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THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM**IMADR Oral Statement: 18th Session of the Human Rights Council****Item 4: Human Rights Situations that require the Council's attention**

22 September

Madame President,

IMADR strongly believes that the human rights situation in Sri Lanka requires further attention by the Human Rights Council. We welcome the submission of the UN SG Panel Report and its recommendations. Furthermore, we hope the findings of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) will contribute towards challenging the culture of impunity and building confidence among the war affected communities paving the way to lay a strong foundation for reconciliation. We look forward to the finalization of the LLRC report in November 2011 and its immediate public release thereafter.

These two reports give us an opportunity to open a constructive dialogue within the Human Rights Council among members, observers, civil society and the Government of Sri Lanka to improve the human rights situation in Sri Lanka: This is the call of thousands of victims and families who are waiting for justice and reparation. In this respect we wish to draw your attention to the letter forward to the President of this council signed by 20 NGOs and call for an immediate response.

As a member state of the UN GOSL is obliged to share with the community of nations the modalities related to the implementation of pledges given on many occasions. Still not fulfilled. The issues at stake relates to the lives of hundreds and thousands of people as well as accountability and compliance to international standards. It is regrettable to note the attitude of governments who resort to almost ridiculing the HRC and the affected by urging us to believe that side events are modalities to reckon with and calling on the international community to discuss serious issues at a tea party hosted by violators themselves.

Madam President,

After the side event held by GOSL during this current session of the HRC, a well-known journalist and human rights defender from Sri Lanka and the former leader of the Free Media Movement, Mr Sunanda Deshapriya, has come under continuous attack in all state-controlled media – print and electronic – in Sri Lanka with false accusations quoting a statement purported to have been made by the President of the Maldives. This false reporting has led to a major media campaign against Mr. Sunanda Deshapriya and his close associates still residing in Sri Lanka. We call for urgent attention of the HRC on this matter and call for an immediate stop to such misleading reporting. Madam President, it also shows that the human rights situation in Sri Lanka needs urgent improvement and consideration.

Thank you Madame President.

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