



Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the UN, Geneva

Tel : (+41) 022 919 12 50, Fax : (+41) 022 734 90 84

E-mail: mission@lankamission.org Web: www.lankamission.org

Countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America express their support to Sri Lanka's efforts at achieving national reconciliation

Sri Lanka's efforts at achieving national reconciliation and significant progress in many spheres received support from countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America during the adoption of the resolution on 27 March 2014 and consideration of the High Commissioner's Report on Sri Lanka on 26 March 2014 at the Human Rights Council.

China said "the international community must respect the right to choose one's own path of development." They also pointed out that the co-sponsors of the draft resolution on Sri Lanka "used the problem of human rights to openly exert pressure on Sri Lanka" to intervene in the internal affairs of the country." China shared the concerns of many other countries that "this resolution does not reflect the consensus of the Council" and it is "an example of politicization of human rights" and at the same time "some of the contents of the draft goes against the mandate of the High Commissioner and provision of the resolution which established the Council."

Pakistan expressing their concern and opposition to country-specific resolutions in principle said "such resolutions are ineffective and counter-productive." While commending Sri Lanka for successfully "overcoming this menace of terrorism and separatism" it emphasized that "the international community including the HRC should help and support Sri Lanka to heal its wounds and achieve reconciliation and lasting peace" instead of "adding fuel to the fire." Pakistan reiterated that "no self-respecting country would agree to the intrusive measures advocated in this resolution" while pointing out OP 10 and OP 6 of the resolution as examples. Raising a question on the capacity of the OHCHR to carry out its mandate given by the resolution, Pakistan said if the OHCHR is to receive funds "from countries that have sponsored this resolution it will obviously be seen as a process that will be tainted."

Cuba said "Sri Lanka has shown a genuine commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights of its people" and that it "does not believe in an international investigation in this specific case." In Cuba's point of view, "It's simply a case of imposing in the interests of the powerful over others" and this initiative gives a signal which is contrary to "a spirit of cooperation and dialogue."

Russian Federation said they "consider that this initiative is unconstructive in principle" and that "this draft goes well beyond the limits of reconciliation and it constitutes interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state."

India was strongly supportive of Sri Lanka's continued engagement with the OHCHR and UN special procedures. It noted that the implementation of LLRC's recommendations "lies at the core of reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka" and underscored that "the Report of the LLRC and its findings and recommendations provide a window of opportunity to forge a consensual way forward towards a lasting political settlement." India said "in asking the OHCHR to investigate, assess and monitor the human rights situation in Sri Lanka, the resolution ignores the progress already made by the country and places in jeopardy the cooperation currently taking place between the Government of Sri Lanka and the OHCHR and the Council's Special Procedures." India expressed its firm belief that "adopting an intrusive approach that undermines national sovereignty and institutions is counterproductive" and its concerns that "the resolution has the potential to hinder the efforts of the country rather than contribute constructively to its efforts, and hence inadvertently complicate the situation."

Japan shared its "policy objective" of supporting Sri Lanka's efforts through its engagement with Sri Lanka "on a dialogue on bilateral basis encouraging Sri Lanka to implement concrete measures for promoting national reconciliation and ensuring accountability." Japan believed its continuous engagement with Sri Lanka has resulted in further commitments. Japan strongly "urged Sri Lanka to continue to make atmosphere to cooperate with the international community and to steadily implement concrete measures including the ones to which Sri Lanka committed itself recently to improve its human rights situation and to realize timely national reconciliation."

Republic of Korea noted with appreciation Sri Lanka's "continued efforts towards national reconciliation and reconstruction". It noted that "despite the achievements made by the GoSL for national reconciliation and reconstruction there is still room for improvement in terms of accountability" while it "is fully aware of the difficulties" of doing so emphasized that "this is what SL should go through in order to achieve full national reconciliation."

South Africa encouraged the GoSL to implement the recommendations of the LLRC "as one of the most important steps in the journey towards true national reconciliation." It also encouraged "the Government and people of Sri Lanka to speedily agree on a credible and meaningful process that would create a conducive environment inside and outside the country and will allow for a meaningful and sustainable political settlement leading to a constitution that will be acceptable to all Sri Lankans." It said it is "prepared to share this experience with the people of Sri Lanka" through its Special Envoy "to work to promote the need for a peaceful, sustainable long term political solution which would be best achieved through broad consultation and an inclusive, open, transparent and meaningful dialogue process amongst all the people of Sri Lanka."

Brazil acknowledged the progress achieved by the GoSL and also recognized "the enormous challenges" it faces as a country that goes through a transitional process. Brazil stressed the importance that "Sri Lanka continue to advance its efforts in the realm of transitional justice as part of the necessary measures to guarantee the rights to memory and truth as well as to ensure reparations for victims and to overcome practices that still affect the human rights situation in the country." Brazil said "We believe that increased international cooperation including through constructive dialogue is the most effective

contribution this Council, the OHCHR and the international community as a whole can give to Sri Lanka.”

Uganda said, “a call for an international investigation into the situation in Sri Lanka has, “in our view, no basis. We should be mindful that Sri Lanka has fought one of the most ruthless terrorist groups in the world”.

Nigeria “appreciated the efforts of the Sri Lankan Government to continue engaging the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms as a means of improving the human rights situation in the country” and also commended Sri Lanka’s achievement in the areas of demining, resettlement, reconstruction and rehabilitation of its people, especially the former combatants.

Iran pointed out that Sri Lanka has continued to maintain its engagement with the Council and emphatically stated “we oppose the politicization of human rights issues, including country specific human rights issues”.

Zimbabwe said the High Commissioner’s report went beyond its mandate “by making reference to and recommendations on extraneous issues, including its call for the establishment of an international inquiry mechanism to further investigate alleged violations”.

Namibia said “the international community should assist Sri Lanka in her continued efforts to overcome difficulties to pursue the policy of national reconciliation, rehabilitation, and resettlement of those who were affected by the conflict, as well as the reconstruction of the country:.

Viet Nam spoke of endeavors and concrete achievements made by the Government and People of Sri Lanka in post-conflict resettlement since May 2009 should be welcomed” and said it would “be ready to join hands with the support of the international community and share with Sri Lanka our hands on experience of national reconstruction and international integration”.

Arab Republic of Egypt welcoming the “genuine commitment to the reconciliation process by undertaking a range of substantive measures, including within the framework of the National Plan of Action on the implementation of the recommendations of the LLRC, which is Sri Lanka’s own domestic mechanism” said, “the Council as well as the International community must encourage States in their efforts to promote and protect human rights”.

Sudan in its statement noted that it “appreciates the continuous and tireless work of the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the recommendations of the LLRC via a national plan of action aiming at ensuring conducive environment for the national reconciliation and reconstruction on going processes”.

South Sudan in its statement appreciated the “role of the government in reducing the number of military forces in the Northern and Eastern provinces, and removing of many checkpoints in order to strengthen freedom of movement” and welcomed “the

appointment of three members of Commission of Inquiry to investigate alleged abductions or disappearance of persons in the northern and eastern provinces”.

Thailand welcomed the “progress achieved in the implementation of the LLRC recommendations, particularly the establishment of the military courts of inquiry and the Commission of Inquiry on Disappearances”. They noted that a number of measures have been set up to address accountability issues, including regular discussions between the Government and the ICRC to explore possible areas of cooperation on alleged disappearances”.

Myanmar said “Sri Lanka deserves a due recognition for the progress achieved so far in the post-conflict efforts in the areas of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction” and that it was “pleased to see the continued engagement and cooperation of Sri Lanka with the High Commissioner and her office” and added that “reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction work after 30 years of the conflict in Sri Lanka is no easy task”.

Belarus said “we consider that the report of the High Commissioner goes beyond the mandate defined in said resolution, even the one in the resolution, and the matters and the recommendations in it are not foreseen by the resolution”.

Bhutan commended Sri Lanka for its open and proactive engagement with the mechanisms of the human rights council, including Special Rapporteur procedures, treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review” and in its statement said, “we also recognize the process of reconciliation is not an easy task”.

Bolivia its statement said, “the Report of the High Commissioner submitted to this Council session on Sri Lanka goes beyond the mandate granted under the resolution 22/1.”.

Lao PDR appreciating the “significant efforts of the Government of Sri Lanka to engage the country towards democracy and improvement of the livelihoods of its citizens” in its statement said, “we are also pleased to note that Sri Lanka remains committed to continue its multifaceted and comprehensive process of reconciliation in the context of the National Plan of Action on the implementations of the recommendations of the LLRC”.

Morocco acknowledged that “Sri Lanka has made important policy measures such as restoring the civil administration in the Northern and Eastern areas of the country and the elections at the Northern Provincial Council last September” and “it should now capitalize on these measures to build trusted and reconciled environment among the components of the Sri Lankan nation”.

Uzbekistan welcomed “the Government’s adoption for further recommendations made by this Commission and the fact that Commission has been set up and military courts to investigate disappearances as well as the ongoing cooperation of the country with this Council and its mechanisms”.

Several INGOs who also intervened in the Sri Lanka related discussions at the HRC, also commended Sri Lanka:

International Buddhist Foundation (IBF) said there are “attempts to highlight Sri Lanka as an “emblematic failure” oversteps the border of sanity shown in this Council by some actors, while totally ignoring the lessons learnt from genocide and horrendous crimes that occurred in their own countries, and strive to point an accusing finger at a sovereign State that liberated its people from a bloody 30 year LTTE carnage”.

World Barua Organization, a Non-Governmental Organization said, “Sri Lanka is a country which has come out of a thirty year terrorist war and is making progress in reconciliation” and “there are attempts by some countries to disrupt this process, being influenced by various elements who are determined to discredit Sri Lanka in this Council” and added “history of the world has proven that reconciliation is a possibility as an internal process. It has been done in other countries and it can be done in Sri Lanka too” and that WBO and that “we hope that the international community will provide necessary inspiration and help to Sri Lanka in this hour of need.

Buddhist Relief Organisation (IBRO) asked, “where these international figures were and what the UN was doing for 30 odd years watching LTTE blast people to bits, kill pregnant women, babies and innocent Buddhist Monks, and no sooner the LTTE is vanquished they are quick to come out demanding accountability, transparency, holding Geneva Rights” and demanding “why the LTTE were killed? What kind of hypocrisy are we witnessing?” and questioned “the duplicity of some of those powerful countries whose human rights violations have been overlooked by the UN, UNHCR is a matter of regret”.

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