

---

## Ambassador Kunanayakam tells HRC the trend of 'Might is Right' should be discouraged at all costs

Saturday, 01 October 2011

Last Updated Sunday, 02 October 2011

Ambassador Tamara Kunanayakam tells the Human Rights Council that the trend of 'Might is Right' needs to be discouraged at all costs. Statement Delivered by Ambassador H.E Tamara Kunanayakam, regarding the deferral of the Draft Resolution 'Transparency in Funding and Staffing of the OHCHR', during the final day of the 18th Session of the Human Rights Council. Madam President, Sri Lanka wishes to address this Council on draft resolution L/14 and associate itself with the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of the cosponsors. We also welcome, in a spirit of constructive engagement, the Presidential Statement made on this subject.

Sri Lanka thinks it an opportune moment to recall to this Council and to the Office of the High Commissioner, the General Assembly Resolution 48/141 of 20th December 1993, which in its several recitals amongst others, specifically emphasized that the need for promotion and protection of human rights be guided by the principles of impartiality, objectivity and non selectivity in the spirit of constructive international dialogue and co-operation. It went on to reaffirm the necessity for continued adaptation of the UN human rights, machinery to meet present and future needs in the sustenance of human rights and the need to improve coordination, efficiency and effectiveness, as reflected in the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, and within the framework of balanced and sustainable development for the benefit of all. Having regard to this fundamental premise, the General Assembly Resolution went on to decide 8 matters. It went on to create the Office of the High Commissioner and mandate the High Commissioner with several duties, amongst which was the principal responsibility to carry out the UN human rights activities within the framework of the overall competence of the General Assembly. Amongst the responsibilities is the duty to rationalize, strengthen and streamline its machinery with a view to increasing its efficiency and effectiveness and to report annually on its mandate coupled with steps being taken to provide staff and resources within the existing regular budget of the United Nations. Madam President, What is clear from all this is the overarching duty of transparency with regard to its activities including equitable geographic representation in the staffing and a clear need for an equitable appropriation of funds available to the Commissioner and the need for accountability of such appropriation to this Council. Any procedure that falls short of these ideals is wholly inappropriate. It is only timely that we would urge this Council to take serious note of whatever shortcomings that detracts from achieving these ideals and put in motion a process that would address these issues in a meaningful and responsible manner so as to achieve the ideals of equitable and efficient distribution of funds and symmetrical mobilization of human resources. This process can only begin if the Office of the High Commissioner permits access to information in a spirit of candour. It is sincerely hoped that this resolution too should not be regarded by some as procedural trivia. May we respectfully observe, that this kind of critique, is symptomatic of the re-emergence of the ghost of the trend that might is right, a trend that must be discouraged at all costs. Thank you, Madam President.