
Amb Kunanayakam warns that the Council is being taken hostage to the hidden agendas of the mighty

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At the end of the 19th Session of the Human Rights Council, Ambassador Tamara Kunanayakam, taking the floor under the concluding general segment, affirmed that the US resolution against Sri Lanka constituted a negative precedent that challenged the core values of the Human Rights Council, and reflected a blatant case of politicization that "takes the Council hostage to the hidden agendas of the mighty". Ambassador Kunanayakam exposed the fact that no one within the Council was ignorant of the pressures exercised and the methods used to obtain support for a resolution whose list of co-sponsors, she said, constitutes a caricature of a divided world. She rejected all forms of unilateralism, threats, sanctions, blockades, conditionalities, and the orchestrated disinformation campaigns which, she said, aimed to diabolise Sri Lanka, and further pointed out that such measures would only bring dishonour to the resolution's authors. Observer States such as Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Pakistan also taking the floor under the same segment, expressed similar sentiments and reiterated support for Sri Lanka.

Link to webcast –<http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2012/03/comments-by-observer-states-on-draft-resolutions-55th-meeting.html>

(Sri Lanka statement can be browsed at the following timing- 01:28:49) Full Text of Statement:

General Comments by Sri Lanka 23 March 2012
Madam President, Before proceeding, Sri Lanka seeks clarification on allegations made by certain countries of threats to, and intimidation of, human rights defenders by members of its delegation. We treat such allegations with utmost seriousness and do not condone such violations. In this regard, we have asked for details from some of those making the claims, but, so far, we have not been able to ascertain the veracity of the incidents. We urge everyone to be responsible in making allegations that cannot be substantiated. Madam President, Sri Lanka is proud to have led a battle of convictions by appealing to the conscience of each and every one – for the respect of the principles and values that should unite the international community. The US resolution against Sri Lanka constitutes a negative precedent that challenges the core values of the Human Rights Council, and reflects a blatant case of politicization that takes the Council hostage to the hidden agendas of the mighty. Humanity has entered a new period in which the very survival of the values we cherish and uphold is at stake. To rise to these challenges is our responsibility, a necessity, and no longer an option ! No one here is ignorant of the pressures exercised and the methods used to obtain support for a resolution whose list of co-sponsors constitutes a caricature of a divided world. We reject all forms of unilateralism, threats, sanctions, blockades, conditionalities, and the orchestrated disinformation campaign whose aim is to diabolise Sri Lanka, but which only brings dishonour to its authors. When international solidarity, mutual respect and cooperation between the rich and the poor, the developed and the developing, the haves and the have-nots, must be the rule, we are witnessing an exacerbation of rivalries, of ambitions and schemes, of confrontation and unilateralism. When it has become imperative to appeal to the conscience of each, to impartiality and non-selectivity, we see a rise in arrogance, hypocrisy, double-standards, and the exclusion of those who dare to be different. Today, one country deems itself the depositary of a mission to dictate to the rest of world its vision of Democracy, of Human Rights, of Development. Is any of us safe from becoming the next target, the object of pressure, even of military aggression, to the detriment of our peoples and their right to life? It is our duty to unite in the common struggle to defend our sovereignty, our independence, our territorial integrity, and the free choice of our peoples to shape their own societies and their destiny. Sri Lanka will continue its policy of peace and reconciliation, which is an inclusive process that enjoys not only the support of its own people, but broad international support. We will also continue to defend the independence and the prerogatives of the Human Rights Council, against any effort to undermine its multilateral principles. We must heal not hurt; unite not divide ! The victory of one nation over domination is our collective victory, its defeat is our collective defeat ! Sri Lanka pays homage to all those who, in various ways, expressed their support for our common cause ! That, Madam President, is the price of liberty for our countries and our peoples !