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**Welcome Address**

**By**

**Virgilio Labrador**

Welcome Remarks by Virgilio S. Labrador, Head, Seminars and Institutional Development Programme, AMIC at the opening of the Workshop on Editorial Management for Women Journalists, Kathmandu, Nepal, December 7-14, 1994.

Honourable Minister for Information and Communications, Pradeep Nepal, Ms Prabha Thacker, Chairperson of MANUSHI, Ms Padmasana Shakya, Member-Secretary, MANUSHI, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to the opening of the workshop on Editorial Management for Women Journalists organised by MANUSHI and the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre or AMIC. This workshop aims to upgrade the reporting and editorial skills and capabilities of women journalists in South Asia to prepare them for management positions in their respective publications. This intensive eight-day workshop will have a mix of lectures, discussions, and field visits covering various areas of reporting, editing and management of newspapers and magazines. The workshop also aims to develop the consciousness of the participants on the unique role of newspapers in the developing countries of the region. To this end, we have assembled a distinguished team of resource persons and an equally impressive group of participants from the South Asian countries of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. By bringing together such a diverse group of working journalists from South Asia, we hope to facilitate an exchange of views, opinions and experiences that the participants will be able to benefit from and take back when they resume their duties in their respective countries.

Nepal is a fitting setting for such an endeavour. For here in one of the historical crossroads of the world, many an exchange of minds and peoples of various backgrounds and cultures have transpired and flourished. This process has been no doubt facilitated by the innate hospitality and friendliness of the Nepalese people. AMIC is therefore proud to hold this workshop in Nepal, which is the second major regional meeting AMIC has organised in Nepal this year. The first one being the Regional Seminar on Media and Pluralism held in March and attended by senior government officials and journalists from South Asia.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with AMIC, AMIC is a regional non-profit coordinating organisation serving mass communication professionals and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region. Our activities include publications, research, training, documentation and institutional development. The seminars and institutional development programme which I belong organises sixteen seminars and training courses every year in various countries of Asia with one singular focus: the upgrading of the quality of mass communication training and education in the region. Since its inception in 1971, AMIC has organised over two hundred and fifty seminars and workshops participated in by over 4,000 communication professionals and scholars. Our work has been made possible by the steadfast support of the Singapore government and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and other national and international organizations.

In organising seminars and workshops throughout the Asia-Pacific region, we work closely with local partner organisations in every aspect of organisation and management. We are happy to have as our local partner in this workshop, MANUSHI, whose efforts have made all of the local arrangements possible. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of our country representative, Mr. Narendra Pandey of AMIC-Nepal, who has been instrumental in bringing this workshop to Nepal and the support of organisations such as the Communication Assistance Foundation for making this workshop possible.

I would also like to thank our chief guest this morning, the honourable minister, for taking time from his many pressing commitments to address our gathering. As a former journalist himself, I'm sure everyone in this room can feel the affinity that the Minister has for members of the noble profession of journalism, in addressing this gathering. So from one journalist to another, I would like to express in behalf of AMIC, our heartfelt thanks to the honourable minister. Last but not least I would like to thank all of you, ladies and gentlemen, and the organisations represented here for the encouragement and support you have given us by your presence.

I would now invite our chief guest, the honourable minister for Information and Communications, Pradeep Nepal to give us his inaugural remarks.