

USTPAC welcomes High Commissioner Zeid’s report on Sri Lanka, calls on the government to publicize a comprehensive reform and transitional justice plan

(3 March 2017 – **Washington DC**) The United States Tamil Political Action Council (**USTPAC**) calls for urgent action on resolution 30/1 commitments and concurs with UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, that action on Sri Lanka’s implementation is “worryingly slow.” Resolution 30/1, co-sponsored by the government of Sri Lanka in September 2015, is a reform and transitional justice blueprint. Progress on this blueprint is immediately required.

Commenting on the report, Dr. Karunyan Arulanantham, USTPAC’s President said, “USTPAC urges the UN Human Rights Council to adopt a new resolution reflecting High Commissioner Zeid’s recommendations, including for the government of Sri Lanka to publicize a comprehensive plan with a timetable for reform and transitional justice and for OHCHR to establish offices in Sri Lanka.”

[High Commissioner Zeid’s report](#) demonstrates the government’s disappointing progress and lack of transparency on implementation of resolution 30/1. The report details how tasks that could be carried out quickly, such as repealing the Prevention of Terrorism Act, stopping security force surveillance and harassment, releasing all land from the military to civilians, and operationalizing the Office of Missing Persons have still not happened.

The High Commissioner pointed out that the government has failed to generate trust among the Tamil community. In a [press release](#) put out by the OHCHR today, High Commissioner Zeid said, “This critical opportunity in Sri Lankan history cannot be missed. I urge the Government and people of Sri Lanka to prioritize justice alongside reconciliation to ensure that the horrors of the past are firmly dealt with, never to recur.”

High Commissioner Zeid also concluded that the consultations conducted by the government-appointed Consultations Task Force were inclusive, participatory and deserving of praise. Victims reported that for the first time they felt respected while in formal dialogue with the government.

“After the Human Rights Council concludes, international engagement must continue. We need the active participation of the UN and all UN member states to drive reforms and to hold the government to account,” concluded Dr. Arulanantham.

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About USTPAC: USTPAC is a US-based Tamil advocacy group advocating for a cessation of ongoing human rights abuses in Sri Lanka, accountability for crimes committed during and after the civil war, and a political settlement to address the root causes of the conflict. Since 2009, it has worked for these goals with the US Government and UN Human Rights Council.

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