
Ambassador Kunanayakam warns external pressures threaten Sri Lanka's right to development

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Taking the floor under the general debate of Item 3 (Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development), Ambassador Tamara Kunanayakam affirmed that if the 'Council is to remain credible, it must give equal attention to economic, social and cultural rights as to civil and political rights; to the collective dimension as to the individual dimension; to the international as to the national.' She regretted that more than 25 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development and the consensus achieved, obstacles were still being placed in the way of its implementation, depriving developing countries of their right to determine the type of society in which this inalienable right can be realized.' Reiterating that development, human rights and peace are interdependent and interrelated, Ambassador Kunanayakam said that Sri Lanka considered the multidimensional approach to development in which the people are the central subject, as the only sustainable path to reconciliation. She said that being multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual, and multi-religious, Sri Lanka relied on a participatory, community-based, decentralized development strategy to shape a society best suited for the realization of the full potential of its members. Recalling the unprecedented GDP growth rate of more than 8% last year, Ambassador Kunanayakam reminded of President Mahinda Rajapaksa's emphasis that economic growth must be accompanied by equity, and that all people must benefit from the peace dividend, even in the remotest part of the country. Since human rights, peace and development were interdependent and interrelated, she warned that external pressures, threats and conditionalities would affect progress made and threaten the reconciliation process and the fragile peace, without which, the right to development cannot be realized. 'There can be no development without effective international cooperation and solidarity, as a complement to national efforts,' she declared referring to the UN Charter requirement, that economic and social issues can only be addressed through international cooperation. Full text of statement : Human Rights Council 19th Session Agenda Item 3 Report of the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the U.N Open-ended Intergovernmental working group on the Right to Development Statement by Sri Lanka Madam President, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by Egypt, on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement. Sri Lanka wishes to reiterate that development, human rights and peace are interdependent and interrelated; that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent; that, if this Council is to remain credible, it must give equal attention to economic, social and cultural rights as to civil and political rights; to the collective dimension as to the individual dimension; to the international as to the national. More than 25 years after the adoption of the Declaration, and despite the consensus achieved, obstacles continue to be placed in the way of its implementation, depriving developing countries of their right to determine the type of society in which this inalienable right can be realized. Less than 3 years after the end of an almost 3-decade old conflict against terrorism and separatism, Sri Lanka considers that the multidimensional approach to development, is the only sustainable path to reconciliation, which is its primary objective. Our President Mahinda Rajapaksa has continuously emphasized that economic growth must be accompanied by equity, that all people must benefit from the peace dividend, even in the remotest parts of the country. Multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual, and multi-religious, Sri Lanka relies on a participatory, community-based, decentralized development strategy to shape a society that is best suited for the realization of the full potential of its members. Last year alone, Sri Lanka recorded an unprecedented GDP growth rate of more than 8%, reflecting an imperative transformation of our rural economy on which the majority of people depend for their livelihood. Despite progress, Sri Lanka is subject to external pressures, threats and conditionalities that continue to, threaten its reconciliation process and the fragile peace, without which the right to development cannot be realised. Madam President, There can be no development without effective international cooperation and solidarity, as a complement to national efforts Article 9.1 of the Declaration provides that, and I quote : 'All the aspects of the right to development set forth in the present Declaration are indivisible and interdependent and each of them should be considered in the context of the whole.' In keeping with this requirement, my delegation calls upon the Working Group, in defining criteria and operational sub-criteria, to ensure that the multidimensional aspect of the right to development is respected, and a balance struck, between the individual and the collective, the national and the international, forming the basis for a legally binding instrument. Thank you !