



Statement by the Delegation of Sri Lanka under Agenda Item 2 – General Debate at the 42nd Session of the Human Rights Council

Mr. President,

Subsequent to the most abominable terrorist attacks over 4 months ago on Easter Sunday Sri Lanka was put to test. However we witnessed the continued resilience of Sri Lanka's security forces to protect the country and its people, while ensuring fundamental rights, consistent with the pledges it has made before this Council. These range from the speedy restoration of security which has minimized the impact on the country's socio-economic fabric and upheld its international reputation, the lifting of the State of Emergency within 4 months, providing the ICRC full access to individuals detained, engaging in an informed debate on seeking to upgrade the new counter terrorism legislation, and in deference to the sensitivities of the Muslim community, adjustment of the regulation banning full facial cover attire.

The Government remains committed to combating hate speech and all forms of crimes directed against ethnic and religious communities and is taking steps to counter religious radicalization and violent extremism.

With reference to the recent appointment of the Army Commander it must be noted that this is a sovereign decision taken by the Head of State. External attempts to influence decisions and internal administrative processes of public service promotions in Sri Lanka are unwarranted and unacceptable. Articulating a position of concern on this appointment by certain bilateral partners and international entities, based on allegations, is regrettable and contrary to the principles of natural justice.

Thank you.

11 September 2019