



Submission to:
90th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

July 2016

Racial Discrimination in Sri Lanka

Introduction

1. Notes that Sri Lanka acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in 1982, and it submitted the last periodic reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2000. Regrets with concern the delay in submissions of the latest periodic reports.
3. Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society comprising one large ethnic group (Sinhala) and several much smaller ethno-religious groups: North-Eastern Tamils (11.1% in the total population); Muslims (9.3%); and Up-Country Tamils (4.1%)¹, and Tamil is their first language.
4. The three decade of the ethnic conflict which resulted in a full blown war in 2009 has impacted the majority-minority relations in the island, leaving behind challenges within the constitutional, legal and policy framework of the minority rights discourse including the stark reality of a narrative of bi-polarization of the political imagination of a multi-ethnic society; marginalization through displacement and within minorities. No doubt that the new government will be confronted with the every reality of the war as it grapples with the establishment of mechanisms for reconciliation, truth seeking, non-recurrence and accountability.
5. One estimate suggests that 75,000 people were killed as a result of the war since 1983. 290,000 persons were displaced often on multiple occasions. In March 2009, estimated 150,000 to 190,000 people, most of those were North-Eastern Tamils, were believed to be trapped in a small corner of the Vanni, subjected to the forced LTTE conscription and denial of the freedom of movement,² under constant shelling and with insufficient water, food and medical care.³
6. Since the decolonization in 1948, there has been legal, political and economic discrimination of minorities including racist violence against them. For examples: the disenfranchisement and deprivation of the citizenship of Up-Country Tamils; the ‘Sinhala Only’ language policy; anti-Tamil riots such as in 1958, 1977 and 1983; discrimination in access to State lands and development funds⁴; and poor quality of housing, health and education in estates⁵.

¹ Census of Population and Housing of Sri Lanka (2012), Table A3: Population by district, ethnic group and sex, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka. These figures are from the last all-island census in 2011. As a result of the war, there has been a considerable migration of Tamils of North-Eastern origin from Sri Lanka, partly compensated in numbers by population increase and better enumeration of the Muslim and Up-Country Tamil communities

² UN News Centre (26 March 2009), “*Sri Lanka: UN relief chief reiterates concern over civilians trapped by fighting*”, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30310#.V4NgGvmLSM8>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

³ International Committee of the Red Cross (17 March 2009), “*Sri Lanka: ICRC continues to help civilians as crisis escalates*”, <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/update/sri-lanka-update-170309.htm>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

⁴ Elizabeth Nissam/ Minority Rights Group (1996), “*Sri Lanka. A Bitter Hatred*”.

⁵ Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) (2011), “*Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation*”.



7. The Northern Muslim populations were forcibly evicted from their homes and lands by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 1990⁶.
8. Tamils of Indian origin, also known as plantation Tamils or Up-Country Tamils, comprise about 4.1% of the Sri Lankan population⁷. They were originally brought to work as bonded laborers in the tea, coffee and rubber plantations in Sri Lanka by the British around 1820 during the colonial period⁸. Some Tamils of Indian origin came to Sri Lanka as traders and settled in Colombo and other urban areas⁹. A large part of the Indian Tamil population remains in the central, plantation areas of Sri Lanka, while approximately 6% of them have moved to other parts of the country in search of various employments¹⁰.

Article 4

Intolerance of minorities can be found in the highest echelons of the State including the Army Commander and a Minister of the former regime. These statements have not been condemned by the government. It underlines that when such sentiments of racial superiority from persons in power are not denounced by State authorities and politicians, it legitimizes racist ideologies and practices among other State actors within the public institutions and society.

The rise of religious intolerance manifested in the attacks against the minority communities are another concern. The attacks include restrictions on construction and/or expansion of places of worship of religious minorities and on freedom of religion through an initiative to enact legislation on unethical conversions, and widespread impunity for such acts.¹¹ *Bodu Bala Sena* (BBS), a hardline Sinhala Buddhist organization, is often involved with or responsible for those attacks.

Article 5

There have been push backs in human development indicators in the North and East that 46% of children aged 3-59 months are underweight in comparison to 29% in the rest of the country. Only 46% of the population in the North and East has access to safe drinking water compared to 62% in the rest of the country¹².

Ethnic minorities remain under-represented in the public sector employment in comparison to their proportion in the population, including national schools and divisional secretariats. Up-Country Tamils constitute 0.31%, Muslims constitute 3.29% and North-Eastern Tamils constitute 5.26% of State sector employees,¹³ and that their representation in the provincial public sector is only slightly better,

⁶ Imtiyaz, A.R.M, and Iqbal, M.C.M. (2011), "*The displaced northern Muslims of Sri Lanka: Special problems and the future*", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, pp: 376 – 379

⁷ Census of Population and Housing of Sri Lanka (2012), Table A3: Population by district, ethnic group and sex, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka.

⁸ De Silva, C.R. (2011), "*Sri Lanka – A history*" (revised version), p. 262

⁹ Fulbright Commission, "*Sri Lanka – an Overview*", http://www.fulbrightsrilanka.com/?page_id=561, last accessed on 9 July 2016.

¹⁰ Radhakrishnan, V (1948), "*Indian origin in Sri Lanka: Their plight and struggle for survival*".

¹¹ See the Tables 01, 02, 03 of this report.

¹² World Bank (2007), "*Sri Lanka Poverty Assessment*", Colombo

¹³ Department of Census and Statistics (2006), "*Census of Public and Semi- Government Sector Employment - 2006*", <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/CPSGSE06/index.html>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.



where Up-Country Tamils constitute 1.94%, Muslims constitute 5.87% while North-Eastern Tamils constitute 13.7%.¹⁴

Poverty in the estate sector (almost exclusively of Up-Country Tamils) is endemic, according to the World Bank. The poverty headcount in estates is 7 percentage points higher than the national average¹⁵.

Right to housing is a serious problem faced by the plantation community. According to the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) conducted in 2009/10, 56.1 % of the plantation workers continued to live in “line rooms”. According to the Center for Poverty Analysis (CEPA), this figure was 56.9% by 2015¹⁶. The design of these “line-rooms”, usually, a single room in barrack-type residential units, does not provide a healthy environment for the inhabitants. These houses constructed during the British rule remain unchanged. The health care system in estates is poorer than other regions. According to the survey conducted by an NGO working in these areas, children in estates have low birth weight, remain stunted and under-weight compared to those in other regions in the country¹⁷.

Moreover, women from the minority communities confront multiple forms of discrimination including gender-based violence, discriminatory personal laws¹⁸, unequal access to land and public resources.

Following a change in the electoral system to a proportional representation system, minority political parties can play an influential role in Sri Lankan politics. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), the largest Muslim political party, and the Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), representing Tamils of Indian origin, have been in a position to make and break governments. Because these parties held sufficient seats to enable the formation of coalition governments, the party leadership was able to negotiate with the ruling party and win several key ministerial portfolios.

Yet, self-determination and self-governance have been critical demands of minority groups for over half a century in Sri Lanka. Under the current legislative framework, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, the Provincial Councils Act No.42 of 1987 and enabling legislation (the brainchild of India that was introduced as part of the Indo-Lanka peace pact in 1987) provide some level of devolution of power to the provinces.¹⁹ Yet, the 13th Amendment is limited both on paper and in practice.

Case Study: Tamils of Indian origin living in the plantation sector

The situation of plantation Tamils is exceptional and requires specific attention. The community has been marginalized and side-lined for decades and faced major political, economic and social rights violations. As Sri Lanka charts its post-conflict future, it is crucial that this community does not continue to be neglected. Although plantation Tamils were not directly involved in the conflict, because of their Tamil name and identity they have faced similar human rights violations to North-Eastern Tamils such as arbitrary arrests and detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

¹⁴Ibid

¹⁵ World Bank, “Sri Lanka – Overview”, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/srilanka/overview>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

¹⁶ Center for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) (May 2015), “Poverty in the Estate Sector: has it turned the corner?”, <http://www.cepa.lk/blog/details/poverty-in-the-estate-sector-has-it-turned-the-corner--e12dc7f68939e8b4f5c525ff40899a65.html>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

¹⁷ Chandrabose, A.S. and Sivapragasam, P.P. (2015), “Red colour of tea: Central issues that impact the tea plantation community in Sri Lanka”

¹⁸ Ramani Muttetuwegama, “But I am Both”; Sri Lankan Women under Parallel Legal Systems in Indira Jaisingh (ed), Men’s Law, Women’s Law, Women Unlimited, New Delhi 2005 pp. 173-189.

¹⁹ Groundviews, “Devolution of powers under the 13th amendment in Sri Lanka: Fact or Fiction?”, <http://groundviews.org/2009/07/19/devolution-of-powers-under-the-13th-amendment-in-sri-lanka-fact-or-fiction/>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.



Historically, the civil and political rights of plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka have been violated. Many of them were stateless and faced problems of citizenship through successive post-independence governments. They received Sri Lankan citizenship only in 2003 under the Citizenship Act 35. However, over 200,000 people in this community still have problems of documentation, since many lost their citizenship documents in the ethnic riots in July 1983. Several thousand do not have national identity cards (NICs), which has led to arrests and detention. The lack of basic documentation affects their ability to seek proper employment, own property, benefit from social security, vote and open a bank account.

Plantation Tamils are the most neglected and under-privileged ethnic minority community in Sri Lanka. Poverty levels among them are 10.9% percent which is very much higher than the national average.²⁰ Most are employed for picking tea and they receive extremely low wages, despite the fact that the tea industry is one of the top contributors to the country's economy. Work in the plantation sector is labour-intensive and its conditions are poor in which many plantations are now being managed by corporations.

The living conditions of the plantation workers are also very poor. Their "line room" houses are often made of wood, inadequate to withstand the cold and rainy weather in the mountainous areas. Cramped living conditions also mean children, parents and extended families share the same sleeping space. Sanitary facilities are insufficient and there is high rate of sexual attacks including incest²¹. Other social problems in the plantation sector include high rates of domestic violence, alcoholism and caste-based attacks.

The male literacy in the plantation sector is 88.3% while the national rate is 94.7%. The female literacy rate is 74.7% against a national average of 91.1%. Similarly, only 20.2% of the plantation population has a secondary education and only 2.1% of them have a post-secondary education. The comparable figures for the national average are 52.2% and 20.7% respectively. More than half (55.9%) of the plantation population has only primary education²².

The education that community's children receive is of poor quality due to the inadequate facilities and a lack of qualified teachers. The children often drop out from primary school. Some 37% of the children are engaged in child labour, which is uncommon in the rest of Sri Lanka. Only some 0.2% of workers in the public sector are Tamils of Indian origin while 5.5% are North-Eastern Tamils, 2.2% are Muslims and 92% are Sinhalese.²³

Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

75,000 Muslims were forcibly removed from the North by the LTTE in October 1990, and then most of them settled in IDP camps in Puttalam where they continue to be dependent on food rations while facing problems of the access to employment, stigmatization by the host community, neglect by State authorities and the lack of compensation for their loss of assets and properties.²⁴

²⁰ Satharasinghe, A.J. (2015), "Social Development Status of Estate Sector", http://www.mpid.gov.lk/en/images/NPA_UNDP/1_Mr_Satharasinghe.pdf, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

²¹ Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition (2008), "National Report on violence and health in Sri Lanka"

²² Ilyas, A.H. (2014), "Estate Tamils of Sri Lanka – A socio economic review", *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 6(6), pp.184 – 191

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Imtiyaz, A.R.M, and Iqbal, M.C.M. (2011), "The displaced northern Muslims of Sri Lanka: Special problems and the future", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, pp.376 – 379



Land seizure

Land has been a highly politicized and ethicized issue in Sri Lanka since independence. State-sponsored colonization schemes, moving Sinhalese into Tamil and Muslim dominated areas in the early 1960s, caused much concern at the time.²⁵ Throughout the conflict, people from all three communities lost their land: mainly through the establishment of High Security Zones (HSZs); land-grabbing by the militant groups and civilians; and encroachment and displacements. Following the end of the conflict, issues over land remained. Specific ways in which the State has appeared to be involved in land issues highlighted by minority representatives were: taking over land for security purposes or under various ministries; and supporting, assisting and in some cases, sponsoring people from the Sinhalese community to settle in the North and East. In the opinions of those interviewed for this research, these actions represent an attempt by the Sri Lankan government to alter the demographic make-up of the North and East.²⁶

Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)

The draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) is a tool used to commit large scale atrocities against the Tamil population and minorities in general. The PTA has been applied for arbitrary arrests and detention, unfair trials and torture as documented by the OHCHR investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL).²⁷ The anti-terror legislation does not comply with international standards, leaving the minority communities remain exposed to continuous human rights violations. Although the government plans to replace the law with alternative legislations in line with international human rights standards, the PTA remains operational. For instance, between March and April 2016, 25 persons were arrested under the PTA during a security operation as a result of the discovery of an explosive device in Jaffna.²⁸

Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances

Majority of the disappeared persons during the past three decades were from the Tamil community. Many commissions of inquiry on the issue were appointed previously, yet they have been criticised for the lack of independence, transparency and accountability as well as for the poor or non-implementation of the recommendations of the commissions.²⁹ Moreover, at the end of the war, when Tamils trapped by the fighting began to enter the government-controlled areas, the military asked people who had had any involvement with the LTTE to surrender. According to one eye witness interviewed during an IMADR fact finding visit, “*They (the military) made announcements that even if you had worked for the LTTE for one day, you should surrender*”. However, many of those surrendered are still missing today. On 25 May 2016, the government ratified the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, but it has failed to criminalize the act of enforced disappearances.³⁰

²⁵ University Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna) (1993), “*Land, Human rights & The Eastern Predicament*”, <http://www.uthr.org/Reports/Report11/Report11.htm>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

²⁶ Interviews with activists and civil society leaders in the regions of the North and East

²⁷ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2015), “*Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka - Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/30/61)*”, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A_HRC_30_61_ENG.docx, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

²⁸ OHCHR (June 2016), “*Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka (A/HRC/32/CRP.4)*”, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session32/Documents/A_HRC_32_CRP_4_EN.docx, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

²⁹ OHCHR (November 2015), “*Preliminary observations of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances at the conclusion of its visit to Sri Lanka*”, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16771&LangID=E#sthash.e4CwJu9v.dpuf>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

³⁰ OHCHR (June 2016), “*Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka (A/HRC/32/CRP.4)*”, paragraph 77



Indigenous Peoples

The indigenous people of Sri Lanka, *Wanniyalatto* (forest-being), are discriminated in their access to housing and its quality, education, health services and the exercising cultural rights.³¹ They are not represented in decision-making processes, and most of them do not have birth and/or marriage certificates.³² They are stigmatized as “backward” and “uncivilised” in wider society, and are largely dependent on State cash transfers (Samurdhi payments) for income and not allowed to freely enter, forage, hunt and cultivate in customary lands which are now designated as the Maduru Oya National Park³³.

Lack of effective remedies, recourse, redress and other measures

The Sri Lankan judiciary has historically been inconsistent in its adjudication of human rights violations in general and unsympathetic to minority rights in particular. The Constitution prohibits in Article 12 (2) discrimination “on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any one of such grounds”. However, it is regretted that this protection is extended only to ‘citizens’. It is further regretted that there has been no equal opportunity legislation enacted to strengthen protection including from acts of discrimination by non-state actors and to offer non-political remedies for victims of discrimination.

The 1957 Prevention of Social Disabilities Act (as amended in 1971) criminalizes caste-based discrimination. Nonetheless it is of concern that caste-based discrimination remains prevalent in Sri Lanka, though unacknowledged by State authorities as reflected in the absence of recent prosecution, public education campaigns and of legal, institutional and policy measures to root out discrimination based on work and descent in the public and private spheres³⁴. This discrimination is represented in marriage advertisements in weekly newspapers, religious practices and the denial of voting for women in administrative services in relation to the appointment of Diyawadana Nilame (Chief Executive) of the Temple of the Tooth Relic.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act No.16 of 2003 has restored citizenship rights to stateless Up-Country Tamils. Nonetheless, a large number of plantations Tamils remain frustrated in its application and enjoyment due to inordinate delays experienced in the hands of public officers, lack of documentation thereby preventing voter registration and national identity card registration for their full economic, political and social integration.

The recognition of Tamil as an official language through the 13th Amendment to the Constitution is noted, while the official languages law is respected only in the breach in public institution outside of the North and East.³⁵ Tamil speakers outside the North and East are unable to transact official business with State authorities in the Tamil language, either through correspondence or in person, signage and information materials in the Tamil-language are scarce and the Official Languages Commission is under-resourced, unable to inspect and monitor implementation of the official languages law and unwilling to take legal action against recalcitrant public institutions.³⁶ The present Minister for National

³¹ Sunday Times (16 November 2007), “*Veddahs’ world is a no man’s land*”, http://www.sundaytimes.lk/081116/News/sundaytimesnews_21.html, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

³² Ibid

³³ Fernando, M. (2016), “*Losing Grounds: A study on socio, economic, and cultural challenges of selected marginalised groups in Sri Lanka*,” Colombo: PDP

³⁴ K.T.Silva, P.P. Sivapragasam, P. Thanges (eds) (2009), “*Casteless or Caste Blind Dynamics of Cultivated Caste Discrimination Social Exclusion and Protest in Sri Lanka*”, International Dalit Solidarity Network, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies and Kumaran Book House Colombo & Chennai .

³⁵ Coexist Foundation (2006), “*Language Discrimination to Language Equality: Report of an Audit of the Status of the Implementation of the Official Language Policy in Sri Lanka*”, FCE Publications, Colombo

³⁶ Official Language Commission (2006), “*Annual Report 2005*”, p.21, Rajagiriya



Co-Existence and Official Language Hin Mano Ganeshan has threatened to resign for the failure to implement the national policy.

Though the Public Administration Circular No. 3 and 7 of 2007 promotes the bilingual services of the public sector, it is of concern that no positive action is envisaged for the recruitment of Tamil language speakers to central and provincial governments outside the North and East to redress their under-representation in the public sector and to include minority communities to public administration.

Although the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was ratified by the government in 1996, the delay in its incorporation into domestic law in the context of widespread stigmatization of migrant workers and their families, threats to ban mothers of under-fives from working abroad and poorly designed and resourced reintegration schemes for returned migrant workers remain concerned.

The Interim Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Electoral Reforms to address the under-representation of minorities in elected government at central, provincial and local levels, especially in areas where minorities are dispersed, has been neglected.

The Government of Sri Lanka should uphold in principle and give effect to the decision of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka against the arbitrary eviction of hundreds of Tamil lodgers from Colombo in 2007,³⁷ and against the arbitrary detention of Tamils in Colombo following an LTTE bombing in November 2007³⁸.

Implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

We regret that the Government of Sri Lanka has not made a declaration under the Article 14 of ICERD to enable the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) to consider individual communications from Sri Lanka. The lack of national efforts to monitor and evaluate State obligations under the ICERD, the lack of implementation of the Committee's general recommendations and recommendations contained in the concluding observations, the failure to publicize the concluding observations remain concerning.

The slow progress of investigations to the incidents and attacks against the freedom of opinion and expression that have taken place through abductions and enforced disappearances, extra-judicial killings of media workers including from minorities, arson attacks against media institutions, threats and intimidation of media workers and lack of independent media access to conflict areas, have been obstacles to combat racism and racial discrimination.

While the forthcoming visit of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues scheduled for October 2016 is welcoming, the government should invite the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance to undertake a country visit in 2017.

³⁷ The Island (9 June 2007), "SC restrains IGP, eight others from evacuating Tamils", <http://www.island.lk/2007/06/09/news1.html>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.

³⁸ The Island (11 December 2007), "SC orders Tamil suspects in custody enlarged on bail", <http://www.island.lk/2007/12/12/news7.html>, last accessed on 11 July 2016.



Proposed Recommendations

The government should:

1. Collect disaggregated data, in particular by the Department of Census and Statistics and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion and caste;
2. Ensure that its anti-poverty and development programs have a targeted focus on the needs and rights of minority communities;
3. Enact equal opportunity legislation that protects the access of victims of racism and racial discrimination or those who may be victims to social services including employment, housing, education and healthcare;
4. Ensure recruitment of groups that are or may be affected by racism and racial discrimination to all public services, especially in areas where they are dispersed minorities;
5. Recognize the existence of caste-based discrimination and formulate policies, laws and administrative measures for the eradication of discrimination based on work and descent;
6. Direct State officials to facilitate electoral registration of Up-Country Tamils and to recognize their status as citizens as provided for by the 2003 Act regardless of possession of the formal certificate of citizenship;
7. Consult with internally displaced persons (IDPs) to device durable solutions for their voluntary return, or integration in their present area of displacement or relocation to another area with safety and dignity;
8. Create appropriate mechanisms in consultation with the Wanniyalatto community for their participation in decision-making processes that may impact on their full and equal enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights;
9. Appoint a Special Commissioner or Ombudsperson to protect and promote the rights of indigenous people;
10. Ensure the protection and security of all religious groups and their freedom of religion and belief, including from non-state actors;
11. Implement the Official Languages Law and strengthen the independence and effectiveness of the Official Languages Commission;
12. Enact domestic legislation in conformity with the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families that recognizes their economic contribution and accords them dignity and rights;
13. Incorporate a gender perspective in all relevant policies, strategies and programs of actions against racism and racial discrimination;
14. Revise school textbooks and curriculum to eliminate elements that may promote racism and racial discrimination or reinforce negative stereotypes of minorities;
15. Establish a Minority Commission to effectively investigate and take action on intolerance of and discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities through minority rights education and specifically designed awareness raising campaigns;



16. Ensure constructive and mutually respectful engagement with civil society organizations and human rights defenders in combatting racism and racial discrimination;
17. End impunity for violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals and groups involving racism and racial discrimination;
18. Publicize the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action in Sinhala and Tamil as a component of activities towards the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
19. Encourage the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka to develop an action plan based on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; and
20. Abolish the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and release those detained under Act without charge.

Table 01: Incidents of violence against Muslims in Sri Lanka in 2013

Date	District	Brief of Incident
5-Jan	Anuradhapura	A demonstration against Anuradhapura Malwathuoya Mosque is held by monks. The demonstrators demanded immediate removal of the Mosque and the Muslims living around the mosque with immediate effect.
6-Jan	NuwaraEliya	TalawakeleJamiul Anwar Madrasa was set on fire by an unidentified group. The Madrasa building was totally demolished and another building was half burnt by the fire. The Police said this fire may have occurred due to an electric leakage, but the people in the area suspect that a group behind was behind the incident.
7-Jan	Colombo	Sinhala Ravaya and the Students Association of the Law College protest against the increase of Muslim students entering the Law College.
9-Jan	Anuradhapura	The Anuradhapura Malwathuoya Mosque is attacked for the third time. During the attack the mosque was submerged due to a flood.
16-Jan	Jaffna	A group of people arrive in a white van during morning prayers to attempt kidnap a well known Muslim business man.
19-Jan	Colombo	Buddhist monks protest against a No Limit fashion outlet (A prominent brand name in Sri Lanka owned by a Muslim businessman), demanding the shop to be closed immediately
20-Jan	Kurunegala	Leaflets against Muslims and Islam are distributed.
20-Jan	Anuradhapura	Notices and leaflets appear, warning the Sinhalese not to consume food in Muslim hotels because it causes impotence in Sinhalese men.
22-Jan	Nationwide	The BBS declares that all newly established mosques are 'bunkers of Jihad'. It demands for information of all the mosques in the country within 7 days, failing which it will have to take the next course action against them, it warns.
22-Jan	Nationwide	Then Minister of UPFA government, Champika Ranawaka says that the Halal Certificate is necessary only for goods produced for consumption by Muslims and not goods consumed by others. He further states that the decision made by the All Ceylon JamiyyathulUlama (ACJU) is not practicable.
23-Jan	Kalutara	A group of monks damage a Muslim restaurant in Beruwala
25-Jan	Nationwide	In a blatant show of racism, a Tamil newspaper refers to the on-going anti Muslim hate campaign as a conflict between pigs and donkeys.
26-Jan	Ratnapura	150 monks from the Sinhala Ravaya and BBS groups attempt to storm the Jailani mosque. Accompanied by several policemen, they clambered up the rock face, carrying Buddha statues in their hands, only to find their attempt foiled by a massive thunder-shower that caused the group to retrace their steps
4-Feb	Galle	The BBS distributes leaflets against Muslims.
7-Feb	Nationwide	The BBS announces that the year 2013 is the year of "Halal eradication". They have the blessings of the President of Sri Lanka to continue their hate campaign activities.
9-Feb	Matara	The Matara Gandara Muslim mosque is attacked and stoned at midnight by a gang, shouting and cursing as they did so.
11-Feb	Kurunegala	A Muslim man on his way to work from Horambawa to Kalpitiya is attacked by unidentified persons.
11-Feb	Kegalle	The BBS puts up some 'anti-halal' posters.
11-Feb	Kurunegala	Muslim businessmen receive warning letters from an organization called the 'Consortium of Buddhist Associations' stating that the 'Para Muslims will be dead before March'
11-Feb	Nationwide	A statement by the BBS describes Buddhists as 'the trees on a Rubber Estate' and the minorities as 'the small bushes and creepers in the estate.'
13-	Kurunegala	In Siyabalagaskotuwa and Kilinpolla, around areas near the police, four Muslim

Feb		shops are attacked by unidentified persons in broad daylight. No police came to their aid.
14-Feb	Kandy	The 'KeppattipolaParapuyra' gang distributes 'anti-halal, anti-Muslim' handout that say: "you have full freedom to oppose the Halal process."
17-Feb	Colombo	BBS General Secretary, Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara Thero gives an ultimatum to the government to ban Halal certification by March 31st. More than 1300 Buddhist monks and a gathering of 15,000 people attended the rally.
17-Feb	Trincomalee	A meeting against Muslims is held at the Raja Ala Buddhist temple, where measures to damage the Muslim community's share of the economy was discussed.
17-Feb	Batticaloa	Kattankudi police stops a community awareness programme organized by the Sri Lanka ThowheedJamath, despite the fact that the organizers had obtained the proper permission from the relevant authorities to hold the event
20-Feb	Nationwide	The BBS compares the JamiyyathulUlama to the LTTE, and claims that the organization's actions are like those of the LTTE leader, V. Prabhakaran
21-Feb	Colombo	Posters appear that call for an anti-Muslim propaganda gathering in Dehiwala (on February 24). It also urges the Sinhalese to be prepared to fight for the country at anytime, anywhere.
21-Feb	Kandy	Posters against Muslims appear saying: Stop Muslimization in Murathalava town. We Sinhalese don't want Muslims or Halal.'
22-Feb	Galle	The Galle, HirumburaMohideenJumma Mosque is attacked early in the morning; its windows shattered, stones strewn all over the mosque floor.
27-Feb	Matara	While on the way to an institution for a computer course, 3 Muslim school girls are attacked by Sinhalese youths, who threaten them to stop wearing their hijab and abayas.
28-Feb	Kegalle	The Kegalle Jumma Mosque situated on the Colombo - Kandy Main Road is attacked, its windows damaged.
2-Mar	Kalutara	A group of around 120 Sinhalese people try to stop a halal slaughtering in the town. They photograph the butchers slaughtering cattle.
3-Mar	Ratnapura	A mosque is attacked in Opanayaka.
3-Mar	Hambantota	Sinhala Ravaya organizes a public meeting where they declare that Muslims are racist and they are not.
3-Mar	Gampaha	The 60-year old Mahara mosque was defaced with images of pigs and anti-Muslim hate slogans
3-Mar	Gampaha	The superintendent of the Mahara prison (located close to the local mosque), orders the mosque administration to close the mosque down. The mosque has been in the area for over 100 years.
5-Mar	Gampaha	A government minister orders the removal of a mosque in Mahara.
5-Mar	Kalutara	A Panadura –Eluvila Baudhaloka principal orders Muslim students to worship teachers and not to wear their hijab.
5-Mar	Nationwide	Rev. Shagoda Vipassi complains that "Sri Lanka's history is altered in grade 11 Islam book".
6-Mar	Colombo	A Muslim lady doctor attached to the Colombo South Teaching hospital is attacked by a Buddhist extremist.
14-Mar	Kandy	Posters appear in Kandy against Muslims ("don't go to Muslim shops!" and other hurtful messages).
31-Mar	Kurunegala	People shopping in a Muslim-owned shop have rotten eggs thrown at them.
31-Mar	Gampaha	A group of Muslim men taking part in religious activities is attacked. The attacker, a Sinhalese three-wheeler driver fled the scene immediately.
2-Apr	Batticaloa	Some notices intending to persuade Tamil people to participate in a hartal against Muslims are distributed in the Batticaloa district via post.

3-Apr	Anuradhapura	A Muslim Sunday School in Dickson Road, MalwatuOya, Anuradhapura is ordered by the BBS to removed immediately.
7-Apr	Colombo	A group of Sinhalese people demand that a mosque is closed, saying that failure to do so will result in their return with a Buddhist monk, to demolish the place.
10-Apr	Jaffna	An unknown gang attacks the Jaffna University Muslim student's prayer room with crude oil.
14-May	Colombo	MethotaKolannawa mosque is stoned by some drunkards
27-May	Matale	Matale District Secretary, claims that there are no mosques in Dambulla town. "There is no need to talk about it."
28-May	Matale	Padeniya Muslims are ordered by the Matale GA to move from their homes after their area is declared 'sacred', without any compensation or alternative arrangements.
4-Jun	Nationwide	Kalmunai Subathraramaya Viharadhipathi Sagaratna Thero writes that 'Sri Lanka is only for Buddhists.'
6-Jun	Nationwide	The BBS urges the government to introduce a national policy on Islamic religious education in the country. The BBS General Secretary claims Madrasa schools had been established throughout the country to spread Islamic extremism by certain NGOs.
9-Jun	Nationwide	The BBS launches an online petition calling for the ban of the face veil (burqa and niqab).
9-Jun	Colombo	A temporary mosque in the Grandpass area of Colombo is forced to relocate in one month due to an intense protest campaign by the "Ravana Balaya". The monks had staged a protest in front of the mosque and disturbed prayer on July 5th.
20-Jun	Batticaloa	The Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Puligal (TMVP), led by former Eastern Province chief minister and current Provincial councillor and former Advisor to the President, Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan (alias Pillaiyan), has been engaging in anti-Muslim propoganda in a bid to counter the popularity of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA).
24-Jun	Kalutara	A mosque in Kalutara is stormed by the Sinhala Ravaya marchers.
30-Jun	Batticaloa	A Buddha statue is placed in Oddamavadi Al Azhar school ground.
1-Jul	Batticaloa	Unidentified people break into the Masjuthul An-Noor mosque in on the Colombo – Batticaloa main road. Tills inside and outside were broken and the collections were missing.
4-Jul	Trincomalee	Tamil parents and children of Nilaveli Tamil Vidyalayam protest against Muslim children wearing hijab. The school administration forbids the Muslim children wearing the hijab from entering the School premises (two events)
11-Jul	Badulla	A mob of masked individuals stones the Mahiyangana Mosque, assaults the mosque trustee, breaks in and throws pig's head, flesh and blood into its precincts.
19-Jul	Badulla	Mahiyangana mosque closes down for the first time in 40 years. Uva Province Minister, Anura Vithanagama, allegedly threatened the trustee of the Mahiyangana Masjidul Araba Mosque against holding Jummah prayers.
21-Jul	Trincomalee	Armed forces try to stop the renovation of Muhaideen Jumma Mosque of Allai Nagar in Thoppor (Muttur area). They demand to see the approval for the mosque.
3-Aug	Colombo	A group of ten men led by the Chief Prelate of the Bellanwila Rajamaha Viharaya enter the Masjidul Hiba mosque while the devotees are about to break their fast, and threaten them to close down the mosque immediately.
12-Aug	Colombo	The new Grandpass mosque is closed after the attacks. The Sri Lanka Muslim Council said that the Muslims had agreed to move to the older place of worship.

18-Dec		Masjidhul As Shafee Mosque was stoned around 11.30pm and the police didn't arrive until 12.30am. None was arrested yet.
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Table 02: Incidents of violence against Christians in Sri Lanka in 2013

Date	District	Brief of Incident
6-Jan	Polonnaruwa	40 persons and a Hindu priest disrupt 60 Christians (Assembly of God church) gathered for prayer. Physical violence resulting in 4 injuries. Both parties presented at the magistrate court were advised to refrain from further conflict.
21-Jan	Puttlam	Mob of around 75 persons protests the renovation of a pastor's residence, claiming that he was building a church.
3-Feb	Gampaha	Group of Christians (Independent Church) at a prayer meeting threatened by a group of ten persons and the parish priest of the Mudukatuwa Catholic church, and told to stop the prayer meeting or face assault.
14-Feb	Colombo	Death threats to pastor of Gospel Tabernacle Church.
17-Feb	Kalutara	Threats to church pastor at the Christian Prayer Centre to discontinue prayer meetings claiming that they are unlawful. Perpetrators identified to be members of BBS who are also police and government officials.
17-Feb	Kandy	200 people with 2 Buddhist monks threatened pastor of the Light House Church to discontinue prayer meetings claiming they to be illegal.
3-Mar	Batticaloa	Living voice of Life church burnt down, following threats and a case being filed against the pastor for breach of peace.
4-Mar	Kandy	Christian individual taken away from her home during a prayer meeting and threatened with a beating for being Christian. The pastor who informed the Police about the incident was instructed not to disturb the peace.
16-Mar	Kegalle	Divisional Secretary orders Assemblies of God church to close down claiming that it is illegal
16-Mar	Galle	Mob, led by Buddhist monks disrupts worship service at Gethsemane Church and demands services are discontinued
17-Mar	Hambantota	Mob with monks disrupt worship service at Harvest Church and threatens pastor with death; worship services suspended by police few days after the incident. Stones thrown at homes of congregation members
18-Mar	Hambantota	Mob led by Buddhist monks attack the residence of the pastor of the Jeevana Alokaya church resulting in injury, destruction of property and eviction. Demands were made to discontinue Christian practices in the area.
19-Mar	Hambantota	Police orders prayer meeting of Assemblies of God church to be discontinued
21-Mar	Kurunegala	Police orders worship services at Heavenly Vision Church to stop temporarily, subsequent to complaints by Buddhist monks.
24-Mar	Colombo	Monks stage public protest against Assemblies of God church and assaults worshippers
24-Mar	Hambantota	Prayer meeting of Believers Fellowship church disrupted by members of the BBS, pastor and worshippers assaulted, property of approx. 100,000 damaged.
	Nation wide	Approximately 12 pastors been visited and questioned about their ministry by unidentified persons - Mostly in Kandy and Polonnaruwa districts
24-Apr	Hambantota	Premises of the residence of pastor of Assemblies of God church set on fire by unidentified persons
27-Apr	Polonnaruwa	Pastor of Believers Church set up and falsely accused of hiding explosives
27-May	Hambantota	Setting fire to the door of a location used for prayer meetings of Assembly of God church.
5-Jun	Colombo	Break in, desecration of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church, attempts of arson.

23-Jun	Colombo	Pastor of New Life Church physically and verbally assaulted in public by a buddhist monk and chased to his church. Church also attacked by a mob, resulting in injuries and destruction of property.
29-Jun	Puttlam	Anti-Christian meeting and threat of protest, accusations levelled against pastor of Gethsamane Church
5-Jul	Matale	Intimidation of pastor of Assemblies of God church by Police officers in civilian attire
26-Jul	Anuradhapura	Disruption of prayer meeting and threat of assault to the host if prayer meetings were continued at Gospel to the World church.
4-Aug	Colombo	Forced closure of Calvary Worship Church by state authority
5-Aug	Hambantota	Fire crackers thrown into pastors premises (Assemblies of God Church)
27-Aug	Kalutara	Prayer meeting of Calvary Church disrupted and pastor prohibited by the police to enter Pitipana
2-Sep	Hambantota	Attempts of arson on Assembly of God Church pastor's house
7-Sep	Colombo	Threat of attack planned by BBS, prevented by police protection
8-Sep	Colombo	Pastor of JeevanaDiya Church assaulted and church property destroyed
13-Oct	Puttalam	Church service of Golathwaye Church disrupted by two Buddhist monks and another individual and asked to discontinue. Pastor of church accused of desecrating Buddhist statues
11-Oct	Kegalle	Complaint to the Municipal Council against Church of Glory by villagers
6-Oct	Matale	Pastor's premises attacked (Gospel Power Mission Church)
12-Oct	Monaragala	Pastor of Four Square Church verbally attacked at a meeting organized by villagers and Buddhist priests.
4-Nov	Matale	Pastor's premises attacked
24-Dec	Hambantota	Assemblies of God church surrounded by mob demanding Christmas services to stop
24-Dec	Galle	Fire crackers thrown into Assemblies of God church and pastors premises
24-Dec	Galle	Stones hurled at Light House church
27-Dec	Monaragala	Protestors stop construction of Methodist Church
21-Dec	Galle	Petrol bombs hurled at pastor's premises (Samaritan Church)
10-Dec	Western Province	Pastor's residence shot at (details withheld to protect identity)

The main anti Muslim riot in 2014 – South Sri Lanka

Muslims and their property were attacked by Sinhalese Buddhists in the towns of Aluthgama and Beruwala, as well as in Dharga Town in Kalutara District. At least 4 people were killed and 80 were injured. Hundreds were made homeless following attacks on homes, shops, factories, mosques, and a nursery. Ten thousand people (8, 000 Muslims and 2, 000 Sinhalese) were displaced by the riots. The riots followed rallies by BBS. The mainstream media in Sri Lanka censored news about the riots following orders from the Sri Lankan government.

Table 03: Incidents of violence against Muslims, Hindus, and Christians in 2014

Date	District	Brief of Incident
04-Mar	Colombo	The Gangodawila Magistrate issued an injunction against the Kadawatha Road mosque in Kalubowila, Dehiwala, demanding the cessation of all religious activities on the premises. The order followed a case filed by the Kohuwala Police on 20 th February that the mosque was a “public nuisance”.

07-Mar	Colombo	The pastor of the Apostolic Church received a letter from the Divisional Secretariat stating that they had received information that the pastor was leading an unauthorized place of worship and asked him to submit registration documents.
09-Mar	Badulla	While the Sunday service was in progress, a mob of around 60 people led by six Buddhist monks gathered outside the pastor's premises and demanded that the pastor stopped all religious activities. One of the Buddhist monks slapped the pastor.
26-Mar	Damb	Two hand grenades were hurled at the Mosque in Dambulla on the night of 25 th march by a group of unknown persons, according to a member of the Mosque Trustee Board, Mr M Rahmathullah. Only one had exploded resulting in minor damages to the mosque.
04-Apr	Batticaloa	The church premises were set on fire by a group of unidentified persons. The church premise was completely damaged by the arson attack, together with Christian reading materials.
27-Apr	Kalutara	New Life Living Church, Bandaragama (Kalutara District) When a group of 30 Christians was engaged in prayer, a mob of 30 persons led by Buddhist monks stormed the premises and demanded that the prayer meetings be stopped. The Office in Charge (OIC) of the area police station supported their demand.
28-May	Kegalle	Two Buddhist monks from Keraminiya temple in Mawanella entered the Masjidul Tharul Hikma around 5.30 pm and ordered to close the mosque.
29-May	Puttalam	The pastor received a letter dated 29th May from the Ministry of Buddha Sasana and Religious Affairs requesting him to attend a meeting at the Ministry bringing along all legal documents pertaining to the church.
20-June	Jaffna	Reports from Jaffna stated that a mosque in the busy Navanthurai area was attacked; reportedly by unidentified persons. The prayer room used by Muslim students of Jaffna University had also been attacked a couple of days earlier.
23-June	Kurunegala	A group, carrying swords and cricket bats, threatened Muslim shop owners in the area and attacked and damaged the mosque located at Ibbagamuwa in Kurunagala district.
13-July	Ratnapura	A mob of about 25 villagers led by two Buddhist monks forcibly entered the premises and disrupted the worship service.
19-July	Polonnaruwa	A group of eight people led by a Buddhist monk, claiming to be from the Ravana Balaya, visited the pastor's premises and demanded that the church be closed down. The group threatened him with death.
03-Aug	Badulla	The Police instructs pastor to stop prayer meetings at the Revival Good News Church
03-Aug	Ratnapura	The Police instruct pastor to stop prayer meetings at the Bethel International Pentecostal Assembly.
15-Aug	Trincomalee	The Sri Lankan military demolished a mosque situated at Karumalai-oottu in Trincomalee Town. The mosque, established in 1926 and registered as a Jumma Mosque in 1947, was seized by the Sri Lankan military.
05-Sep	Northern Province	The intimidation by the Sri Lankan military has for the second time led to prayers, that were going to be held for the displaced people of Valikamam North, been cancelled. Military intelligence threatened the organisers with "consequences" if the prayers went ahead.

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