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இலங்கை மனித உரிமைகள் ஆணைக்குழு  
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

## **The Message of the Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka on International Day in Support of Victims of Torture-2023**

Freedom from torture is an absolute right of all human beings which cannot be restricted under any circumstances. Nonetheless, the heinous act of torture both physical and mental is widespread in Sri Lanka and worldwide. The consequences of this blatant human rights violation is not just faced by the victims of torture but also their families, friends and witnesses. Thus, on this International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka adds special emphasis on the need to provide all forms of support to **victims, their families and witnesses** without discrimination.

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, through its inquiries and investigative mechanisms, takes all measures within its capacity to provide redress and reparation to the victims of torture. However, the support required by victims and their families extend beyond reparations to receiving fullest rehabilitation through specialised programmes which include provision of continued psychological support until full recovery is attained.

The Commission also highlights on the prevalence of many victims and witnesses who self-censor and refrain accessing the justice system due to fear of reprisals and past instances of impunity.

In light of the foregoing and the international human rights obligations of the State, the Commission calls upon the State to take necessary steps to establish an ecosystem in which the victims can access justice free from reprisals and receive full rehabilitation to fully recover from the injustices faced.

It is also a clarion call to all organizations, professionals, individuals and stakeholders to fully commit individually and collectively to provide all forms of support which includes medical, legal, psychological, and social, to the victims of torture, their families and witnesses, without prejudice and discrimination.

On this day, the Commission also reassures its unwavering commitment to ensure prevention of torture through its island wide education and training programmes, and monitoring processes, notably the National Preventive Mechanism through which a wide range of detention centres including police stations, prisons, CID/TID and child care homes are routinely visited to ensure no person is subjected to torture under any circumstances.

It also appreciates the efforts taken thus far by the civil society, journalists, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders to support the victims of torture to obtain redress and reparations and hold the perpetrators accountable for the injustices caused by them. However, let us collectively be determined to ensure a future free from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Justice Rohini Marasinghe  
Chairperson  
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka.

26 June 2023