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THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

IMADR Oral Statement, Human Rights Council 14th Session

Item 9: General Debate

Mr. President,

IMADR wishes to express our concern regarding the situation of IDPs in Sri Lanka. Out of more than 290,000 people displaced since 1st April 2010 in Sri Lanka, only 142,772 have returned to their villages, in fact many of them are in temporary shelters, unable to return to their homes due to lack of infrastructure, incomplete de-mining or on the basis of security considerations and takeover of their lands by the military. 64,093 are still in camps in Vavuniya and Jaffna and about 92,791 with host families.

- There is grave concern regarding the capacity of the UNHCR and other aid agencies engaged in provision of relief to these IDPs to continue their work over the next few months.
- In several places in the Vanni, the takeover of land by the Army and Navy prevents IDPs from returning to their places of origin, for example in Mullikulam and Sannar in Mannar districts.

2 IDP women have been raped this month at Visvamadu by armed forces personnel where resettlement is going on. The judicial process is taking place. It is the responsibility of GOSL to prevent any such occurrences in future.

In terms of budgetary allocation, the government of Sri Lanka continues to give extraordinary priority to military expenditure – the budget allocation for resettlement of IDPs is about 1% of the defense expenditure which is estimated 210 billion rupees for 2010.

Mr. President, we also would like to draw the attention of the Council to the suffering of 260 million people throughout the world who are affected by the discrimination based on work and descent. In the UN efforts to address this issue, the “draft UN Principles and Guidelines for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent” were developed by the former Special Rapporteurs of the Sub-Commission on Human Rights, namely Professors Yozo Yokota and Chinsung Chung and included in their report. While the report was accepted as a UN official document (A/HRC/11/CRP.3) at the 11th HRC, the principles and guidelines have not yet been recognised as an UN standard in addressing this form of discrimination. Taking this opportunity, we would like to reiterate our call for the early adoption of the draft principles and guidelines as such by the Human Rights Council.

Thank you Mr. President.

IMADR is an NGO in consultative status (Special) with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations