

Interfaith International

Ecosoc accredited NGO, Geneva, Switzerland

Statement by Visuvalingam KIRUPAHARAN on behalf of 'Interfaith International' under
Universal Periodic Review on Sri Lanka

8th session of the UN Human Rights Council – 13 June 2008

Mr President,

Interfaith International would like to make some comments regarding many issues raised in the outcome report on Sri Lanka.

The Draft report of the Working Group on the UPR - A/HRC/WG.6/2/L.12- indicates that many states are concerned about 'Child recruitment' and insists that this is not only in relation to the LTTE, but to **all factions**. Some states have even recommended that Sri Lanka investigate the role of security forces in child recruitment and hold to account those responsible. While we talk about Child recruitment, it is also necessary to consider other child rights – related to child labour, poverty, sexual abuse, etc. There are many war affected children without parents, shelter and food. No consistent and stable welfare is available to these victims.

The outcome UPR document on Sri Lanka fails to quote a remedy proposed in the recommendations of the report A/HRC/8/3/Add.3 – 14 May 2008. The Special Rapporteur urges that in the interests of crime control, the two parties to the conflict, the government and the LTTE "..... **should initiate and regularize contact between the government police and the policing forces that operate in LTTE-controlled areas.....**"

Referring to paragraph 82 of the Draft report, we observe that even though some countries recommend that the independence of Sri Lanka's human rights institutions such as the National Human Rights Commission be strengthened, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Special Rapporteurs go further. They not only recommend an International Monitoring body be established, but they also assert that the National Human Rights Commission is no longer independent.

The report A/HRC/WG.6/2/LKA/2 - a compilation of information from treaty bodies, special procedures, and other relevant official United Nations documents strongly recommends **that a field presence of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human rights be established with a mandate for both monitoring the human rights situation in the country and providing technical assistance.**

It is imperative that the Human Rights Council urge the GOSL, to accept an independent OHCHR presence and to allow the entry of international human rights monitors.

Thank you.

Geneva, Switzerland