SEAL of the AUTISTAN DIPLOMATIC ORGANIZATION
SELO da ORGANIZAÇÃO DIPLOMÁTICA do AUTISTÃO

Opening presentation to His Excellency the Ambassador of Nepal.

Embassy of Autistan in Brasília — 26 May 2026.

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1. Introduction.

Your Excellency,
dear colleague from the Embassy of Nepal,

Thank you very much for coming to the Embassy of Autistan in Brasília.

I would like to explain why we believe that Nepal may have a very special opportunity regarding autism, and how the Embassy of Nepal could help create a useful and concrete dialogue with the competent authorities in Kathmandu.

2. Why this moment is important.

From the public information we found, Nepal is now preparing important autism structures.

In September 2025, the Autism Directive Taskforce, led by Deepak Prakash Mahara, submitted a draft National Autism Guideline to the Ministry of Health and Population.

In April 2026, the Government also announced autism-based model schools in the seven provinces. We understand that a technical committee, coordinated by Roshan Shrestha, was formed to work on the concept and structure of these schools, and that CEHRD may later have a coordination role.

So Nepal is not at an abstract stage. Concrete texts, structures and models are being prepared now.

This is why the first concepts, the first words and the first practical choices are so important. They can orient the whole system for many years. If the initial framework reduces autism to ASD, treatment, specialized services or normalization, then later corrections will become difficult. But if the initial framework is based on accessibility, correct consideration of autism, acceptance of autistic people and autism itself, and respect for autistic nature, then Nepal can build its autism policy on healthier, simpler and more useful foundations from the beginning.

3. The fundamental distinction: autism and ASD.

The first conceptual point we would like to offer is the distinction between autism itself and autism-specific disorders or difficulties, usually called Autism Spectrum Disorder, or ASD.

Almost everywhere, people use “autism” and “ASD” as if they meant the same thing. They say “autism” when they mean the difficulties, disorders or disabling situations related to autism. And they say “ASD” as if the whole autistic nature itself were a disorder.

This creates a deep confusion.

If autism itself is reduced to ASD, then autism is automatically treated as a disorder. Then speaking about autistic qualities becomes incoherent, because it would mean speaking about the qualities of a disorder. But autistic qualities do exist, which shows that autism itself cannot be reduced to disorder, defect or pathology.

For us, autism itself is not a disease, a defect or an inferiority. It is a particular human nature, a particular way of being and relating to the world.

At the same time, ASD-related difficulties are real. Autistic people may have real support needs and real needs for specific learning. We do not deny that. But these difficulties must not be confused with autism itself.

When we say that autism must be respected, we do not mean that difficulties should be ignored. We mean that autistic nature must be respected, while real difficulties and support needs are addressed without trying to erase that autistic nature.

In 2023, we explained this distinction to Chiara Servili, the autism specialist at the headquarters of the World Health Organization in Geneva. During a long videoconference, she understood this distinction and said that it was useful. She also understood that using the word “autism” in a simplified way to mean only the disorders could create negative consequences. We can show evidence of this meeting and of what she said.

Without this distinction, autistic people often receive a damaging message: that their whole nature is a lifelong disorder, that they are defective, or that they must constantly be corrected. This harms self-esteem, dignity, creativity and the possibility of a fulfilled autistic life.

4. Our central position.

Our central position is this: autistic people do not suffer from autism itself. They suffer from the consequences of the lack of correct consideration of autism throughout the social system. These consequences are sensory, mental or other socio-generated harms, and in the end they are violations of natural harmony.

This means that the problem is not only inside the autistic person. It is also in the environment, in the attitudes, in the communication, in the organization, in the expectations, and in the lack of natural and respectful opportunities.

This is why accessibility is not an additional luxury. It is the direct answer to the real source of much autistic suffering: sensory, mental or other socio-generated harms produced by the social system.

These harms should also be understood as signals. When an autistic person suffers, blocks, withdraws or reacts intensely, the correct response should not be only to silence the reaction, correct the person, or make the autistic person appear more normal. It should be to ask: what in the environment, communication, attitude, organization or expectation is producing this sensory, mental or other socio-generated harm?

In that sense, autistic reactions can function like an alarm system. If an alarm rings, the intelligent response is not to destroy the alarm or disconnect the siren. The intelligent response is to find out what danger, incoherence or aggression activated it. Autism can therefore help reveal defects of the social system that other people may tolerate, ignore or no longer perceive.

A good autism policy should therefore not begin with: “How can we correct autistic people?”
It should begin with: “How can society become accessible enough for autistic people to live, learn, participate, develop and express their autistic qualities without being damaged?”

5. The first axis of our model: accessibility, from general to individual.

The first major axis of our model of National Autism Implementation Plan is the suppression of obstacles and the reduction of sensory, mental or other socio-generated harms.

This first axis is organized from the most general level to the most individualized level.

The first layer is accessibility for autistic people, based as much as possible on universal design. This means that society, services, procedures, communication and attitudes should be made accessible in a general way, before a specific person has to ask for help. It is an overall state of accessibility, not something that appears only after an autistic person is already in difficulty.

The second layer is reasonable accommodation in the presence of autism. When general accessibility is not enough for a particular situation or person, then specific adjustments must be identified, implemented, checked and corrected if they are insufficient.

The third layer is general autism assistance, accessible at any time and, as much as possible, also remotely. This assistance should be useful not only for autistic people, but also for families, schools, professionals, public services, emergency services, workplaces, shops or any ordinary setting facing a situation involving autism. Such a system could also use digital tools and artificial intelligence to connect practical guidance, education, statistics, recurring problems and possible solutions.

The fourth layer is individualized autism support, for autistic people and families who need more precise, personal and continuous support.

So the logic is not to start with expensive individualized systems for everyone. The logic is subsidiarity: first make society generally more accessible; then add reasonable accommodations when needed; then provide accessible autism assistance for many situations; and finally provide individualized support for those who need it.

This structure is especially important for a country where resources, specialists and access to urban services are limited.

This first axis is completed by family education about autism and non-autism, education of autistic people on the same subject, training of public services, public awareness, protection of rights, complaint and correction mechanisms, and a broader policy of correct consideration of autism everywhere.

A central part of this is attitudinal accessibility: the ability of families, schools, services and communities to accept autistic people and autism itself, without fear, wrong interpretations, ego reactions or automatic attempts to normalize.

This is why public awareness and family education are essential. If families, schools, public services and communities receive simple and correct orientation, many problems can be solved at the root, before they become exclusions, conflicts or costly interventions.

Accessibility for autistic people is not a privilege taken from others and given to autistic people. It is not a transfer of comfort from one group to another, and it is not harmful to anyone. On the contrary, these measures are corrections that move the social system toward more harmony. Very often, they correct confusion, incoherence, aggression, excess, disorder or unnecessary complexity in the system itself. They help autistic people first, because autistic people are often the first to suffer from these defects, but they also make life clearer, calmer, more coherent, more economical and more humane for everyone.

6. Why this approach is especially adapted to Nepal.

Many autism policies in richer countries rely on costly and centralized systems, professional power, repeated interventions, travel to cities, and programmes designed to make autistic people appear less autistic.

For poor families, rural communities, and countries with limited resources, this model is often inaccessible. It can also be harmful when it tries to normalize autistic people instead of respecting autistic nature.

When an autistic child is trained to hide or suppress autistic characteristics in order to appear non-autistic, this may look like progress from outside, but it can damage self-esteem, dignity, creativity and the possibility of a fulfilled autistic life.

Trying to make autistic people become non-autistic is often absurd and mistreating. It is like trying to make a cat wear socks: from outside, it may look like a correction or adaptation, but it does not respect the nature of the being.

Nepal could choose another path, more adapted to its own strengths.

Instead of importing models based on material power, obligation, money, professional authority and normalization, Nepal could build an approach based on intelligence, discernment, humanity, kindness, accessibility and respect for autistic nature.

This would be more coherent with what we perceive as a deep quality of Nepal: a more subtle, more human, less brutally materialistic way of relating to people and to life.

There is also something symbolic here. Nepal is a particularly original country. It has, among other things, a very particular time zone and a very particular flag, including its unusual shape and proportions. It also has its own geography, cultural identity and historical way of being different without simply copying others.

For this reason, it would be sad and almost absurd if such an original country imported a normalizing autism model whose purpose is precisely to make autistic people appear less different.

Nepal could instead create a truly original national autism policy — a Nepalese model for autism — adapted to families with limited material resources, but also useful for many other non-rich countries.

From our experience with Nepalese people, we have often seen kindness, humility, patience, willingness to help, and a lower tendency to react with offended ego. For autistic people, this is not a small detail. It is a major resource.

Nepal's main capital in this field may not be financial capital. It may be human capital. And for autism, this human capital can solve problems that money alone cannot solve.

If basic accessibility exists in families, schools, local services and communities, many difficulties can be reduced before they require specialized intervention. This means fewer costly travels, fewer separations from ordinary life, fewer unnecessary interventions, and less suffering caused by inappropriate environments.

Reducing sensory, mental or other socio-generated harms is therefore not only more respectful; it is also more economical. It prevents many problems before they require specialized responses.

In other words, instead of using force, pressure, money and artificial correction after the problems have already appeared, Nepal could use intelligence, kindness, acceptance and accessibility before the problems become severe.

7. Acceptance, natural inclusion and opportunities to try.

Autistic people do need specific learning, especially to understand the non-autistic world. In a way, they need to learn society, or non-autism, like a second language. But learning a second language should never destroy the first one. In the same way, autistic people can learn the non-autistic world without having to erase their autistic nature. These learnings work much better when they happen naturally: through real life, real activities, real relationships, and inclusion in an environment that accepts autistic people and autism itself.

Acceptance is therefore not passive. It is not simply saying “we tolerate autistic people”. Real acceptance means allowing autistic people to exist, learn and develop without being forced to appear non-autistic.

If autism itself is accepted, many efforts currently spent on making autistic people appear non-autistic become unnecessary or even clearly harmful.

Inclusion is not only a right. It is also a natural learning environment, when the surrounding people are accessible.

This is also why we insist on offering opportunities instead of overprotection. Many autistic children are overprotected or considered incapable not because they cannot learn, but because the environment never gives them real, safe and respectful opportunities to try.

A respectful autism policy should create safe opportunities to try, participate, discover abilities and be recognized for real contributions.

We have direct experience of this. In Kazakhstan, in a mountain environment, the Autistan Diplomatic Organization, through the direct involvement of its founder as an autistic advisor, helped autistic children progress quickly by changing the way they were considered and included. They were not treated as defective. They were trusted, encouraged to try, included in real activities and recognized by other children.

One striking example is Tima, a young autistic boy of about thirteen or fourteen. At the beginning, he seemed very passive and almost disconnected from the activities. His family, probably with good intentions, seemed to believe that he would never really be able to do anything by himself because he was autistic. The founder of the Autistan Diplomatic Organization had the idea to give him concrete chances, through simple real tasks and real opportunities to participate. At first it was difficult, but in only a few days his attitude changed visibly. He became more confident, participated in practical activities, was recognized by other children, and even experienced simple friendship with them. These changes can be seen clearly in photos and videos.

The key was not an expensive therapy. The key was a natural, human, non-defectological environment, and a concrete change in the system around the autistic child.

For Nepal, a country of mountains, communities and strong human qualities, this may be very relevant.

8. The second axis: a sustainable, free and fulfilled autistic life.

The second major axis of our model is a sustainable, free and fulfilled autistic life.

This means that autism policy should not stop at childhood, diagnosis, school or health. It should consider the whole life of autistic people: identification or confirmation of autism, integral health, education respectful of autism, professional training, possible independent living, autonomy, continuity of support and longevity.

It should also protect the possibility of a fulfilled autistic life, with creativity, specific interests, nature, experiences, discoveries, travel, chosen relationships, freedom, originality and a personal path.

A very important part is the valorization, protection and application of autistic strengths.

This means changing the frame: some apparent defects may actually reveal autistic strengths, and some autistic reactions may function as signals showing where the environment is producing sensory, mental or other socio-generated harms.

Instead of seeing only apparent defects, policy should also recognize autistic strengths. Autistic reactions can help identify sensory, mental or other socio-generated harms, and can help society return to more balance and harmony.

This model can help compare what is already in Nepal’s guideline, what may be missing, and how general principles can become concrete measures.

9. How the Embassy of Nepal could help.

The most useful role of the Embassy of Nepal would be to help create an effective and followed connection with the real responsible persons in Nepal: the ministry, committee, department or technical team working on the National Autism Guideline and on the autism-based model schools.

Knowing names and email addresses is useful, of course. But in our experience, a simple formal contact often remains superficial. People may answer politely without yet realizing why a real dialogue with us could be useful for their own work.

What is more effective is a human and institutional connection that can lead to an actual working relationship: first a short technical note, then a real videoconference, and then, if useful, a more precise contribution to the documents or projects being prepared.

We have seen this before with Jonas Ruškus, rapporteur for France at the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities between 2019 and 2021.

At the beginning, the exchanges were polite and limited. But over the months, as the dialogue developed, he understood more and more the importance and usefulness of our explanations. He wrote this himself, several times, spontaneously, confirming how useful our contribution was for his work.

At one point, after a meeting in French, he found the explanations so important that he wanted to organize another Zoom meeting, this time in English, so that his anglophone colleagues, members of the Committee, could hear the founder of the Autistan Diplomatic Organization explain these points directly.

This was during the Covid period, when all these meetings were by videoconference. Because of time zones, this meant that some Committee members had to participate in the middle of their own night. Mr Ruškus himself wrote that he considered it important that his colleagues hear these explanations directly.

We can show written evidence of all this if necessary.

This example is important because it shows that, at the beginning, our contribution may look unusual, difficult to evaluate, or simply secondary. But when a real dialogue is allowed to develop, competent people can progressively understand how useful it is for their own work.

This is why we hope the Embassy of Nepal can help not only by indicating a possible contact, but by helping the first connection become credible, followed and effective.

Names and email addresses are useful, but they are often not enough. In many institutional contexts, the first exchanges remain polite and superficial, because the responsible people do not yet realize what they could gain from a real dialogue with us.

What would be most useful is a small amount of diplomatic support to help overcome the initial attitudinal barriers: doubts, confusion, lack of time, unfamiliarity with our approach, or the impression that autism must be treated only through usual medical or service-based frameworks.

If this initial threshold is crossed, and if real discussions or videoconferences can take place with the competent people in Nepal, we are certain that our contribution will be useful. This happened with the Haute Autorité de Santé in France, where the founder of the Autistan Diplomatic Organization was a member for two years of the steering committee for the official good-practice recommendations on autistic adults. It also happened with the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and with the World Health Organization.

So the point is not only to reach the right people. It is to make the first contact serious enough, and followed enough, so that the competent people in Nepal can pass the initial stage of politeness or uncertainty and begin to see concretely how useful this dialogue can be for them.

10. Evidence and possible next steps.

If the Embassy of Nepal needs more certainty before facilitating such a connection, we can provide selected evidence of the seriousness of our work: written exchanges and documents related to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the World Health Organization and the French High Authority for Health, as well as concrete photos, videos and materials from Kazakhstan.

At a later stage, a secondary subject could also be explored: training Nepalese people to work as autism assistants, in Nepal or abroad, using precisely the human qualities mentioned before, within a serious, ethical, supervised and professional framework. This could also allow Nepalese people to develop a useful professional role in a field where patience, humility, kindness and low ego reaction are not secondary qualities, but essential qualities.

This could be especially relevant because autism assistance requires not only technical knowledge, but also patience, humility, kindness and the ability not to take autistic reactions personally.

Our hope is that Nepal can build an autism policy based not mainly on expensive systems, but on accessibility, acceptance of autistic people and autism, human intelligence, natural inclusion, kindness, opportunities to try, and respect for autistic nature.

Nepal could show that a country does not need to copy expensive and often questionable models in order to help autistic people. It can use accessibility, human quality and correct understanding as a stronger foundation.

If Nepal succeeds in this direction, it could become an example for many other countries.

Thank you very much.