

**United Nations Human Rights Council
22nd Regular Session, 25 February to 22 March 2013
Agenda Item 6**

**ICJ Oral Statement in the Interactive Dialogue on the adoption of the UPR Outcome
Document on Sri Lanka**

**A CALL FOR ACCEPTANCE OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND JUDICIAL
INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY**

15 March 2013

Check against delivery

Mr President,

At the end of the armed conflict in 2009, the Government of Sri Lanka pledged to the international community that it would conduct credible investigations into allegations of gross human rights violations and serious violations of international humanitarian law occurring in the last weeks of the war.

The Human Rights Council, in its Resolution 19/2 of March 2012, called on the Government of Sri Lanka to fully implement the recommendations of the Lesson Learned Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) and take all necessary additional steps to fulfil its legal obligations and commitment to initiate credible and independent actions to ensure justice, equity, accountability and reconciliation. Almost four years on, the Government of Sri Lanka has yet to initiate an independent investigation or hold any persons accountable for the atrocities committed in May 2009.

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) calls on the Government of Sri Lanka to reconsider its rejection of recommendations to end impunity and ensure accountability (Recommendation 128.70 in the UPR Outcome Document), fully implement the recommendations of the LLRC; and conduct prompt, effective and independent investigations into allegations of serious human rights violations (Recommendations 128.29, 128.30 and 128.31).

The ICJ has expressed grave concern over the recent removal of the legal Chief Justice of Sri Lanka through an impeachment process declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court and in clear contravention of international human rights law and standards, including the right to a fair trial, and the rule of law. The Chief Justice's removal is the most recent episode in a long series of attacks against the independence of the judiciary. The ICJ therefore also urges Sri Lanka to accept recommendations to strengthen and ensure judicial independence and the integrity of the judiciary (Recommendations 128.77, 128.78 and 128.79).

I thank you.

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