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**Joint Statement IMADR , Forum Asia and Pax Romana**  
**Item 6 – Consideration of UPR reports – Sri Lanka**  
**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

Mr. President,

We value the process related to UPR as it has provided a new opportunity for members states and other relevant stakeholders to further engage the attention of the Council adding on to and strengthening the work of treaty bodies and special mechanisms.

In the outcome document from Sri Lanka's UPR, several countries have raised concerns and brought recommendations to address existing culture of impunity, threat to media freedom, increase of disappearances and extra-judicial killings, continuing attacks on peace activists and human rights defenders. Other important issues the outcome document did not reflect include racial profiling of detainees majority being Tamils, heightening communal tensions and violence faced by Muslims in the East in the aftermath of the highly rigged Provincial Council Election, sexual violence faced by Tamil women in Akkaraipattu which has occurred following search operations by the STF, intimidation of 2 journalists by the Secretary Defence. The conditions in Sri Lanka is worsening. Therefore we wish to affirm the recommendations made by Portugal in para 28, which urges Sri Lanka to address torture, combat impunity, reconsider establishing a local OHCHR presence with monitoring capacity, increase cooperation providing unrestricted access for humanitarian aid and ensure the protection and security of IDPs. All initiatives taken by the GOSL have failed to address these issues effectively eg. COI.

As part of the outcome of the UPR, and in keeping with recommendations made there under, we call upon the government to provide the following information to the HRC as part of a continuing constructive dialogue

- a) Date or timeline related reconstitution of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka in accordance with the Paris Principles (Recommendation 2, paragraph 82 Conclusions and Recommendations)
- b) Date and timeline related to full implementation of the provisions of international human rights instruments at the national level, in particular ICCPR and CAT (Recommendations 7,8, 10, paragraph 82)
- c) Date and timeline related to ratifying of the Disappearances Convention (para 33)
- d) An Action Plan related to the implementation of voluntary pledges with Benchmarks for the sessions in September 2008 as follow-up to UPR

During Sri Lanka's UPR several countries have spoken rightly about poverty and development challenges faced by Sri Lanka. Every Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil citizen over last 3 decades has grappled with poverty but had stood firmly struggling for realization of human rights. If we bring only one message to the Council as citizens, it is that the mere eradication of poverty does not make the guarantee of certain minimum international human rights standards optional. No country should be allowed to cover it's sins inside the cloak of poverty in this Human Rights Council.

Thank You