



Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the UN, Geneva

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Press Release

Ambassador Aryasinha says request to the Office of the High Commissioner to undertake a comprehensive independent investigation reflective of partisan politicised agenda

Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Ambassador Ravinatha Aryasinha responding to the High Commissioner's Report on Sri Lanka, informed the UN Human Rights Council on 26th March 2014 that rather than encourage and support the ongoing reconciliation process in Sri Lanka, as well as the constructive engagement Sri Lanka continues to maintain with the Council, it was ironic that the draft resolution on Sri Lanka being mooted by some members of this Council, is reflective of the same partisan politicised agenda through its request to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to undertake "a comprehensive independent investigation". Assistance to this process by third party 'experts' whose mandate and credentials are far from clear; and its deliberate exclusion of a significant part of the duration of the terrorist conflict from the period under investigation via the introduction of a particular time frame, would be both precedent setting and prejudicial to the interests of all member and observer states of this Council in the future.

Responding on behalf of the Sri Lanka to the 25th Session of the Human Rights Council on the High Commissioner's Report, Ambassador Aryasinha said, the Government of Sri Lanka has consistently and with good reason rejected previous resolutions on Sri Lanka proposed by the US, which have emanated from a politicized process and mandate, and without the consent of the country concerned, and would do so again. He said, Sri Lanka reiterates that any action taken in the promotion and protection of human rights of a country must have the consent of that country.

Ambassador Aryasinha drew attention to the trajectory that has emerged with regard to the recommendation contained in Report of the UN High Commissioner reflects "the preconceived, politicized and prejudicial agenda which has been relentlessly pursued with regard to Sri Lanka". He said politicized processes will only impede the delicate balance of the ongoing reconciliation process in Sri Lanka, as well as the constructive engagement Sri Lanka has continued to maintain with the Council.

While pointing out to a clear lack of mandate and pre-conceived nature of its recommendations, he said his delegation was "surprised by the numerous errors and misperceptions contained in the draft report on Sri Lanka" which was despite the High Commissioner and her team having undertaken a comprehensive, week-long visit to Sri Lanka during which time they were provided with unfettered access to study first hand the situation on the ground. Expressing "deeply concern" at such glaringly erroneous information in a Report of this nature, he said, "one would have expected that the OHCHR to have undertaken a more stringent scrutiny of facts". Pointing out to a deviation from last year on the OHCHR refusing to accede to Sri Lanka's request to publish as an "Addendum" to the Report, the "Comments" of Sri Lanka on the High Commissioner's Draft Report as done in 2013, he said it demonstrated the disregard to established precedent which seriously impeded the visibility and integrity of subject between the two documents.

External Affairs Ministry Monitoring MP Sajin de Vass Gunawardena, and Secretary to President Lalith Weeratunga and members of the Sri Lanka delegation attended today's UNHRC session.

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