**National Consultations to Inform the Design of Reconciliation Mechanisms**

**Officially Launched**

In September 2015, the Government of Sri Lanka stated that, in accordance with the mandates received from the public at the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections held in January and August 2015, respectively, action will be taken to establish mechanisms for truth-seeking, justice, and reparations to consolidate peace, reconciliation and guarantee non-recurrence.

It was informed that mechanisms in this connection will be evolved through a wide process of consultations involving all stakeholders, including victims.

This morning, at the District Secretariat in Jaffna, Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera launched the national consultations that will inform the design of reconciliation mechanisms.

The Consultations will be designed and implemented by a Task Force consisting of leading public personalities appointed by the Government – Ms. Manouri Muttettuwegama (Chairperson), Dr Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu (Secretary), Mr. Gamini Viyangoda, Prof. Daya Somasundaram, Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa, Ms. Shantha Abhimanasingham, PC., Dr Farzana Haniffa, Prof. Sitralega Maunaguru, Prof. Gameela Samarasinghe and Mr. Mirak Raheem.

At the launch of the process today, the website for the consultations ([www.scrm.gov.lk](http://www.scrm.gov.lk)), which will also enable written submissions, shortly, was activated. While members of the public will have the opportunity to submit their responses to questions posed on the website in time to come, the Task Force will also carry out focus group discussions that will involve all stakeholders including victims, war widows, security forces personnel, families of the missing, the disabled, political personalities, and religious leaders.

Quoting President Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe at length, the Minister emphasized the commitment of the Government to the process of reconciliation to ensure durable peace. He spoke of all Sri Lankans across the island who have suffered at the hands of those who have abused the power of the gun and the need to take determined action to guarantee non-recurrence.

The occasion was graced by Member of Parliament M.A. Sumanthiran, Governor of the Eastern Province and Advisor to the President Austin Fernando, Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, District Secretary of Jaffna, the Chief of Defence Staff, the Security Forces Commanders of the North, members of the Task Force on Consultations, representatives from the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation and the public.

Speaking at the event, Member of Parliament M.A. Sumanthiran called on all conflict affected persons to come forward to share their views with the Task Force.

The text of remarks made by Minister Mangala Samaraweera is attached.

*Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms*

*12 February 2016*