



**The Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the
United Nations and other International Organizations in
Geneva**

Human Rights Council

30th Regular Session

Agenda Item 2

The Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights on Sri Lanka

Statement by
H.E. Mr. Ravinatha P. Aryasinha
Ambassador / Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka

(Geneva, 30 September 2015)

Mr. President
Mr. High Commissioner,
Deputy High Commissioner,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all know, an epoch making event took place in my country on the 8th of January this year at the Presidential Election when the people voted decisively for change.

From a culture of impunity where the rights of the individual had been violated for almost a decade, the people sought a change to a New Sri Lanka where ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity is respected, celebrated and valued; and independent democratic institutions, freedom of expression, the rule of law, good governance and the promotion and protection of all human rights - both civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights are upheld.

The President and Prime Minister placed reconciliation as well as development as the top-most priorities of the Government. Efforts were launched immediately to restore and renew Sri Lanka's relations with the international community as a whole to ensure that the benefits of these partnerships and relationships accrue to the people of my country. Soon after the Parliamentary Election on the 17th of August, the President and the Prime Minister worked to forge a National Unity Government that is essential for the political and policy stability required for reconciliation to succeed.

Mr. President,

The spirit of the Government that I represent is to build a nation that is prosperous, a nation where the human rights of all individual citizens are protected, a nation which is a responsible member of the international community, a nation that is confident, respecting the universal values of freedom, equality and justice, and a nation that is at peace with itself and with the world.

This new vision is what we now represent in our actions in this Council. You heard clearly the message that the Minister of Foreign Affairs conveyed when he addressed the Council on the 14th of September regarding the steps that Sri Lanka has already taken and intends to take in achieving reconciliation and upholding human rights including the setting up of mechanisms for truth seeking, justice, reparations and non-recurrence through consultations with all stakeholders. You have all seen our written response dated 15th September to the OHCHR on the Report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka which set out clearly, the path we intend to take. We stated that we take note of the Report of the OISL and that we will ensure that its content as well as recommendations receive due attention of the relevant authorities including the new mechanisms that are envisaged to be set up.

Mr. President,

In this path that we have chosen to tread, we will work with the High Commissioner, his Office, systems and procedures of the Human Rights Council and the international community including our bilateral partners to take necessary steps to safeguard and uphold the human rights of all our citizens. This includes obtaining their advice and assistance.

As you are aware, Sri Lanka worked with the main co-sponsor of the Resolution and other members of the Council to achieve consensus. We look forward to your continued support.

Thank you.