies of its members for conducting the elections in a free, fair and transparent manner.

UNDERSCORING the importance of strengthening institutional as well as human resource capacity of the Election Management Bodies of the members for enabling them to carry out their respective constitutional mandates in an effective, efficient and expeditious fashion.

EMPHASIZING the need of continued cooperation and collaboration among the members to make this Forum fit for its Charter.

ACKNOWLEDGING the increasing momentum of enhanced cooperation through the exchanges of experiences, expertise, best modalities and practices in the areas of over-all elections management including the use of ICTs in electoral processes.

STRESSING our common resolve to enhance collaborative efforts in tackling existing and emerging challenges in the elections management.

REAFFIRMING our sincere commitments to further strengthening this regional mechanism to our mutual advantages.

APPRECIATING the outgoing FEMBoSA Chair, Election Commission of Bhutan for its excellent stewardship and valuable contribution for the past two years in

keeping with the FEMBoSA Charter through a collaborative and coordinated approach in the common interests of the member countries.

Have hereby unanimously agreed to the following resolutions:

1. We firmly believe that maintaining fairness, integrity and transparency of the elections at all levels is crucial for institutionalizing a vibrant democracy for peace, stability and prosperity of our member countries and the people. We have learned a lesson from the COVID-19 outbreak that democracy and integrity of elections can be at serious risk during such challenging times, and we must therefore pursue a collaborative approach to deal with such unforeseen and crisis situations.
2. Considering a vital role of electoral processes in the democratic governance system, we express strong solidarity to each other and remain committed to maintaining electoral integrity crucial for promoting democratic norms and values. We reaffirm our commitments to exploring diverse ways of working together to strengthen institutional as well as human capacity of our electoral institutions.
3. We recommit to further promote mutual cooperation and engagements, policy innovation as well as learnings among the Election Management Bodies of the members by sharing each other's knowledge products and other relevant study reports and research publications including through online platforms.
4. We extend our sincere appreciation to India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), Election Commission of India (ECI) for holding relevant workshops, seminars and providing various training programmes to enhance the capacity, skills and knowledge of the personnel working in electoral institutions of the members; and encourage the

IIIDEM as well as other relevant institutions to offer such training programmes and workshops in future.

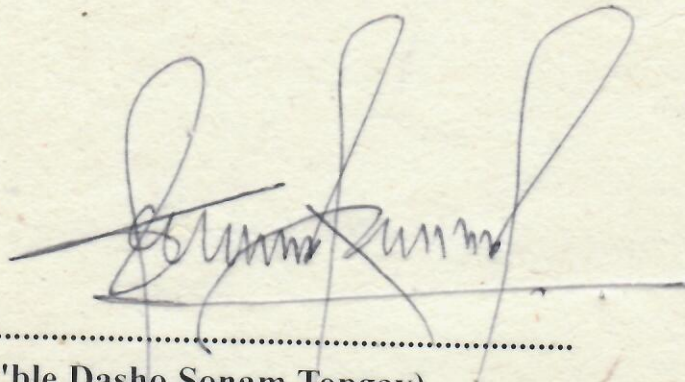
5. As climate change has posed an existential threat to humanity due to its adverse impacts on economy, people's health and livelihood including electoral processes and institutions, we commit to promote and apply innovative, resource-efficient and environment-friendly electoral management techniques, practices and logistics as part of our collective efforts for protecting and preserving the environment in a more sustainable manner.
6. We agree to frame common strategies and action plans to leverage the opportunities emanating from innovative social media platforms including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and to promote collaboration in controlling and mitigating the risks as well as challenges from these emerging technological developments.
7. We share the view that the appropriate use and application of ICTs in all aspects of electoral governance system plays a critical role in conducting, managing and regulating the elections related processes as well as sensitizing the relevant stakeholders including voters, political parties and their candidates in respect of the matters related to the elections. In this regard, we note that the introduction of digital tools and techniques in the electoral system has opened up new opportunities as well as challenges.
8. We emphasize the importance of incorporating the eligible citizens who are outside of their respective member countries for employment, education or other legitimate purposes, in the electoral processes in line with prevailing laws in the respective FEMBoSA member countries as to make elections

more participatory, inclusive and agree to undertake pragmatic measures, as appropriate.

9. We underscore effective, timely and expeditious implementation of important decisions made and consensus reached during the past conferences/meetings for achieving our shared objectives and result-focused outcomes in electoral management.
10. We congratulate the Election Commission, Nepal for assuming the Chairship of the FEMBoSA and commit to extend our full support and cooperation during its tenure to realise the objectives and the spirit of the FEMBoSA Charter.
11. We – the member countries of FEMBoSA – unequivocally agree to form a Secretariat of FEMBoSA at the Election Management Body of the member country designated as Chair for a period of its chairship. The Secretariat is expected to make regular contacts with Election Commissions of FEMBoSA members, keep updated records of important policy as well as programmatic measures collectively undertaken, organise collaborative works under the auspices of FEMBoSA. The outgoing Chair will present a Stewardship Report at the next FEMBoSA Conference/Meeting.
12. We - Hon'ble Dasho Sonam Topgay, Chief Election Commissioner of the Election Commission of Bhutan; Hon'ble Mr. Nitesh Kumar Vyas, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner of the Election Commission of India; Hon'ble Mr. Fuwad Thowfeek, Chairman of the Election Commission of the Maldives; Hon'ble Mr. Dinesh Kumar Thapaliya, Chief Election Commissioner of the Election Commission, Nepal and Hon'ble Mr. R. M. A.

L. Rathnayake, Chairman of the Election Commission of Sri Lanka - hereby endorse the Kathmandu Resolution.

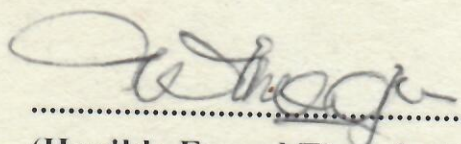
Adopted at Kathmandu, Nepal on 5th September 2024.



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(Hon'ble Dasho Sonam Topgay)
Chief Election Commissioner
Election Commission of Bhutan



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(Hon'ble Nitesh Kumar Vyas)
Senior Deputy Election Commissioner
Election Commission of India



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(Hon'ble Fuwad Thowfeek)
Chairman
Election Commission of the Maldives

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(Hon'ble R. M. A. L. Rathnayake)
Chairman
Election Commission of Sri Lanka

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to

(Hon'ble Dinesh Kumar Thapaliya)
Chairperson, Forum of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia
and Chief Election Commissioner
Election Commission, Nepal

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