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As the crowds moved across central Kathmandu on Thursday, the size of the rally was massive, yet it was the diversity of the participants that stood out in the solidarity march of the 16th edition of the WORLD SOCIAL FORUM (WSF) 2024.

Waves upon waves of people from all over the world, most in traditional attire, some in indigenous clothing, some in workwear, some in casuals and some in suits, walked hand in hand with a soaring cry of “Another World Is Possible”.

There were workers, farmers, peasants, trade unions, women’s organizations, LGBTQI organizations, indigenous groups, ethnic organizations, civil society organizations and social movements from across the globe. This march and the grand opening ceremony that followed was the beginning of the WSF 2024 in Kathmandu.

The World Social Forum traces its origins to civil society movements that emerged against globalization in the late 1990s, resulting in the first WSF in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001.

The process for the WSF2024 began in November 2022, as Nepal was selected as the potential host country to hold the 16th edition of the WSF. The selection process was conducted by the International Council (IC) and the Asia-Pacific Social Forum (APSF). In March 2023, the IC mandated that Nepal would be the host, and Kathmandu would be the host city.

This was immediately followed by the mobilization of a general council, organizing committee and various subcommittees in Nepal with all members working voluntarily, determined to make the WSF 2024 a success.

After that, the Nepal Organizing Committee (NOC) began careful planning and there was mass mobilization all over the world, as well as the launching of the WSF website. Organizational and individual registrations were set up, Bhrikuti Mandap was selected as the venue, and the organizing committee held weekly meetings to track progress and facilitate processes.

A volunteer program was launched, as well as an app program. All preparations were geared towards a smooth and successful operation of the WSF 2024 in Kathmandu.

The WSF schedule was finalized after the registration deadline in late January. Participants soon began to arrive in large numbers for the WSF and the opening ceremony commenced on 15th

February with Bhrikuti Mandap filled with people from all corners of the world, looking for hope, inspiration and solidarity.

WSF 2024 saw over 50,000 participants, with over 1400 organizations from six continents and 98 nations. The Intercontinental Youth Forum ran concurrently with 410 participants from over 30 nations. There were more than 400 activities registered, under thirteen varied themes, including (but not limited to) economics, migration, discrimination, gender, culture, war and peace, climate change, indigenous groups, human rights, social movements etc. Today's square of statements saw more than 60 declarations from organizations worldwide, pledging to continue to work towards the realization of another, fairer and more just world.

The WSF owes its success to various social movements, institutions, organizations and individuals. We wish to express our gratitude to Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the UN for his support and solidarity message. We give a heartfelt thanks to all the distinguished speakers at our opening ceremony.

We thank all faculties, staff and students from Ratna Rajya Campus, Nepal Law Campus, and Balmiki Campus of Tribhuvan university and all personnel at Bhrikuti Mandap for providing the venues for WSF 2024.

We thank the support from Kathmandu metropolitan city, Lalitpur metropolitan city, the district administration office Kathmandu, Nepal Tourism Board, Nepal Police and the Government of Nepal.

We thank the security forces at the venue, the WSF volunteers who gave us their time and efforts, the NGO federation of Nepal who provided their offices for the secretariat free of cost, the National Federation of the Disabled Nepal who provided their offices for the secretariat free of cost during the WSF, Mr. Pushpa Lal Shrestha, a resident of Budhanilkantha municipality who provided drinking water free of cost, and the Bhrikuti Mandap Management Committee. We are grateful to Phect Nepal and Kathmandu Model hospital for providing us with medical support and ambulances for all five days at the WSF free of cost.

Furthermore, we are grateful to our international council members for their continuous support, suggestions and collaborative efforts, and the Asia Pacific Facilitation committee for their support, guidance, and for bridging any gaps in communication.

We thank the subcommittee members from the NOC for their tireless efforts to make this event a success, We thank all press and media personnel for their coverage and participation. Lastly, we thank the secretariat team for their dedicated efforts for the WSF 2024's successful operation. Finally, We thank you for being a part of this beautiful journey and becoming a part of the WSF's history and legacy.

NEPAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE 19 FEBRUARY, 2024
