

Sri Lanka at the High-Level Segment of the 72nd UNGA

The General Debate of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly is scheduled to commence on the 19th of September, on the theme "*Focusing on people: striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet*". President Maithripala Sirisena will address the UN General Assembly in the afternoon of 19th September. He will also participate at the opening session of the General Assembly in the morning of 19th September where the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, is scheduled to make his first address to the United Nations.

Several high-level events will take place on the sidelines of the General Debate where President Maithripala Sirisena will participate, commencing with the High-Level Event on UN Political Reform on 18th September which is co-hosted by the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump. President Sirisena will join world leaders in adopting a Political Declaration for UN Reform which will be graced by the UN Secretary-General as well. The Declaration will be an expression of support to the Secretary-General's leadership and transparency to initiate meaningful reform to make the UN a more effective and efficient organization.

On the same day, Sri Lanka will join the UN Secretary-General's 'Circle of World Leadership on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse', at a High-Level Meeting convened by the Secretary-General on this subject. This is in keeping with the National Unity Government's own vision of strengthening, promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law. Sri Lanka, having made a voluntary contribution of USD 10,000/- to the Secretary-General's Trust Fund will be recognised among others at this event. In connection with this High-Level Meeting, Sri Lanka joined other Member States in signing a voluntary compact with the UN, emphasizing the shared principles on which the UN and Member States support peace operations on the ground, and making specific commitments for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

This is the first General Assembly Session that is being held since Secretary-General António Guterres assumed Office as Secretary-General. On the 19th, President Sirisena will participate in the lunch being hosted by the Secretary-General for Heads of State and Government and heads of delegation to the 72nd UNGA. Additionally, the President will meet with the Secretary-General on the 23rd of September for bilateral discussions that will focus attention on the progressive nature of the relationship between the United Nations and Sri Lanka under President Sirisena's leadership and how this constructive and meaningful relationship could be further enhanced to benefit the people of the country.

President Sirisena will also attend the Reception being hosted by President Trump on the 19th of September, for Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegation who are in New York to attend the 72nd UNGA. The President will also join the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Theresa May, the Prime Minister of Malta Joseph Muscat and other Commonwealth Heads of Government at a Reception on the same evening.

On the 19th of September, the Sri Lanka delegation, demonstrating its commitment to addressing climate change and taking steps to protect the environment, will participate in a Summit that is to be chaired by the French President, Emmanuel Macron, on a 'Global Compact for Environment'.

Demonstrating the National Unity Government's commitment to combat forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, Sri Lanka will join a 'Call to Action to eradicate Forced Labour, Modern Slavery, and Human Trafficking' that has been convened by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Theresa May, on 19th September.

As a reiteration of its commitment to Open Government including the Right to Information, the Sri Lanka delegation will participate in the Meeting of the Open Government Partnership that is to be headed by the

French President Emmanuel Macron and the Prime Minister of Georgia, Girgi Kvirikashvili on the 19th September.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein will call on the President to discuss about progress in human rights in Sri Lanka under the National Unity Government.

Additionally, the Sri Lanka delegation is scheduled to participate in the Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting, the Informal Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers, the Ministerial Meeting of the Commonwealth, the Ministerial Meeting of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, and that of the Group of 77.

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