December 8 is a historic day in South Asia marking the launching of regional cooperation under South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). On the occasion of the thirty-second anniversary of the establishment of SAARC and the thirty-third SAARC Charter Day, I have the great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to the fellow citizens and Member States of the SAARC.

SAARC Charter is an expression of our collective will, common resolve and mutual pursuit to promote peace and stability, accelerate economic growth, as well as advance socio-cultural development in South Asia. Over the years, much investment has been made in terms of time, resources and efforts to fulfill Charter objectives. In view of our shared developmental needs, common challenges and multiple transnational threats, we need to redouble our collective efforts and resolve today much more than in the past.

There exist huge untapped potentials and immense complementarities in the region for progress and prosperity. Our collective determination must, therefore, focus on result-oriented programs, projects and activities that will make positive impact on the welfare and the quality of life of our people. Our renewed efforts must also be reoriented towards deepening regional cooperation in realizing opportunities in trade, investment, tourism and other development potentials of the region. It is important that all Member States display much needed political will to advance the momentum of the SAARC process and also remain steadfast in the commitment to sustaining an ambience of a meaningful regional cooperation in line with the spirit of SAARC Charter.

As the current Chair and founding member of the Association, Nepal remains committed to SAARC Charter. Regional cooperation constitutes a core dimension of Nepal’s foreign policy. We continue to play a constructive role in, provide full support to and work together with fellow members for making SAARC a relevant and vibrant organization for the people of South Asia.

May this Charter Day inspire us to foster mutual trust, understanding, cooperation and partnership as well as to promote deeper regional integration for peace and prosperity in South Asia!

Kathmandu, 8 December 2017.

(Sher Bahadur Deuba)