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Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

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Statement of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka on the International Day to End Corporal Punishment

The International Day to End Corporal Punishment commemorated on 30th April marks a significant stride towards fostering a safer and more compassionate society towards children. Corporal punishment, characterized by the use of physical force for disciplinary purposes, has long been a contentious issue influenced by entrenched cultural and societal norms.

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka prioritizes child rights through a multi-faceted approach. This includes advocating for child friendly policies at the national level, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of these policies, conducting educational programmes to raise awareness about child rights, forming partnerships with relevant stakeholders, conducting research to understand child rights issues and building the capacity of professionals to protect and promote child rights effectively.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), unequivocally asserts the rights of every child to be protected from all forms of violence and affirms the best interest of the child. Sri Lanka ratified the Convention in 1991. International legal instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) also explicitly prohibit corporal punishment.

Sri Lanka's Chapter 7, Section 27(13) of the constitution, the Corporal Punishment Act No. 10 of 2006, and the Education Ministry Circular of 2016 reinforce this prohibition within the country's legal framework. However, there is a need for a unified and coherent legal framework that covers all aspects of children's rights comprehensively. Addressing these gaps requires not only legislative reforms but also effective implementation strategies, awareness campaigns, capacity building, and collaboration of relevant stakeholders.

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka while affirming the Commission's commitment to ending corporal punishment in Sri Lanka, encourages the government agencies, civil society organizations, parents, caregivers, educators and other stakeholders to unite to eradicate all forms of corporal punishment thereby fostering a safer and nurturing environment for all.

Chairman
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
Colombo.

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