

Economic Diplomacy for Trade Facilitation and Better Export Performance of Federal Nepal

Organized by

South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE)

Maya Manor Boutique Hotel

Hattisar Sadak, Kathamandu

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For a long time, Nepal's poor trade performance has been a constant worrying factor with imports growing tremendously while exports remained stagnant. There is a concern that such high levels of imports may not be sustainable in the long run. To boost Nepal's export performance, the government has introduced cash incentives to exporters, designed product-specific strategies and invested in trade facilitation. Besides easing supply-side constraints, export expansion also requires efforts to ease Nepali products' entry into destination markets. For this, economic diplomacy has been identified as an important tool for trade facilitation and export promotion. While economic diplomacy has remained an important part of Nepal's development path, its full potential has yet to be exploited. The importance of economic diplomacy has further heightened given that Nepal will be losing existing trade preferences after Nepal's graduation from the least developed country category. Against this background, SAWTEE, with support from The Asia Foundation, is carrying out a study on leveraging economic diplomacy for enhanced trade facilitation and better export performance of federal Nepal. The study aims to identify gaps in the institutional arrangement for economic diplomacy to provide recommendations to strengthen economic diplomacy for improved export performance. This roundtable will bring together government officials, experts, academicians and private sector representatives to identify gaps and suggest a way forward to strengthen economic diplomacy for trade. The roundtable seeks to initiate dialogue on utilizing economic diplomacy for better export performance.

Program Agenda

2:00-2:30 PM	Registration
2:30-2:35 PM	Welcome Remarks: Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Chairperson, SAWTEE
2:35-2:50 PM	Presentation: Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Former Foreign Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister, and Former Ambassador to Switzerland
2:50-5:00 PM	Round Table Discussion Moderator: Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Former Foreign Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister, and Former Ambassador to Switzerland
5:00 PM onwards	Hi-Tea