

THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

**IMADR Oral Statement: 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council  
Items 2&10: General Debate (including presentation of SG/HC country reports)**

25 September 2014

Thank you Mr. President,

IMADR and Franciscans International wish to appreciate the information shared with us by the international investigation team regarding the ongoing inquiry into alleged war crimes and violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws in Sri Lanka.

We are disappointed by the refusal of the Government of Sri Lanka to cooperate with the UN investigation team and to see this as an opportunity for the authorities to address any concerns they would have in this regard. The Government of Sri Lanka could have used this process to obtain technical support to investigate into difficult circumstances related to the killings which took place in the Government-controlled areas, like that of the journalist Lasantha Wickrematunge, Parliamentarians Nadarajah Raviraj, Joseph Pararajasingham and Lakshman Kadirgamar to name a few. We wish that the investigation team will be provided access to Sri Lanka at some point, especially since there may be the need for verification of geographical locations.

We are deeply concerned by the propaganda carried out by Government ministers which threatens possible detention and legal action against those providing evidence to the investigation team. We wish to bring the recent statement made by the Minister of External Affairs to your notice. It stated that sophisticated equipment was found in the hall, where families of the disappeared from the North gathered, and it was used to convey information to Geneva. This is a false statement made by the responsible Minister which can easily put those families into risk. The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Terrorism Investigation Department (TID) have been visiting the homes of the disappeared and taking down details of their families in the aftermath of the statement by the Minister, which has created a climate of fear among families of the disappeared.

We once again call upon the Council and the UN to ensure that witnesses, victims, lawyers, human rights defenders and organisations cooperating with the investigation are provided with maximum security and protection. We also request the Government of Sri Lanka to make use of this opportunity to help families of the Muttur massacre to ascertain the truth regarding the assassination of their loved ones. Last but not least, we urge the Government of Sri Lanka to refrain from intimidations, harassments and reprisals against those seeking accountability for past crimes.

Thank you Mr. President.