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Media Release

Developing countries express their confidence for the efforts made by Sri Lanka towards achieving national reconciliation

Developing countries expressed their confidence for the efforts made by Sri Lanka towards achieving national reconciliation and commended its level of cooperation with the UN. They clearly highlighted that the report A/HRC/22/38 was tabled today(20 March 2012)at the UN Human Rights Council under the agenda item 2 by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was unwarranted and a clear overstepping of its mandate. They also underlined that the report of the OHCHR has no nexus to the principle objectives of the US sponsored resolution 19/2 of March 2012, and therefore, any further initiatives in the Council, based on or emanating from this report are counterproductive.

The Delegation of the **Russian Federation**, while making a joint statement on behalf of 14 countries: Belarus, China, Cuba, Egypt, Iran, Kenya, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, Sudan, Uganda, Venezuela and Zimbabwe stated that " We note that the objective of the resolution 19/2 was to mandate the OHCHR to provide, in consultation with and with the concurrence of the Government of Sri Lanka, advise and technical assistance on implementing the said resolution ; and to request OHCHR to present a report to the Council on the provision of such assistance. We further note that the above was mandated clearly within the context of the implementation of Sri Lanka's domestic reconciliation process. Considering the above, we are of the view that the report A/HRC/22/38, the High Commissioner has exceeded her mandate of reporting on the provision of assistance, by making substantive recommendations and pronouncements. These recommendations are of a political nature. Furthermore, the High Commissioner, specifically in paragraph 64 of the Report has hastened to prejudge the outcome of Sri Lanka's ongoing domestic reconciliation process". Russia further noted that "the repeated allusion to the Secretary General's Panel of Experts Report, which was not mandated or endorsed by any intergovernmental process, not only takes the report beyond the scope and mandate of 19/2, but also exposes its inherent bias"

The delegation of **Thailand** while making an intervention said they “welcome Sri Lanka’s efforts to engage with the Council, especially through the UPR process, which we believe is an appropriate mechanism to address the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. The Council and the OHCHR can also play an important role in assisting Sri Lanka implement the various recommendations accepted during its UPR process. We believe that the Council has yet to exhaust the various options available in its Institution Building package. Therefore the case of Sri Lanka should not set any precedent for future country situations”.

The Delegation of **Venezuela** stated that the call for the international investigation prejudices the results of the national reconciliation process which is in full swing . “We regret that no due attention was given for the major efforts undertaken by the government of Sri Lanka to live up to its obligations on the human rights, particularly re- establishment of peace in 2009. Sri Lanka has shown its serious attitude in their commitments to this council, in their mechanisms and to the office of the high commissioner. They have provided information on ongoing progress, openly. We reject this interventionist attempts to interfere the internal process under way in a country which is leading towards national reconciliation, which are not grounded on the genuine cooperation which is the cornerstone of this council, which is work in consultation with the consent of the concerned States. We condemn this as the serious risk and the negative precedence that could set in the work of this council. The biased and interventionist nature of these practices will make way to double standards imposed by the empire and their allies which will be an assault on the sovereignty of the people in the South who do not subjected to their commands”.

The Delegation of **China** said it welcomes the efforts made by Sri Lanka to implement the recommendations of the LLRC and to formulate a National Plan of Action. “We commend the government for the great progress being made by resettling the IDPs, enhancing infra structure development, and improving people’s lives. We support Sri Lanka as a country that achieving the national reconciliation by promoting human rights. The report of the OHCHR has failed to reflect these positives, to which china express concerns. China commends Sri Lanka for its efforts to have enhanced cooperation with the UNHRC by received a visit from the OHCHR and actively engaged with the UPR mechanism and implementing the accepted recommendations. Sri Lanka faces domestic reconciliation, peace consolidation and development. China calls on the international community to support the Government these efforts in reconstruction, reconciliation and to provide time and space. China calls on the OHCHR and the relevant parties to abide by the mandates hold by the resolutions and to provide with the consultation of the government of Sri Lanka to provide with constructive assistance”.

The Delegation of **Cuba** in its statement underlined that “there is an argument that the resolutions in this council are aimed at enhancing dialogue and corporation with the Government of Sri Lanka. Such arguments are not credible, as we are satisfied with the willingness to cooperate with Council by the Sri Lankan authorities. It is difficult to find another county who provided more information and displayed more their wish to dialogue as Sri Lanka”. They also noted that the invitation to High Commissioner to visit Sri Lanka is still pending.

The Delegation of **Belarus** stated that their delegation is regret to observe the thinking of the experts of the OHCHR who made the report on Sri Lanka remains at a level of cold war style value judgments. "We had expected to have a different type of document and recommendations that could have made constructive cooperation. But it has not made the prospective of constructive cooperation with the Government of Sri Lanka. In spite of fostering dialogue, OHCHR has gone beyond its mandate in preparing this report, and making superficial descriptions". Belarus questioned as to why the OHCHR had spent time and money on this report, when Sri Lanka is cooperating?" They also went on to say that "of the sixteen pages of the document, it has only two and half pages for technical cooperation. The OHCHR has called to establish a so-called truth seeking mechanism. We would like to question the OHCHR that were these one sided sanctions imposed by the EU and the US?".

The Delegation of **Myanmar** took the floor and stated that they "welcome the willingness of the Government of Sri Lanka to engage with the Council in a spirit of openness and constructive dialogue. We are pleased to note that Sri Lanka has taken the path of reconciliation leading to a durable solution that would be acceptable to all parties. In this regard Sri Lanka deserves to receive a constructive and positive assessment in the Human Rights Council in a spirit of objectivity and impartiality"

The Delegation of **Vietnam** referred to the efforts of the Government of Sri Lanka to "heal the hurts from the 30 year old conflict" and said "visiting Sri Lanka today, we can see an aspiration deep inside the eye of every Sri Lanka man and woman. This is the aspiration of peace, of living neither fear nor hate and of a brighter future in the island where democracy, justice, human rights and dignity prevail. Significant achievements in many fields and the ongoing national reconciliation and reconstruction are making this aspiration, step by step, come true. Nevertheless, Sri Lanka knows better than anyone that this aspiration is being challenged by numerous difficulties. Huge losses and grave consequences left by the conflict could not be resolved within a short time. Much need to be done, especially for the vulnerable groups like women, children and minorities. That said, the most important added value to Sri Lanka's tireless work remains in ensuring a favourable environment to the national reconciliation and reconstruction and to the full enjoyment of all human rights for Sri Lankan people. Any initiative should be therefore be inspired by and consolidates the aspiration of a stable and peaceful Sri Lanka. Today we share the view that a constructive approach based on dialogue and genuine assistance is the unique way that the Council should proceed to help Sri Lanka overcoming her current tough moments"

Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the UN
Geneva

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