



ශ්‍රී ලංකා මානව හිමිකම් කොමිෂන් සභාව
இலங்கை மனித உரிமைகள் ஆணைக்குழு
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

Press Notice No: HRC/P/E/i/11/12/23

Press Notice

The United Nations General Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms calls upon all states to protect the rights of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)

State authorities in Sri Lanka have the duty to respect the rights of HRDs and to refrain from violating or unnecessarily restricting these rights. They also have the positive duty to protect the rights of HRDs from being violated by private actors. Where violations occur, the state has the duty to provide effective remedies to HRDs.

HRDs in Sri Lanka face significant challenges and often complain to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka with regard to their arrest, detention, and prosecution for their legitimate activities in promoting and protecting human rights. They complain that they face violence, threats, retaliation, intimidation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, harassment, and other arbitrary action, and that they are frequently stigmatised in the media.

In this overarching context, there is an urgent need to set out certain general guidelines and recommendations to ensure that the rights of HRDs are meaningfully respected and protected in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka launched the *General Guidelines and Recommendations on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders* on 11th December 2023 at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute marking the 2023 International Human Rights Day.

Spokesperson
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

11.12.2023