

JOINT STATEMENT: RESPECT SRI LANKAN PEOPLE'S DEMANDS, STOP THE VIOLENCE

For Immediate Release

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Seoul, South Korea

The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) and its partner civil society organizations in Asia are deeply concerned regarding the economic crisis experienced by the people of Sri Lanka. We are deeply moved to see men and women struggling to find essential food including lifesaving medical items for their family members and children. This day to day struggle to find sustenance has led the people to protests beginning early April 2022 – a result of fiscal mismanagement and unchecked handling of the economy.

We are concerned to note the use of live ammunition to disperse unarmed citizens in Rambukkana on 19th April, which resulted in one death and several critically injured including police personnel. The excessive use of force on citizens who were demanding essential items is an inhumane act. The people of Sri Lanka have continued to experience such impunity that has not been investigated so far. The shooting at Rathupaswella is a case in point. We call on the people of Sri Lanka and the authorities to ensure peaceful and non-violent resolution to the current crisis. Violence will only exacerbate the situation and compromise the resolution of the core problem.

Restoring faith and confidence in democratic governance is the need of the hour. The parliament must immediately agree to collectively reach a consensus to respond effectively and meaningfully to the demands of the people clamoring for good governance and an end to the corrupt regime of the Rajapakse family and their cronies. Protesters and political leaders must come to a negotiation table to resolve the ongoing crisis and violence. We call on the incumbent government and relevant officials to exhaust all means to find a resolution to the fiscal crisis in a sustainable manner. The Rajapaksha Government should hold itself accountable, work with the Parliament to enact crucial reforms, intensify actions to engage and dialogue with Sri Lankan citizens, and facilitate the restoration of checks and balances of governmental power.

Finally, we would like to convey our utmost solidarity to the people of Sri Lanka, in particular the youth, and the working people for coming together and demanding for justice, good governance, rule of law and transparency and rejecting authoritarian executive power. We believe that the demands placed before the country by the youth and the people of Sri Lanka are timely and follow the global trend to move towards greater democratic governance. We pray that the people will win in their struggle without any further repression and bloodshed.

Long live the people, in solidarity in your struggle!

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Endorsed by Organizations:

1. Asia Democracy Network
2. Asian Network for Free and Fair Elections
3. DHEWA org
4. FEFA - Afghanistan
5. International Movement of Catholic of Catholic Students (IMCS) Pax Romana, Asia Pacific
6. Khmer National Liberation Front
7. Korea Women's Associations United
8. Kurian Katticaren
9. Sukaar Welfare Organization
10. Association of Human Rights Defenders and Promoters (Myanmar)
11. Peace and Cultural Foundation
12. LRLDO
13. Centre For Policy Alternatives
14. Citizen Congress Watch

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