

UPF-Nepal Chair Ek Nath Dhakal meets with Pakistani government leaders

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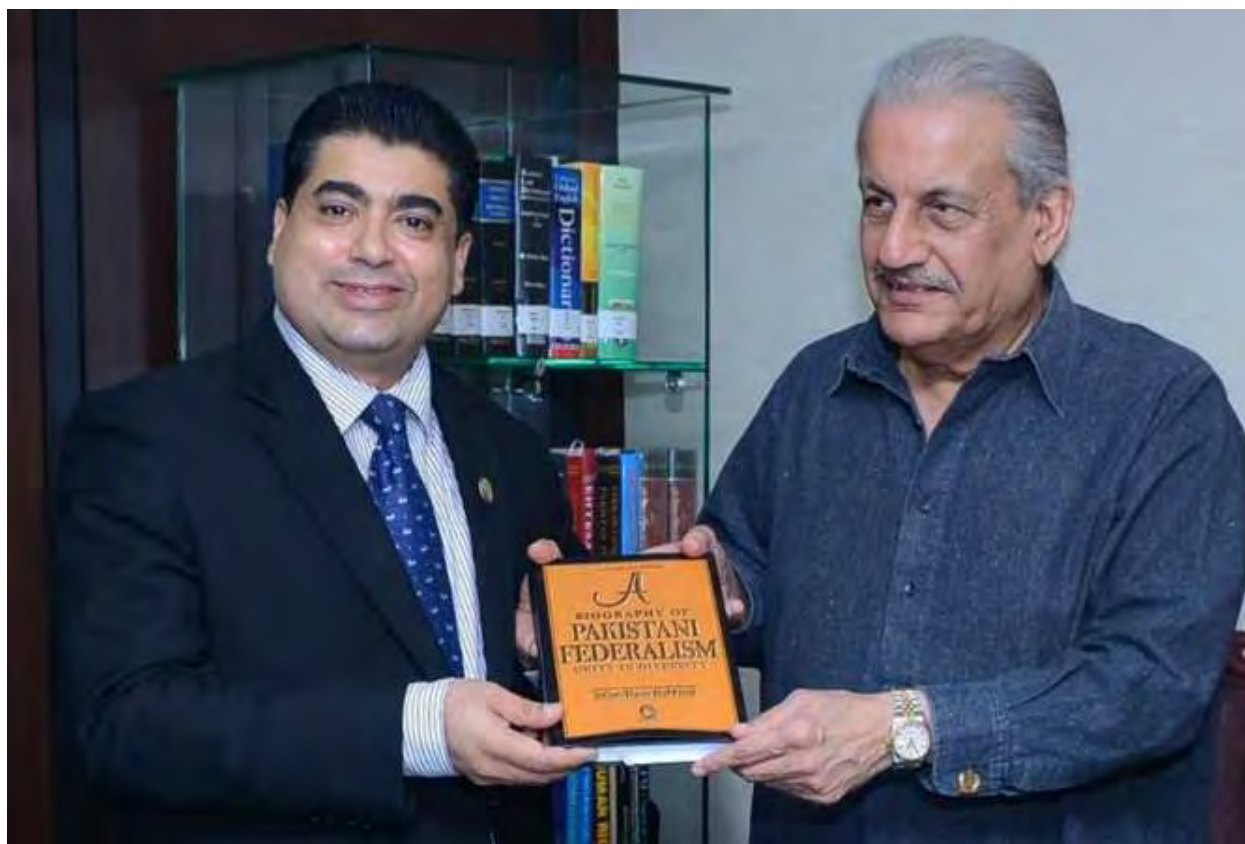
Islamabad, Pakistan -- UPF-Nepal Chair Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal, former minister of peace and reconstruction of Nepal, met with government leaders in Pakistan during a visit to the country in September. In his meetings, he stressed the importance of peace and security in South Asia as prerequisites for socio-economic transformation of the region.

During his four-day trip from September 26 to 30, 2016, Mr. Dhakal met with the Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, Hon. Mian Raza Rabbani, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Hon. Sartaj Aziz. In his meetings with Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Aziz, Mr. Dhakal introduced the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP)[1]. He emphasized that South Asia has every potential to progress but still lags in its development, and called for a new level of cooperation and understanding among members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), as a first step toward achieving peace and stability in the region.

In addition, the Nepalese lawmaker met with the Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Interior and Narcotics Control of Pakistan, Hon. Baligh-ur-Rehman as well as Pakistani Senators Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed; Hon. Muhammad Usman Khan Kakar; and Hon. Sardar Muhammad Azam Khan Musakhel.

On September 28, Mr. Dhakal joined the opening program of the 7th National Youth Peace Festival: "Youth for Peace and Countering Violent Extremism" as the keynote speaker. In his address to the more than 500 young people in attendance, he stressed, "We must help to raise our young generation to be future leaders with a global mindset."

Mr. Dhakal was also a keynote speaker at the South Asia Peace Initiative (SAPI)[2] conference that took place at the National Library of Pakistan on September 29. At the event, whose theme was “Addressing the Critical Challenges of Our Time: The Role of Governments, Civil Society & Faith-Based Organizations,” Mr. Dhakal introduced the vision and mission of the IAPP and said, “We must act today as a positive and peaceful agent of change of our society. We need to act urgently to help nations and this world avoid further division and misfortune.”



[1] The IAPP, a project of UPF, is an international network of lawmakers, current and former, who collaborate together to advance peace and human development at all levels of society. It advocates “micro peace” centering on the ethical and moral values needed to create peace and harmony in the home which can be scaled-up to apply at the social, national, regional and global levels.

The initiative was first proposed during UPF's International Leadership Conference convened in Seoul, Korea in February this year. More than 800 participants, including nearly 150 current parliamentarians from 40 nations, attended a special session held at the Korean National Assembly building chaired by the Speaker of the Korean Assembly, Hon. Kim Eul-dong.

[2] SAPI brings together people from all social disciplines to build common ground based on universally shared values, rooted in the family. The focus is to foster sustainable development, mutual prosperity and regional amity in South Asia. Since 2005, nineteen programs have been held throughout this region, including in: Nepal, India, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and, most recently, in Pakistan.