

Chairman,  
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka,  
165, Kynsey Road,  
Colombo 08.

13 December 2013

Dear Sir,

I write with reference to a report in the Sunday Leader newspaper of the 8th of December 2103 regarding the proposed commission on Torture to be established under the aegis of the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission. The report states that the establishment of such a commission is to be postponed. In particular, it states that:

“This decision was taken by the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission, together with the Commonwealth Secretariat Human Rights Unit, responding to a request made by several civil society organisations who had sought a postponement of the investigations,” sources said.

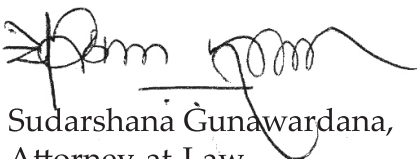
Subsequent to this report, the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) and other civil society organisations working to strengthen human rights protection in our country have had a number of inquiries from the media, seeking to ascertain as to whether any of us either individually or collectively made such a request. We have informed the media that no such communication was initiated with the Human Rights Commission by us or indeed by the Commission.

Given the importance of the issue and the misunderstanding created in the media and accordingly in the general public, we write to ascertain from you the veracity of this report and if confirmed, the names of the organisations which made such a request. Further, we request you in the public interest to publish the names of the organisations in the media without delay.

In the public interest, we will be copying this letter to the Commonwealth Secretariat Human Rights Unit and releasing this letter to the media.

Thank you for your cooperation  
Await your response  
On behalf of the below mentioned civil society organizations

Yours sincerely,



Sudarshana Gunawardana,  
Attorney-at-Law,  
Executive Director,  
Rights Now Collective for Democracy

Cc: Ms. Karen Mckenzie, Commonwealth Secretariat, Human Rights Unit.

**Signed on behalf of the following organizations:**

1. Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA)
2. Dr. Nimalka Fernando, Chairperson, IMADR-Asia
3. J. C. Weliamuna, Attorney-at-Law, Convener, Lawyers for Democracy
4. Mala Liyanage, Executive Director, Law and Society Trust (LST)
5. Ruki Fernando, INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre,
6. Rathika Innasimuttu, The Social Architechts (TSA)
7. Britto Fernando, President, Families of the Disappeared (FoD)
8. Shreen Saroor, Women's Action Network (WAN)
9. Philip Dissanayake, Executive Secretary, Right to Life Human Rights Centre
10. Kusal Perera (Citizen's Rights)
11. Muhammad Muzzammil Cader, Non-Violent Peoples Movement
12. Ainslie Joseph, Convener, Christian Alliance for Social Action
13. Ferddy Gamage, Coordinator, Centre for Policy Dialogue
14. Herman Kumara, Convener, National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO)
15. Padmini Weerasooriya, Mothers and Daughters of Lanka