



# Ministry of Defence

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1 year 1) - Subedi,

I was pleased to welcome you to the Ministry of Defence last week for our inaugural meeting and to congratulate you on your appointment as Nepal's Ambassador to the United Kingdom. I look forward to working together with you in your appointment to build upon the strong foundation of the relationship we have between Nepal and the United Kingdom, including that represented by the continued service of Gurkhas in the British Army in this bicentennial year.

Thank you for the letter which you presented from your Foreign Minister, Hon. Dr Prakash Sharan Mahat in which he indicated the aspiration of the Nepali Government to resolve the remaining grievances held by ex-Gurkha veterans. The Government holds Gurkha's and the service they have provided to the Crown for 200 years in the highest regard and where it has recognised legitimate grievances has taken steps to address them, for example in 2015 in relation to the policy on mixed-marriage in the Brigade of Gurkhas.

I am grateful for your personal offer, on behalf of Dr Mahat and the Nepalese Government, to support dialogue between ex-Gurkha groups and the Ministry of Defence. As I set out in our meeting I am happy to accept this offer and look forward to dialogue with ex-Gurkha groups about their grievances in due course. It is in all our interests to try and reach an understanding in relation to the grievances some ex-Gurkhas continue to hold.

I have asked my office to work with the Embassy to arrange a date for this. I hope that this planned dialogue will enable ex-Gurkha groups to withdraw their plans to launch a fast in relation to the grievances they continue to hold; nobody would wish to see former Gurkhas pursue this course of action. I look forward to discussing these issues again with you in the future and I hope you enjoy your forthcoming visit to the Headquarters of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

**MARK LANCASTER TD VR MP**

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