



The chairman and members of NASEA silver jubilee celebration committee, NASEA and NAG executive body, NASEA members-life members-former presidents, distinguished guests, friends of Nepal, ladies and gentlemen:

Good Morning and Namaste!

It is indeed my great pleasure to address the silver jubilee celebration of Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASEA) in this great city of Atlanta. It is refreshing that NASEA now is a 25-year old 501(c) (3) institution, a fully grown adult. As it might be common with any associations or organizations, NASEA has been and will be passing through the following four phases of transformation:

1. **Foundation and stabilization** (1991-1999)
2. **Institutionalization and capacity building** (1999 – 2009)
3. **Democratization and competition** (2009 –Present)
4. **Immortalization through continuous democratic reforms** (final stage and it should start from this day onwards) (अमर्त्यता Never-ending)

I was privileged to witness, initiate, and participate in the first three above mentioned phases of the transformations. Our sincere expectations from the future generation will be for making it more perfect institution through further democratization and persistently calibrating its drawbacks to better serve our community. Our goal should be set high to accomplish the missions of the association playing by more actions than arguments and always keeping humility for: preserving Nepalese culture and values; advocating human rights, freedom and peace; and serving humanity.

“Yeti Views” served as mouthpiece of NASEA for many years prior to the IT/IoT boom, online news, and YouTube. In fact, it was the only source of news about Nepal for many of us living in the US. The name of the newsletter “Yeti Views” was decided after a long deliberation at a gathering hosted by Dr. Jyoti Rayamajhi (the first General Secretary) and other families in Auburn, Alabama. Actually, a name Yeti Express was coined by a visiting Nepal Army Captain; however, to make it mouthpiece as well as news disseminator for the time being and ultimately aiming to convert it to a scholarly journal in the long run, I proposed the name as “Yeti Views”, and it was accepted unanimously. The word “Yeti” directs us towards the Himalayas where Nepal is located, and the word “Views” indicates the dynamic and inclusive thought processes that produce wisdom (बुद्धिमत्ता), revolution (तरंग), innovation (आविष्कार), and ultimately capture moments in time (इतिहास). I served as its Chief Editor for many early years and published interviews of dignitaries such as: Krishna Prasad Bhattarai (former PM), Ganesh Man Singh, Girija Prasad Koirala (former PM), and Nepal’s ambassador to the US, His Excellency Yoga Prasad Upadhyaya. We also published eulogy of pro-democracy movement leaders (Manmohan Adhikari former PM), news coverage and fundraising for natural and human induced disasters such as 9/11 Attacks, Hurricane Katrina, and many natural catastrophes in Nepal. We had opportunities to welcome and host receptions for the two former prime ministers and current prominent leaders of the Republic of Nepal: Madhhab Kumar Nepal, and Khadga Prasad Oli in Atlanta. Several other delegations including the participants of the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta were welcomed. We also have had several spiritual discourses such as by Yogi Narahari Nath and many others. We always kept a balanced approach on organizing discourses for our members in the fields such as politics, entertainment, spiritual, historical, business/economic, sports, and education.

Yeti Views started as quarterly, and then it became a biannual newsletter, and now it is not even published. This is very sad that the long and ardent tradition has been broken; Yeti Views serves not only as NASEA’s mouthpiece but it builds our own history of new immigrants. As it has been rightly said that the news media is the third eye of any society and associations are the best ways for collective bargains; the tradition must go on relentlessly to make our collective voice heard and make aware of our presence

as a vibrant “Nepalese American Community” in the USA. There should be an Article on “Yeti Views” added in the byelaws with set forth mandatory publications. It will serve as NAsEA’s official gazette, i.e., it will carry all official notices, accounting and election reports, future planning, and literary as well as academic articles.

“**Nepalese Unity 2000**” was the theme of the First International Conference of Nepalese Associations held in Atlanta in the year 2000 (popularly known as **Y2K Convention**). The Convention was a grand success due to the enormous participation, contemporary and professional programs created arousing impacts in the morals and self-respects of Nepalese living in the USA and beyond. Representatives from the Carter Center, President Carter’s son Chip Carter, and the Atlanta Mayor’s envoy addressed the Convention and handed over a proclamation plaque “July 3, 2000 as Nepalese Unity Day”. The dignitaries from Nepal included former prime ministers Sher Bahadur Deuba and Jhala Nath Khanal. The other participants included the former foreign minister and writer late Rishi Kesh Shah, Drs. Prakash Sharan Mahat (current foreign minister), and Minendra Rijal (former minister); they participated in the Nepal Forum discussions. Head of the diplomatic missions from Washington DC and New York, Their Excellencies Murari Raj Sharma and Jai Pratap Rana participated in various sessions and forums. A delegation of Literary Society from Nepal was headed by Govinda Giri Prerana and Dr. Tana Sharma, poetries and essays were read and judged by a panel to select the three best presenters and honored them with certificates and cash prizes. NAsEA and other participating associations’ youths had various sports tournaments including soccer (football); children as well as professional artists presented cultural shows every night. The Convention gathered 1500+ participants from around the world and eleven resolutions (Atlanta Declaration 2000) were passed by the representatives of participating associations. The Y2K Convention also recognized four Nepali community leaders: Dr. Hari Sharma, Dr. Prahlad Pant, Mr. Dibya Ratna Hada, and Mr. Bed Bhakta Joshi for their community services. The Convention gathered participants from various states of the USA as well as from other countries including Nepal, India, Qatar, Europe (various countries), Australia, and Canada.

Credits for the grand success of the **Y2K Convention** go to the hardworking and dedicated community leaders and the participants such as NAsEA President Dr. Ramesh Amatya and the Executive Body, former presidents Dr. Hari Dhungana, Dr. Samanta Thapa, Dr. Dharmendra Dhakal as well as many other community leaders and individuals. The list goes like: Dr. Shyam Karki (President, ANA), Dr. Prahlad Pant (President, ANMA), Dr. Sharada Bhandari (VP, ANA), Bhim Karki (VP, NS Texas), Radha Basnyat (Canadian Nepali Association), Ishwar Devakota (President, NCNC) Dr. Dharma Acharya (President, FNA), Bala Pant, Subodh and Pratima Gautam, Dr. Prakash Malla, Dr. Bhaskar Dawadi, Girija Gautam, Dr. Shiva Gautam, Shaubhyagya Shrestha, Chet Ghimire, Tek Thapa, Dr. Ram Baral, Girwan Pandey, Raja Ghale, Shailendra Bajracharya, Prem Kunwar, Lekh Sharma, Suman Silwal, Umesh Upadhyaya, Dhananjaya Mudhbari, Avi Malla, Rachita Acharya, Jyotika Acharya, Shraddha Thapa, Sagun Shrestha, Shaili Shrestha, Astha Ghimire, and many more. The Unity 2000 Conference was a milestone to bring together many associations under one roof and providing sense of pride and worthiness among the younger generation. I feel fortunate to serve as the Chairman of the **Y2K Convention**; I am also thankful and indebted to all the associations for their hard-work and unconditional support without which the Convention would not have been so successful.

**Since the Y2K Convention**, there has been a non-stop tradition in hosting joint conventions, this tradition has distracted in fulfilling the objectives of the association and minimized the enthusiasm and participation of the NAsEA members. Any association should follow the core philosophy of democracy: by the members, for the members, and of the members to be successful. Moreover, joint conventions may bring passion and cooperation if hosted after a certain time interval, e.g., four or five years. Therefore, this tradition should be changed to every certain time interval; there should also be an Article on Joint Conventions added in the byelaws, charting a more balanced focus on NAsEA region.

My fellow Nepalese Americans, our participation in the land of opportunities requires strategies and clear policy positions in various issues to participate in the governance. Basically, we should have our

clear views and positions in the World Affairs, the US political and legal issues, and what would be our role and contribution in building Nepal as prosperous and sovereign democratic nation. I am presenting below some basic concepts which should be extended and discussed by NAsEA family rigorously.

**The World** has entered into a new millennia; brothers and sisters, beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has already brought many political, economic, scientific and social changes worldwide including in Nepal in such a short duration. Changes are inevitable and there will always be positive and/or negative changes; however, our goals should be to act accordingly towards creating non-zero-sum changes; so that, humanity will thrive forever. A very dark day of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the September 11, 2001 has changed the political contour of our World. Since then, the humanity has been divided alarmingly; the North-South divide is unduly growing, and we maybe endangering the future of our posterity by disproportionately consuming the limited resources of the planet Earth. Without doubt, the advancement of aviation, navigation, communication, space technologies, medicine, energy production, assembly line production, transportation, and automation of agricultural production, altogether these positive changes are improving the quality and expectancy of life everyday. The side effects of advancement or negative changes could impact on climate changes which are already noticed; however, more dangerous impacts of these advancements hypothetically maybe on magnetic and or gravitational fields of the Earth that could have a sweeping impact on entire civilization. Research on climate change should also be expanded and integrate with the studies on changes in magnetic and gravitational fields to make it more comprehensive.

**The United States of America** became one of the super powers since the downfall of British colonies after the World War II (WW-II). In this post-cold war era, the US has become a unipower. A healthy competition is a critical tenet for any global or regional or local democracies (balanced power structures). Although there are regional or continental unions to balance continental and regional power structures; there does not seem to have an imminent challenger in the global arena for the short run. Therefore, the US has to play a democratic role model as well as challenger of regional hegemony, so that the World becomes safer, more democratic and prosperous. For the first generation of Nepalese Americans, the USA is our work land of opportunities; despite hard work and economic prosperity, we will be left behind if we do not participate and be engaged in governance. In general, we should have a common position in the foreign policies of the USA. Following the path charted by the Father of this Nation George Washington and the other founding fathers; we should always oppose any wars. In case, a war is indispensable, restoration of war torn nation or nation building should be the responsibility of any invading nation's army (this has been a practice for ages). Even a mining company has to restore any mined area after completion of mineral extractions. There are many other policy issues that impact our community and we should discuss them and make our position available time to time. NAsEA's goal should be to produce national political-business-spiritual leaders, scientists and artists, philanthropists and youth volunteers by conducting mentoring programs (e.g., mentor protégé programs).

**Nepal** is our birth place and it is dearer than our life for many of us, the first generation of the Nepalese American community. As we all know, Nepal became republic and recently promulgated a constitution through the Constituent Assembly first time. The seventh constitution in about seven decades is indeed a national manuscript; however, it needs to be revisited and amended to make it more perfect. As a law graduate and interested in constitutional law, my suggestion was to improve the draft constitution's language and inclusiveness to make it supreme law of the nation that would be inclusive, time sensitive, but also sustainable for years to come. I submitted my comments on the draft constitution on July 21, 2015, and I would like to share with you some features of my suggestions. The preamble of any constitution is the heart of the manuscript which pumps blood to all organs of the constitution, therefore, it should be written very thoughtfully and insightfully. My proposed preamble was as follows:

#### **प्रस्तावित प्रस्तावना**

“हामी सार्वभौमसत्ता सम्पन्न नेपाली जनताले, शाश्वत संघिय सरकारको निर्माण गर्न, कानुनी राज्यको स्थापना गर्न, राष्ट्रिय एकता र सामुहिक राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षया सुनिश्चित गर्न, समतामा आधारित समाज

कल्याणको बाटो अबलम्बन गर्न, हामी र हाम्रा भावी सन्ततिलाई मौलिक अधिकार तथा धार्मिक (आध्यात्मिक) स्वतन्त्रता सुनिश्चित गर्नेगरी, यो नेपालको संबिधान जारी गर्दछौं' | (47 words)

The above mentioned preamble would have been the shortest preamble of the world after the US's 52-words and that of India's 85-words. In my opinion, the above preamble is most inclusive yet very succinct. The English translation of the above preamble makes it a 50-word preamble as follows:

We the sovereign people of Nepal, in order to form **a more perfect federal system of government, establish justice**, ensure **national unity** and **common defense**, promote **social welfare**, and secure the blessings **of liberty and fundamental rights** to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for Nepal. (50 words)

I hope the federal or national constitution which should serve as the supreme law of the land will be amended before Nepal starts crafting the state constitutions.

Friends, the world would be safer and prosperous with functioning democracy which demands a commonsense approach, optimization of science and technology, equitable and a level playing field economic approach. I hope wisdom will prevail within the political power spectrum of Nepal. Power can be considered as: military, economic, and information. The information power is the most critical and any nation can afford to have that power. Information empowers the sovereign citizens which ultimately deepens democracy and economic prosperity for all.

As we realized in the **Y2K Convention**, unity among us is very critical to our survival and prosperity in this land of opportunities to enhance our capabilities and to put forth our strong voices whenever needed. Our unity and success in the US will also assist us in bringing changes in the quality of life in Nepal by technology transfer, and creating a knowledge industry that would create an economic power for Nepal. Nepal, a country of many diversities, abundant natural beauties and resources can be transformed into regional economic power with injection of knowledge industry to balance and optimize the resources. Finally, our unity will always remain intact if we follow the spiritual path that gives us happiness and provides answers to many questions that cannot be found elsewhere. Humanity will benefit greatly if our cultural and spiritual philosophies are disseminated for greater benefits to the 21<sup>st</sup> century societies that are suffering from distress, mistrust, and ignorance. Buddhism teaches us three reasons for dukkha (suffering) as: greed, revenge/anger, and ignorance. Our pursuit of happiness will be maximized by minimizing the three causes of dukkha.

My fellow Nepalese Americans, in my opinion there are three types of truth: (i) physical truth (पंचतत्व): sun, earth, water, air, and ether, we can see and feel them, (ii) eternal truth (शास्वत) breathing and liveliness, we can see and feel it, (iii) spoken or expressed by words truth (शाब्दिक) speaking, we can listen. We may not have much control on (i) and (ii); however, we could have full control with due practice and perseverance on the third truth. All these three types of truths are associated with our pursuit of happiness, healthiness, prosperousness and peacefulness. Let truth prevail (सत्यमेव जयते) and peace and happiness downpour on all of us. I will conclude my speech with invocation of a mantra from Ramana Maharsi on Sanatan Dharma:

सत्यम् ब्रूयात् प्रियम् ब्रूयात् । (Speak truth with civility)  
न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम् । (If it is unpleasant, avoid presenting even truth)  
प्रियम् नानृतं ब्रूयात्। एष धर्मः सनातनः ॥ (Never lie, this is the Sanatan Dharma)  
(रमन्ना महर्षि)

Thank you very much for your patience.