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Media Release

Foreign Secretary Aryasinha meets Human Rights Council President in Geneva

Ahead of the upcoming 43rd Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) scheduled to commence next Monday (24 February), Foreign Secretary Ravinatha Aryasinha briefed the President of the HRC Ambassador Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger on the decision of the Government of Sri Lanka to withdraw its co-sponsorship of Resolution 40/1 of March 2019 on 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka', which also incorporates and builds on preceding Resolutions 30/1 of October 2015 and 34/1 of March 2017.

The Foreign Secretary who is presently in Geneva, on Friday (21 February) informed the President that the Cabinet of Ministers had on Wednesday approved this decision following a cabinet paper submitted by Foreign Relations Minister Dinesh Gunawardena. The decision had also been presented to the Parliament on Thursday. He also informed her that Minister Gunawardena will lead the Sri Lanka delegation to the 43rd Session of the Human Rights Council, and will formally inform the Council Members on the Government's decision when he addresses the High Level Segment of the Council, on Wednesday 26 February. Minister Gunawardena who will also respond to the Oral Update on Sri Lanka by the High Commissioner on 27 February, is scheduled to meet the High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, during his stay in Geneva.

She was also informed by the Foreign Secretary that on the eve of the decision being taken by the Cabinet, the Ambassadors of the 'core group' that had moved the resolution, who were resident in Colombo (the UK, Germany and Canada), had also been briefed by Minister Gunawardena.

Ambassador Tichy-Fisslberger appreciated Sri Lanka's initiative to keep her briefed on the matter.

Sri Lanka Permanent Mission

Geneva

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