



**54th Session of the Human Rights Council
Agenda Item 2 - General Debate**

Statement by Her Excellency Himalee Arunatilaka, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in Geneva

13th September 2023

Mr. President,

Resolutions 60/251 and 48/141 require that the work of this Council and the OHCHR should be guided by the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, and constructive international dialogue and cooperation.

Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case with regard to Sri Lanka.

One such instance in the Written Update is the reference to the investigations on the Easter Sunday Attacks of 2019. It is regrettable that the OHCHR has sought to use incorrect and unsubstantiated information from biased sources in their analysis. As Sri Lanka has repeatedly informed this Council, extensive and comprehensive investigations have been carried out by the GoSL with regard to these attacks including a Presidential Commission of Inquiry, the report of which was submitted to the Parliament. Investigations carried out by the Government authorities were assisted by international professional agencies including the Australian Federal Police, the FBI of the United States and INTERPOL.

As at April 2023, 79 have been indicted in Easter Sunday terror attacks related matters. On 12 January 2023, the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka delivered its judgement on the Fundamental Rights petition that was filed against the President, IGP, Director of State Intelligence Service, Defence Secretary and Chief of National Intelligence, at the time of these attacks.

In addition, the Government has decided to establish a Parliamentary Select Committee to address concerns raised in the public domain as of late and the President has appointed a committee, led by a retired Supreme Court judge to investigate the relevant allegations.

Mr. President,

We appreciate the many positive comments made by countries during the Interactive Dialogue on Sri Lanka, acknowledging the visible progress on the ground.

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka supports the One China policy and we welcome China's cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms. We reiterate that interference in the internal affairs of any sovereign country cannot and should not be tolerated.

Thank you.