



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST
REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE, GENEVA**

Tel : (022) 919 12 50
Fax : (022) 734 90 84
E-mail : mission@lankamission.org

56, Rue de Moillebeau
1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland.

Web: www.lankamission.org

Media Release

Human Rights Council commences its 22nd Session - Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe to deliver National Statement on Wednesday

Hon. Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, Minister of Plantation Industries, H.E. the President's Special Envoy on Human Rights and Leader of the Sri Lanka delegation, who is due to arrive in Geneva on Tuesday, will deliver Sri Lanka's National Statement during the High Level segment of the Human Rights Council, on Wednesday, 27th February 2013.

The 22nd Session of the Human Rights Council opened today with statements by H.E. Mr. Remigiusz A. Henczel President of the Human Rights Council, H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremic, President of the General Assembly and Ms. Navanethem Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights.

This was followed by the commencement of the High Level segment where country statements were delivered. Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ravinatha Aryasinha and members of the delegation attended the session. The current session runs through the 22 March 2013. Sri Lanka is due to engage the Council under relevant agenda items and a number of thematic sessions.

Today's agenda also included a High Level Panel on Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) today. Intervening during the Panel, Deputy Permanent Representative Manisha Gunasekera "recalled that the promotion and protection of human rights as enshrined in the VDPA should be carried out in a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and dialogue, and in conformity with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and norms governing international relations". It was noted that "Sri Lanka is particularly mindful of the VDPA's affirmation of the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights which denotes the equal

importance of civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights” stressed the delegation.

The UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, making a video statement during the panel highlighted that promoting and protecting rights was confirmed as a priority United Nations objective and this led to the crucial decision to create the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay while making her statement said VDPA is the most significant overarching human rights document produced in the last quarter of century and said that the most pertinent feature in this document is its universality.

Sri Lanka Permanent Mission
Geneva
25 February 2013