



PEACE NEGOTIATIONS
POST-CONFLICT CONSTITUTIONS
WAR CRIMES PROSECUTION

Statement to Support Transitional Justice in Sri Lanka

The Public International Law & Policy Group's Circle of Former Ambassadors to the Human Rights Council closely follows developments in Sri Lanka.

We note with dismay the dire economic situation in the country that has resulted in severe negative conditions for the Sri Lankan people. We, therefore, call on all party leaders to facilitate the solution to the political crisis and economic disadvantages and urge the international community to step up its coordinated economic and political support to Sri Lanka as it navigates its future during this challenging and uncertain time.

In addition, we must not forget to prioritize advocating for justice for all affected populations as Sri Lanka enters this new chapter of its history. While expressing strong support for its progress towards orderly transition, durable peace, and democracy, this Circle remains deeply invested in transitional justice and accountability issues. Many of us served as Ambassadors to the Human Rights Council in 2014 when the Council adopted Resolution 25/1 on promoting reconciliation, accountability, and human rights in Sri Lanka. This Resolution, and the subsequent investigation into abuses and violations of human rights by both parties in the Sri Lankan civil war, aimed to establish the facts of the violations and ensure accountability. The investigation resulted in a High Commissioner for Human Rights report advocating for hybrid special courts. We reiterate our support for the HRC's decision in Resolution 46/1 from March 2021 to strengthen the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner to collect, consolidate, analyze, and preserve information and evidence of abuses of human rights and related crimes and advocate for victims and survivors.

In light of the new phase of political transition and economic crisis, we urge all responsible parties in Sri Lanka to reaffirm their commitment to transitional justice. Substantial strides must be taken towards accountability for human rights violations committed during the Sri Lankan civil war.

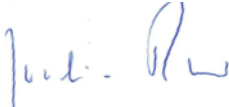
Sri Lanka faces a critical choice: will it turn its back to past crimes, or will it confront the abuses documented by many, including the OHCHR, and pave the way to a stable, peaceful, democratic future? We believe that ensuring accountability through a robust transitional justice program is the only way to have a genuinely peaceful, inclusive, and reconciled society. A comprehensive approach to transitional justice must include prosecutions, reparations, truth-seeking, institutional reform, vetting of public officials and employees, independent oversight of the security system, the promotion and implementation of the rule of law, and a program of healing and reconciliation.

This is the moment for all party leaders to pave the way to a peaceful solution to the current crisis and economic hardship, including complying with the obligations to its people and the international community to cooperate fully in investigating and prosecuting those responsible for atrocities and gross violations of human rights.

Names

Signatures

Joachim Ruecker
Former Ambassador of Germany, Co-chair



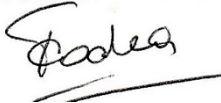
Keith Harper
Former Ambassador of the United States of America



Yvette Stevens
Former Ambassador of Sierra Leone



Filloreta Kodra
Former Ambassador of Albania



Tudor Ulianoschi
Former Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova

Tudor Ulianoschi

Amanda Ellis
Former Ambassador of New Zealand

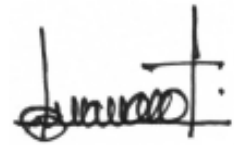


Vojislav Suc
Former Ambassador of Slovenia



Jorge Lomonaco
Former Ambassador of Mexico

Zorica Maric Djordjevic
Former Ambassador of Montenegro, Co-chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lomonaco', with a vertical line extending upwards from the top of the 'o'.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ZMaric' in a cursive style.