



Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the UN, Geneva

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Ambassador Aryasinha thanks countries that stood by Sri Lanka

Says vote a rare moment of solidarity in re-constituted HRC for those who continue to believe in principle

Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Ambassador Ravinatha Aryasinha has said Thursdays vote on Sri Lanka in the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), had provided a rare moment of solidarity for countries that continued to believe in principle, to stand up and be counted, at a time the composition of the HRC is heavily weighted in favour of Western powers, and Bangladesh, China, Cuba, Djibouti, Jordan, Russia and Saudi Arabia who resisted action against Sri Lanka in 2012, were no longer members of the HRC. Ambassador Aryasinha said the Government of Sri Lanka was deeply grateful to the countries that stood by Sri Lanka this year - by voting against, abstaining and absenting themselves, and also helping in lobbying for support, thereby resisting this resolution, which was both deeply intrusive, as well as precedent setting.

With 13 countries opposing the resolution, 8 countries abstaining, and 1 country absenting itself, 22 out of a total of 47 members of the Human Rights Council, refrained from supporting the U.S. sponsored resolution on Sri Lanka which was taken up for debate and vote at the 22nd Session of the UNHRC in Geneva on Thursday (21 March 2013). This cross-regional group included Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kuwait, Maldives, Mauritania, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Thailand, UAE, Uganda, Venezuela (which opposed); and Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya and Malaysia (which abstained); and Gabon (which absented itself).

The resolution was supported by 25 countries, which included the US, 13 EU and EU aspirant member countries which vote as a block (Austria, Czech Rep., Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Spain, Rep. Moldova, Romania, Switzerland), as well as Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, India, Ivory Coast, Libya Peru, Republic of Korea, and Sierra Leone.

In March 2012 when the Sri Lanka resolution was taken up, 23 countries refrained from supporting the resolution - 15 opposing and 8 abstaining, while 24 countries supported it.

Permanent Representation of Sri Lanka to the UN
Geneva

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