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இலங்கை மனித உரிமைகள் ஆணைக்குழு
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

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Press Notice

Observations and Recommendations on the Commission for Truth, Unity and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka Bill

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka wrote to H.E. the President, sharing its observations and recommendations on the Bill titled ‘Commission for Truth, Unity and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka’, which was published in the Official Gazette of 29 December 2023. The Commission acknowledged that the right to truth is a well-established human right under international law and remains a key pillar of transitional justice. However, it stated that this right must be promoted in conjunction with the advancement of other pillars of transitional justice: accountability, reparations, and non-recurrence. In view of strengthening the promotion of transitional justice in Sri Lanka, the Commission presented several observations and recommendations with respect to the proposed Bill. The key recommendations included the following:

1. A high-level committee should be immediately established under the Presidential Secretariat, with the participation of relevant experts and representatives of victim groups and civil society, to monitor the implementation of all constructive recommendations of previous truth-seeking mechanisms, including the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission.
2. Programmes that inform the country as a whole about the findings of previous truth-seeking mechanisms should be carried out.
3. An effective and independent mechanism for investigation and prosecution of gross violations of human rights and grave crimes should be established as a matter of priority. Such a mechanism should be adequately resourced and should have access to relevant expertise including, where relevant, international expertise.
4. The scope of transitional justice mechanisms in Sri Lanka should include both the armed conflict and civil disturbances, including insurrections. The political and socioeconomic conditions that underlie and connect the latter to the former must be part of the truth that the country as a whole reckons with.
5. Any transitional justice mechanism in Sri Lanka should be housed under the Presidential Secretariat, thereby according to it the highest status and importance.

Media Spokesperson

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

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