



CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES  
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## CPA Asks the Steering Committee to Publish 'Draft Zero'

**August 10th 2018, Colombo, Sri Lanka:** The Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) notes the media coverage surrounding a document described as 'Draft Zero' – evidently produced by some legal experts resourcing the Constitutional Assembly process – which is reported to have been submitted to the Steering Committee. According to reports, this document sets out a scheme for a new constitution based on the recommendations of the Sub-Committees of the Constitutional Assembly which reported in 2016, and the Steering Committee's Interim Report of 2017.

While this document has not been made public by the Steering Committee, it is clear from the detailed critical commentaries on its contents that are appearing in the national media that the document has been leaked. We are thus in an extraordinary situation in which critics of constitutional reform are shaping the public debate on a future constitution, while proponents of reform as well as the general public remain in the dark about the proposals before the Steering Committee. This has removed any reasonable justification based on confidentiality which has so far prevented the publication of this document.

It may be the case that the government's conduct of the reforms process, or lack thereof, has by now almost entirely squandered the political opportunity for a new constitution created by the landmark elections of 2015. But the government continues to owe a duty of basic candour to the public that twice mandated and entrusted it with the responsibility for constitutional reform in 2015. CPA accordingly demands that the document known as 'Draft Zero' be published forthwith. It is the least the government can do to demonstrate some respect for the goodwill and credulity of its citizens.