



Deepak Obhrai
Parliamentary Secretary to the
Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International
Human Rights

Media Release

For Immediate Release

Parliamentary Secretary Deepak Obhrai visits Geneva to discuss situation in Sri Lanka

(March 25, 2014, Ottawa) The Honourable Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights, will visit Geneva, Switzerland, on March 25-26, 2014 to address the human rights situation in Sri Lanka at the Human Rights Council.

“Canada will continue to press for tangible progress on post-conflict reconciliation and accountability” said Mr. Obhrai. “Failure to address such issues risks undermining stability and prosperity in Sri Lanka. Canada will continue to express concerns over current human rights abuses and violations in Sri Lanka, including arbitrary detentions and reprisals against activists.”

“Canada has been calling for a strong resolution on Sri Lanka that includes a call for an independent investigation into alleged violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties.”

BACKGROUND

Canada has been a vocal advocate for improved human rights performance in Sri Lanka, including post-conflict reconciliation and accountability. Unfortunately, Canada has received little assurance that the Government of Sri Lanka is serious about addressing these issues. While obvious progress has been made in physical reconstruction, demining and other areas, the Government has not taken comprehensive action on many of the recommendation in its own Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission.

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Canada is deeply disappointed that the Government of Sri Lanka has failed to ensure independent and credible investigations into alleged violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by both sides during the conflict, or to prosecute those responsible for ongoing violations and abuses. In the absence of credible domestic accountability processes, Canada believes now is the time for concerted international action. Accountability and justice are essential to long-term reconciliation and peace.

Canada will continue to pursue these issues through bilateral and multilateral channels and to offer appropriate assistance to Sri Lanka. Canada appeals to the Government of Sri Lanka to collaborate with the Council, engage constructively with the High Commissioner's report and accept the assistance offered to it by her office.

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For more information, contact Orli Joseph in the office of Hon. Deepak Obhrai, M.P.

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