

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### **Nepal: Amnesty International urges investigation into killings**

Amnesty International is gravely concerned about the outburst of violence in the Terai region in southern Nepal. At least eight people have been killed and scores of people injured in clashes between protestors and police. Many of the dead are believed to be victims of police shooting at the crowds.

The demonstrators are members of the Madhesi community in southern Nepal demanding proportional representation in the forthcoming elections to ensure better representation of the community in the constituent assembly. They consider themselves to have been left out of the political process, with no decision making powers.

Members of the Madhesi community have been carrying out a campaign of protest to publicize their political demands. According to reports, some of the demonstrators have attacked buses and lorries. Dozens of people have reportedly been injured during these attacks. There have been reports of the demonstrators attacking journalists and offices of newspapers or radio stations; some journalists have fled the area to avoid being targeted. There have also been threats to human rights defenders in the affected area, including delegations from the National Human Rights Commission and the NGO HimRights whose staff were attacked during monitoring visits to assess the unrest. One police officer has reportedly been killed and several others are among the injured.

Amnesty International acknowledges the responsibility of the authorities to maintain law and order but is concerned that some of the killings may be a result of the possible use of excessive force by police. Amnesty International is urging the authorities in Nepal to ensure a prompt, independent, impartial and thorough investigation into the events and, wherever there is sufficient evidence, prosecute anyone suspected of human rights abuses in proceedings that fully respect international fair trial standards.