

Concluding Remarks by Hon. (Dr.) Harsha de Silva, MP  
Deputy Minister of National Policies and Economic Affairs

Third Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of Sri Lanka  
Geneva, 15 November 2017

Thank you,

Mr. Vice President

Distinguished delegates

For Sri Lanka, the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of the UPR process is significant in the context of the approach of the National Unity Government to work with all stakeholders locally, and with the international community, to promote and protect the human rights of all our citizens, equally, while contributing to the promotion of rights, internationally, as well.

Many distinguished delegates today, recommended that we abolish the Death Penalty. I wish to state that no person has been put to death in Sri Lanka for the last 40 years. Sri Lanka is a country that is an abolitionist in practice.

This is my first experience of a UPR process, and I must say that I feel that we have benefitted from the experience of our peers and I appreciate on behalf of my delegation the views expressed by all to help us do even better in providing our people their rights, and ensure that our citizens are truly empowered.

Mr. Vice President,

Sri Lanka, the oldest democracy in Asia, with universal adult franchise having been introduced in 1931, fully recognises that all rights are interconnected and indivisible. The Government is committed to promote civil and political rights, as well as social, economic and cultural rights, equally.

Therefore, especially as we step into our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence in 2018, we are determined to take necessary steps to build a firm foundation for Sri Lanka to thrive as a 'country enriched', a knowledge based highly competitive Social Market Economy at the centre of the Indian Ocean where all citizens enjoy fully, their social, cultural and economic rights, as well as their civil and political rights, in a country that is reconciled, stable, peaceful and prosperous, that respects the rule of law, and good governance.

This, Mr. Vice President, is our vision for our nation. Copies of our Vision 2025 document have been already distributed to you Distinguished Delegates. I thank all States as well as the United Nations system for their support.

Ayubowan,

Thank you.