

# Outcome Report

## CSO UPR submission workshop

16 – 17 February 2017  
Sri Lanka



## 1. Executive summary

On 16-17 February, *UPR Info* together with the National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO) organised a CSO UPR submission workshop. At the time of implementing the event, Sri Lankan CSOs are drafting UPR submissions to inform the third review of the State in November 2017. NAFSO together with their partner organisations are coordinating a joint submission and this activity proved a timely exercise to boost this process. It follows that the purpose of the workshop was to advance participants' knowledge about the UPR and, specifically, to strengthen their capacity to draft quality. The workshop was intended to:

- Include thematic priorities and information shared by NAFSO partners in the upcoming UPR CSO report;
- Allow *UPR Info* to conduct a first-hand assessment of ways to support CSOs to maximise their interaction with the UPR;
- Reinforce participants' advocacy skills through enhanced knowledge of how to draft influential CSO UPR submission; and
- Map out an advocacy strategy for Sri Lankan CSOs to ensure that they utilise all entry points for engagement with the UPR.

The agenda included interactive segments on:

- The UN human rights system and its actions on Sri Lanka;
- The UPR for newcomers and a discussion on Sri Lankan CSOs involvement in the previous cycles including good practices from other countries;
- Sharing first-hand information to the upcoming UPR CSO report;
- The goals and rules of CSO UPR submissions and sharing of good practices; and

- Next steps towards finalising thematic contributions to the joint CSO submission.

The workshop was the starting point for a new long-term designed project and partnership between UPR Info and national partners.. Building on lessons learnt from a previous project implemented from 2015 to 2016, we expanded on the number of in-country activities. Following the CSO UPR submission workshop, four additional steps are foreseen to be co-organised between Sri Lankan partner organisations and *UPR Info*. While these activities will be tailored to developments taking place in Sri Lanka, in-country pre-sessions are planned in New Delhi and Colombo in September 2017. The purpose of these pre-sessions are to brief the respective diplomatic community on implementation of second cycle UPR recommendations, to present the current human rights situation in Sri Lanka and to suggest specific and action-oriented recommendations for states to make to **Sri Lanka during the Review in November 2017**.

After the Sri Lanka November Review, a CSO strategy workshop will analyse the recommendations that Sri Lanka received and outline CSOs expectations on the Government in the implementation phase. In parallel, CSOs will create an action strategy detailing what actions they can undertake to contribute to implementation. Later on, the feasibility of a Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation following the adoption of Sri Lanka's UPR Working Group Report will be assessed. At this occasion, the Government with other UPR stakeholders could convene to discuss how to make the implementation process an inclusive and sustainable process. During such events, CSOs introduce the instruments they developed in the CSO strategy workshop. This exercise is dedicated to solidify collaboration among national UPR stakeholders, paving the way for fruitful partnerships. Due to the Sri Lankan context and its specificities, the modalities of this event will be agreed upon among partners.



Throughout the week-long mission, *UPR Info* significantly benefitted from its partners and related meetings to enhance its ability to continue working in a politically sensitive and multi-faceted post-conflict situation. *UPR Info* benefitted greatly from meetings

with many stakeholders, during which *UPR Info* introduced its mission and vision and elaborated on suggested activities in Sri Lanka.

The February workshop, the first of its kind for our organisation, took place in Colombo over two days and gathered 55 participants from both urban and rural areas working on various human rights issues. The activity brought together seasoned human rights defenders who played a prominent role in previous UPR cycles as well as newcomers previously not exposed to the mechanism. The encouraging number of grassroots CSOs working on issues related to internally displaced persons, fishing communities, land rights, women's rights and social security added an important element to the event. While national CSOs shared their extensive experience from their previous engagement in the UPR process in 2008 and 2012, representatives from Forum Asia, OHCHR and UPR Info contributed with a global perspective and good practices of CSO interaction with the UPR and overall UN human rights system.

The first day was dedicated to introducing the UN human rights system and its engagement with Sri Lanka. Emphasis was put on the plethora of Human Rights Council resolutions addressing the human rights situation in Sri Lanka and the work of Special Procedures mandate holders. After tea break, UPR Info lead an introduction session on the UPR that stressed the pivotal pillars of building CSO UPR coalitions and constructive cooperation with the Government and other UPR actors to fully realise the potential of the UPR to achieve positive human rights change. This was followed by an interactive discussion on the engagement by Sri Lankan civil

society in the first and second cycle, displaying the interconnectedness between reviews. In the afternoon, CSO submissions were spotlighted since the deadline for submission is 30 March 2017. UPR Info lead the presentation and introduced ways of increasing the likelihood that such reports are included in the Summary of stakeholders' information (also known as the Stakeholders' report). The session also shared good practices that the drafters of NAFSO's and numerous CSOs joint submission could incorporate in their work.

The second day provided space for deliberations on strategic UPR advocacy. *UPR Info* introduced the purpose and modalities of the in-country pre-sessions as well as the CSO strategy workshop and Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation. By detailing Sri Lanka's UPR timeline and contrasting it with the opportunities provided for CSOs along the way, it was evident that coordination among CSOs must be at the forefront of all activities. In this light, the Kenyan and Tanzanian advocacy charters were used as good practices to show how CSOs can divide among themselves tasks and responsibilities. The popular UPR Advocacy Factsheets were also presented and gained much praise by the plenary.



At the margins of the workshop UPR Info engaged in informal meetings to pave the way for the next steps. In sum, the mission proved invaluable in terms of identifying UPR Info's role in supporting the often knowledgeable and vibrant Sri

Lankan civil society in their UPR endeavours. As this was the first time we implemented a CSO UPR submission workshop, in addition to working in a country that we have not engaged in before and with new partner organisations, the workshop constituted a promising springboard for future partnership with national



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CSOs. Due to competing ideas about what the objective of the workshop should be, but also as a result of dividing lines among Sri Lanka CSOs, UPR Info had limited time to introduce the UPR process to participants. As a result, not enough time was spent on explaining the basic elements of the UPR and we were not able to introduce all the good practices and CSO tools that we initially had planned to share. However, it is our position that we have sown a seed for cooperation between UPR Info and national partners in a complex context. We succeeded in sharing our perspective on the UPR with our colleagues and the next activities will demonstrate the impact of the February workshop.



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## 2. Conceptual background

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> UPR cycle, it is essential to move beyond a mere assessment of State's human rights record to ensure sustainable implementation of UPR recommendations and long-term interaction of all stakeholders in the process takes place. UPR Info will support this objective at every step of the way.

Therefore, our project in Sri Lanka is aimed at reinforcing the national human rights architecture and inspiring dynamic collaboration among national actors. Through better reporting, more space for discussions and sustainable strategies, UPR Info supports stakeholders at every step of the UPR process; from the drafting of specific and action-oriented recommendations to their inclusive implementation at the national arena. As outlined below, the holistic approach underpinning the project consists of five interrelated steps..

### 2.1. First step: CSO submission workshop

Drawing on past experiences, we realised that building CSO coalitions is a matter of priority to safeguard meaningful civil society influence on the UPR process. During the two-day submission workshop, such as in Sri Lanka in February 2017, *UPR Info* underlines **the necessity to form CSO coalitions to influence the process**. In locations where such coalitions already exist, *UPR Info* will equip them to constructively participate in the mechanism. The outputs of the workshop will inevitably vary depending on where in the process of drafting submissions CSOs are when the workshop takes place. In some cases CSOs will be in the initial phase of the process, thus utilising the workshop to either inform themselves about the rules and goals of CSO submissions or begin the drafting. In other locations where the process is already underway, it will be an opportunity for *UPR Info* to provide feedback on draft versions before finalisation of submissions. As a result, *UPR Info*

tailors each CSO submission workshop to correspond with the specific needs of CSOs.

An added value of joint submissions is that **CSO clusters** are built around the common concerns of several CSOs. After the two-day workshop, participating CSOs will work on finalising the documents. Ahead of the submission deadline, CSOs will reconvene for a **validation day** where the final version or versions are adopted. In Sri Lanka, such a validation day will take place mid-March 2017, two weeks before the CSO submission deadline. Participating CSOs will take full ownership of the validation day as *UPR Info* staff will not be present at this occasion. Rather this is a moment for CSOs to advance the coalition-building process. At the end of the validation day, the media will be briefed on the deliberations at a **press conference**. If CSOs deem it beneficial, they will be able to seize this opportunity to **share the finalised submissions with the government and other UPR stakeholders**, in order to maximise the impact of their submission.

## 2.2. Second step: In-country pre-session

The *in-country pre-sessions* draws on the success of UPR Info's Geneva-based pre-sessions, one of the largest human rights advocacy platforms in the world. These occasions in Geneva, however, suffers from intrinsic limitations: firstly, they can only accommodate a limited number of CSOs, ranging from five to six speakers per State reviewed; and secondly, in-country diplomats can be more instrumental (compared to their counterparts in Geneva) to the UPR process, as some state's statement will be more influenced by their Embassies than their Missions in Geneva. To remedy this gap, in-country pre-sessions will ensure broader consultations among national UPR stakeholders and reinforce links between CSOs and embassies. This step will be implemented over three days. During the first day civil society representatives will engage in a preparatory training ahead of their interventions with media and diplomats during the second and third day. The second day consists of two separate

sessions; one media training on the UPR and one briefing session to provide space for an inclusive dialogue where local human defenders present on the human rights situation in the country to media representatives. The climax of the workshop is the third day during which CSOs deliver thematic presentations and propose recommendations in front of the diplomatic presence on the human rights situation in their country. During the event, diplomats obtain the first-hand evidence-based information to guide the process of drafting their UPR recommendations.

It should be noted that due to the relatively low number of embassies in some capitals, the in-country pre-session may be complemented, or even substituted, with a **pre-session in a neighbouring country's capital** which is more densely populated with embassies. In the case of Myanmar, we held an in-country pre-session in both Yangon and Bangkok in order to reach the broadest audience possible. We plan to implement a similar strategy regarding Sri Lanka, with pre-sessions to be held in both Colombo and New Delhi.

### 2.3. Third step: CSO strategy workshops

The third step takes place in the immediate aftermath of the review and lends itself both as an opportunity to strengthen or build CSO coalitions and analyse the recommendations the State received. The three-day training will be co-organised with domestic civil society organisations in order to discuss the UPR and map out UPR activities to be undertaken by the CSOs throughout the entire UPR cycle. In order to secure broad participation UPR Info strives to ensure that no less than 20% of the participants come from rural and most affected areas, and aim to an equal gender balance between participants. As media is a crucial actor to popularise the UPR in the public domain, journalists will be invited to the workshop to cover the discussions and interview participants. During the first day, UPR Info debriefs participants on the recent Review in Geneva. We present the UPR timeline and how CSO coalitions can maximise their impact at each entry point of the mechanism,

including advocating for acceptance of pending recommendations. During the second and third day, CSOs begin drafting thematic **follow-up maps** outlining their expectations on the government's implementation process and action strategies detailing what activities civil society can undertake to contribute to the implementation of recommendations. At the end of the third day, participants adopt an **Outcome Charter** containing UPR priorities that CSO anonymously agree to continue working on. In Sri Lanka, we plan to hold such a workshop in December 2017.

#### 2.4. Fourth step: Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation

Following the adoption of the UPR final report (scheduled for March 2018 for Sri Lanka's UPR), we implement with national partners a two-day national dialogue on the implementation of UPR recommendations bringing together the CSO coalition, the government and other UPR stakeholders. In order to ensure full cooperation of the government, relevant representatives such as the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have been informed about the event already at CSO strategy workshop, and communication between *UPR Info*, local CSOs and the government have since been ongoing to guarantee a national dialogue underpinned by trust and transparency. During the first day, two parallel sessions takes place. CSOs engage in a preparatory training prior to the dialogue-day and, if the Government responds positively to the suggestion, a government workshop on good practices of UPR implementation. The second day is entirely devoted to a national multi-stakeholder dialogue on the implementation of UPR recommendations. CSOs present their follow-up matrix to line ministries, parliamentarians, local government representatives, members of the NHRI (if existing) and UN agencies. Government officials will in turn share their implementation plans and feedback to the CSOs. We also aim to discuss "noted" (so-called "rejected") recommendations and the budget allocation for implementing recommendations. The event concludes with the adoption

of a Letter of Cooperation detailing joint steps towards implementation of recommendations and a press conference. In the specific case of Sri Lanka, this entire step will need in-depth consultations with all relevant partners and stakeholders.

## 2.5. Fifth step: Mid-term reporting

If deemed appropriate, a joint Government-CSO mid-term report triggers dialogue on the implementation process. This is an opportunity for the CSO coalition to utilise their UPR expertise that they have accumulated throughout previous project activities. While it could be the case that a joint mid-term report result in a water-downed report containing only a limited number of issues that the CSOs and government could agree upon, the process of dialogue on implementation at mid-term is prioritised before issuing an independent CSO report. In order to mitigate these risks, the report will be drafted by the government with input from the CSO coalition and, if possible, the NHRI. Additionally, in order to incorporate differing views from the government and civil society, dissident opinions could be provided in an annex to the report. The drafting process will be facilitated by consultative meetings both between civil society and between civil society and the government during the six months prior to the (unofficial) deadline for mid-term submissions. The meetings will take stock of the implementation rate to-date, assess the efficiency of undertaken activities and agree on solutions to obstacles. As a culmination of the series of meetings, one week before the deadline, *UPR Info* together with local partners, will organise a final validation meeting where the government, the CSO coalition and the NHRI will agree on a final version. Once the finalised version of the joint report is made public, embassies will be invited to a diplomatic briefing on the contents of the submission. This will be an occasion for the government and civil society to show a united front and showcase the inclusiveness of the implementation process. A press conference will brief journalists on the content of the report. An opportunity for mid-term reporting arises in 2020 for Sri Lankan stakeholders.

### 3. February CSO UPR submission workshop

The CSO submission workshop was implemented during two consecutive days in February 2017. The workshop was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Critically, simultaneous interpretation into Sinhala, Tamil and English was provided. The presence of Forum Asia and OHCHR's Senior Human Rights Adviser in Sri Lanka added further value to the workshop by informing on UN actions on Sri Lanka and sharing good regional practices on CSOs UPR engagement. Even though the workshop was not residential, participants kept to the agenda and no severe delays occurred. This was particularly important since the agenda allowed limited time for introducing the UPR modalities and how to draft influential CSO submissions. Discussions prior to the workshop between UPR Info, NAFSO and their partner organisations eventually resulted in rather short sessions lead by UPR Info, namely the introduction to the UPR, CSO submissions respectively and UPR advocacy.

It should be noted that the workshop was implemented just a few weeks prior to the March session of the Human Rights Council in which Sri Lanka will feature prominently. In parallel, consultations also took place to draft alternative reports to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ahead of Sri Lanka's UPR Review in May 2017. As a consequence, CSOs initially foreseen to participate during the second day, were not represented. Despite the situation, NAFSO made good use of its extensive grassroots network and 13 regional offices to gather participants from across the country. In total, 55 participants from both urban and rural areas working on different human rights topics participated. Both Sinhalese and Tamil CSOs were represented. The lack of women present on the high-table during the first day was rectified during the following day after comments on the need to ensure gender parity and active participation of women. Inclusion of organisations championing minorities and vulnerable group rights will be sought in upcoming activities.

Our partners had ensured that the time devoted for introductory sessions were enough as the level of knowledge on the UPR would be high among participants since they all had engaged in district level workshops to collect information for the submissions



prior to the present workshop. However, as demonstrated by the questions following these sessions, more time could have been spent on explaining the modalities and central tenants of the UPR as well as the value of CSO submissions. In hindsight, a three-day workshop where the first day would be devoted to situating the UPR within the UN human rights system and thoroughly explaining the functioning of the mechanism, would have added much value to the activity. However, the timing of the event and limited availability of participants would have prevented such a workshop to take place.

On the first day, the workshop was opened by Herman Kumara, Convener at NAFSO. He introduced the agenda and applauded the willingness among CSOs across Sri Lanka to engage with and raise awareness around the UPR. He declared that the chief objective of the workshop was to deepen participants' understanding of the mechanisms in order to influence the recommendations that States will make to Sri Lanka during review in November. After these remarks, Ruki Fernando (INFORM Sri Lanka) moderated a panel discussion on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka and related UN actions. He set the stage by introducing the content of past Human Rights Council resolutions addressing the human rights situation in Sri Lanka and highlighted that the country will either be dropped from the Council agenda or the previous resolution A/HRC/RES/30/1 will be extended at the March session. As such, he noted that international scrutiny of Sri Lanka's human rights record is at a historically critical juncture. In this light he argued that it is essential that Sri Lankan

civil society significantly reduces its dependency on the international community and take national ownership of improving the domestic human rights agenda.

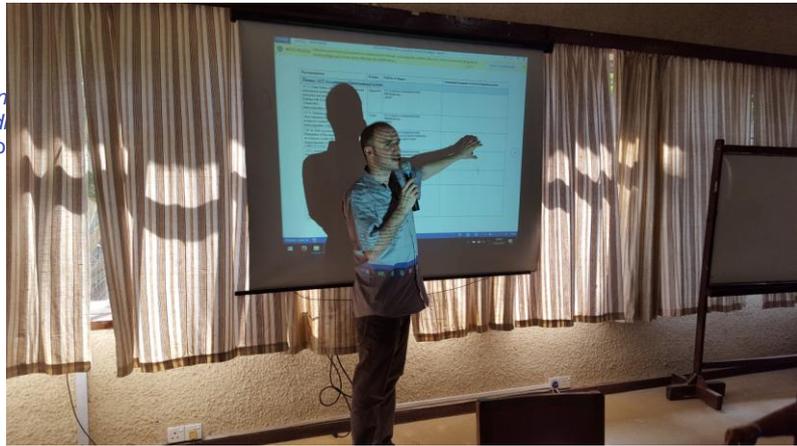
The first panellist, Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), assessed that the Government of Sri Lanka most likely would be granted an extension of the current resolution. He noticed that the dynamics of international politics have changed and it cannot be taken for granted that former allies will continue to table resolutions on Sri Lanka and the time is therefore ripe to identify new champions. He underlined the vital importance of Sri Lanka remaining on the Council agenda as it is the only international arena in which its transitional justice process is assessed, paving the way for global pressure and persuasion on how to improve it. Ultimately, however, he echoed Ruki Fernando's statement that despite the incumbent President pitting constitutional reform against transitional justice, and prioritizing the former, in the future, more reliance must be put on domestic actions to achieve transitional justice. He affirmed that this made it even more important that CSOs advocated for implementation of the recommendations contained in Final Report of the Consultation Task force on Reconciliation mechanisms. Despite promises made by the Government, the lack of transitional justice progress was partly due to political unwillingness as steps in this direction, such making the Office for Missing Persons operational, was believed to result in a loss of votes by the majority Sinhalese population.

The second speaker of the panel, Juan Fernandez, OHCHR Senior Human Rights Adviser, maintained that international human rights mechanisms have had a significant impact on Sri Lanka. The most recent Human Rights Council resolution, A/HRC/RES/30/1, was a follow-up to the 2015 OHCHR investigation on Sri Lanka that recognised that if proven before a court, many of the human rights violations conducted during the war amounted to crimes against humanity or war crimes. He highlighted that the report recommends the establishment of a hybrid-court as international judges will increase the confidence by survivors in the transitional justice

process. He argued that Sri Lanka's third UPR in November 2017 provides a much needed opportunity to take stock of implementation of recommendations from previous cycles and to discuss the slow phase of reform in the country. He expressed concern over continued widespread use of torture as a one of the ordinary tools of criminal investigation which does not only have a detrimental impact on human rights but also on the quality of investigations. Equally, impunity for human rights abuses remained rampant, particularly in relation to sexual violence, he said.

The third speaker, Adam Ahmed, Forum Asia UN Advocacy Team, drew parallels between the situation in Myanmar and Sri Lanka. The two states both have a history of Human Rights Council resolutions and currently there is pressure to discontinue them, he said, recalling that such a decision should be a reflection of the countries' abilities to comply with human rights benchmarks established by the UN. He further stipulated that, as was arguably the case in Burma, a change of Government does not by default improve the human rights situation. Anchored in the example of the Cambodia Tribunal, he held that a Sri Lankan hybrid-court without political willingness is unlikely to hold perpetrators accountable to any significant extent, thus failing to exert remedies and reparations to survivors. Speaking about CSOs' interaction with the UPR, Adam Ahmed said that the UPR is a fruitful opportunity for linking ongoing international processes with community concerns.

Before lunch, UPR Info introduced the core pillars of the Universal Periodic Review. Our organisation shared inspirational examples of human rights improvements stemming from implemented UPR recommendations, frequently boosted by CSOs keeping the UPR on the agenda of Governments. He also noted that as States are making recommendations to States, the UPR is by definition a highly politicised tool, as demonstrated by soft areas attracting most recommendations; international instruments, women's rights and rights of the child. The session stressed the interconnectedness between reviews and urged CSOs not to lose sight of "noted recommendations", as 19% of these trigger action at mid-term. Bearing in mind the



still significant number of vague recommendations and the absence of an official UN follow-up mechanism, he

emphasised that without CSO input at all stages of the UPR its potential of improving human rights at the national level is severely eroded. A main message coming out from the discussion with participants was that unity among CSOs is essential to achieve UPR advocacy objectives. In order to avoid dependency of international NGOs, he concurred with previous speakers that national CSOs must take a prominent role in promoting the UPR and constructively participate in the implementation process after the review.

A pertinent question from the floor recalled that since States are under no formal obligation to implement recommendations, how could CSOs justify spending their scarce resources on engaging with the UPR? UPR Info shared that the UPR is the only global human rights mechanism in which all UN Member States participate in and that one out of two recommendations are either fully or partially implemented at mid-term. He stressed that the UPR had an impact even on an influential actor such as China. As a consequence of UPR recommendations, the State removed the death penalty for certain financial crimes.

In the afternoon, national human rights defenders reported back from district level consultations that had gathered information to the joint CSO submission. Sampath Puspkumara appreciated that Colombo-based CSOs had engaged in more meetings with colleagues in the northern and eastern areas of the country compared to previous UPR cycles and acknowledged that this would contribute to a more inclusive submission that reflected concerns of a broad CSO coalition. Chinthaka Rajapakse added that due to increased cooperation between CSOs, the submission would cover issues that had not been addressed in previous submissions including

LGBTI rights, the situation for returnees from India and constitutional reform. He further stressed that while in the past CSO reporting mainly addressed civil and political rights, economic rights must be afforded more attention in the submission to Sri Lanka's third UPR in November 2017. Anthony Jesudasan stated that the coalition planned to share their CSO submission with the Government before submitting it to showcase transparency and constructiveness. It was hoped that this would trigger national consultations between the Government and CSOs the results of which was foreseen to be included in the National report to be drafted by the Government. He expressed disappointment over the lack of progress in finding durable solutions for internally displaced persons and that disappearances remained a concern, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of the country. This contributed to families losing hope in the ability of the Government to improve the situation. Other issues of concern that had surfaced during district level consultations included the use of illegal fishing gear threatening the livelihood of local fisher people, lack of social security for women headed families and increased insecurity due to expansion of army camps. In Galle, consultations feeding into the submission had focused on issues concerning the fishing community, land grabbing and persons living with disabilities.

The questions and answers session that followed took the form of a consultation meeting. Participants intervened with passionate statements on human rights issues they faced in their communities including issues related to ethnic identities, water shortage, human-elephant conflict, inadequate education and housing. UPR Info recommended them to utilise an OHCHR matrix to evaluate implementation of second cycle recommendations.<sup>1</sup> This document can be annexed to the submission and is not included in the word count.

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<sup>1</sup> NGO Submission Matrix Sri Lanka : <http://s.upr-info.org/2m6Wqny>

The day continued with UPR Info, leading a briefing on modalities, goals and good practices of CSO UPR submissions. It was agreed that the ultimate aim was to have as many CSO suggested recommendations as possible

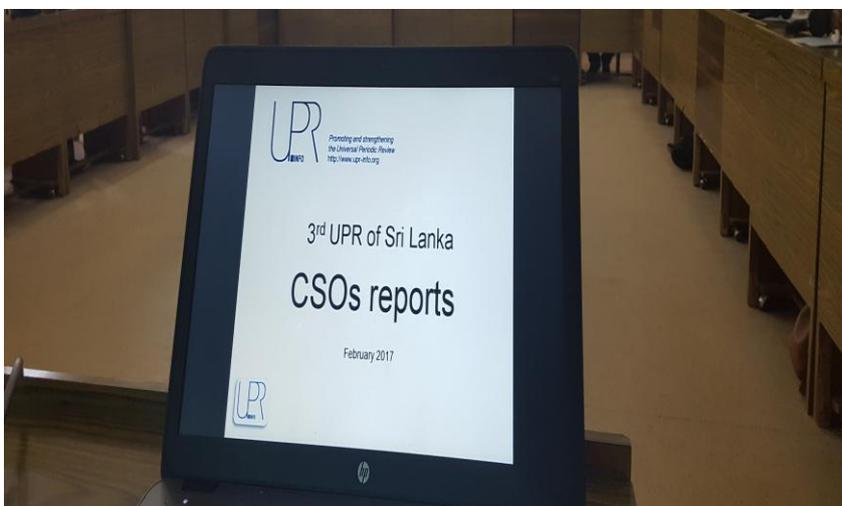


included in the Stakeholders' report. The importance of strictly referring to first-hand and credible information was highlighted as well as the need to report on implementation of recommendations from the previous cycle. Some time was spent on sharing the value of SMART recommendations and how to develop these as an integral part of CSO advocacy. Emphasis was put on the fact that such recommendations safeguard that implementation actually contributes to human rights improvement. UPR Info moreover stressed that the value of SMART recommendations contained in CSO submissions goes beyond the reporting stage. They feed into UPR Advocacy Factsheets and can facilitate the follow-up as they are invoked as SMART indicators against which progress can be assessed. Other good practices, such as referring to outputs from Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as including a methodology chapter outlining the consultation process, increase the likelihood of the submission being included in the Stakeholder's report, he said. Forum Asia urged CSOs to be bold and believe in the recommendations they propose in their reports. As it is likely that states will dilute them before presenting them to the State under Review, it is critical that CSO suggested recommendations are as specific and concrete as possible.



The second day kicked off with *UPR Info* participating in a panel discussion on strategic UPR advocacy. By invoking the example of how to obtain recommendations on land rights, *UPR Info*

demonstrated the need to identify a) countries that had made recommendations to Sri Lanka in the previous cycles and, b) countries that had taken an interest in land rights in previous cycles. Once this shortlist was compiled, the next step was to develop a timeline for advocating these States with suggested recommendations by approaching their Embassy in Sri Lanka (should they have one), their capital and their Permanent Mission in Geneva. *UPR Info* reminded CSOs that advocacy activities must go beyond the scope of States to also envelop agenda-setting bodies such as parliamentarians and journalists. In the context of Sri Lanka with three official languages, the added value of translating recommendations to local languages was also raised. Finally, the good practices of advocacy charters and factsheets were shared with the plenary as civil society tools that facilitates cooperation among CSOs and increase the impact of their advocacy.



In the next session, the CSO representatives tasked with drafting the joint submission conceded that they up until this moment had been unaware of the rules of the submission.

They informed that they had collected hundreds of pages of information from district level consultations and were startled by the realisation that unless the submitted multiple report, they would have to boil down all information to 10 pages. They further stated that they had benefitted from learning about the SMART formula and that this must be at the forefront of the drafting procedure together with objective and precise first-hand information. While the task was daunting, they agreed that it would be an excellent learning opportunity to adhere to the requirements of the submission while balancing expectations from CSOs that had contributed with information.

In closing the workshop, Herman Kumara from NAFSO stated that CSOs have a big responsibility beyond the reporting stage to ensure that national CSOs embark on a joint course towards constructive human rights advocacy. He cemented that Sri Lankan CSOs must build common forums and work together to enable a strong civil society voice in discussions with the Government.

### **3.1. Main Outcomes**

- UPR Info has first-hand knowledge about the capacities and needs of some national CSOs, their interaction and how to support them in the future;
- Sri Lankan CSOs have a better understanding of the UPR and how they can engage with the mechanism throughout the cycle;
- CSOs have increased their understanding of the rules they need to adhere to in order to submit an influential CSO submission;
- CSOs were presented with a proposal for strategic interaction with the UPR containing four interlinked steps; the CSO submission workshop, in-country-pre-sessions, the CSO strategy workshop and the Multi-stakeholder dialogue on UPR implementation.

## 4. Annex

### Training & Planning workshop on UPR for civil society activists

Dates 16-17 February 2017

DAY I - 16 February 2017	
08.00 – 09.00	<b>Tea &amp; Registration</b>
09.00 – 09.30	Welcome, introduction to program, objectives, and participants – <b>Herman</b>
09.30- 11.00	<p><b>Session 1: Introduction to the UN human rights system &amp; engagement with Sri Lanka: past &amp; future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Introduction &amp; Moderator - Ruki</b></li> <li>- <b>Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Alternatives</b></li> <li>- <b>Mr. Juan Fernandez, Senior HR Advisor, UN Country Team</b></li> <li>- <b>Mr. Adam Ahmed, UN Advocacy Team, FORUM-ASIA</b></li> </ul> <p>(15 minutes each, followed by Q &amp; A)</p>
11.00 – 11.30	<b>Tea Break</b>
11.30 – 13.00	<p><b>Session 2: Introduction to UPR &amp; experiences from other countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Moderator – Herman</b></li> <li>- <b>UPR Info &amp; FORUM-ASIA</b></li> </ul> <p>(20-30 minutes each, followed by Q &amp; A)</p>
13.00 – 14.00	<b>Lunch Break</b>
14.00 – 15.30	<p><b>Session 3: UPR experiences in Sri Lanka – 2012 &amp; 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Moderator &amp; Introduction – Sampath Pushpakumara,</b></li> <li>- <b>Additional sharing: Jesudasan / Priyalal / Chinthaka/ Sajeewa</b></li> </ul> <p>(Short inputs, followed by Q &amp; A &amp; discussion on next steps)</p>
15.30 –	<b>Tea Break</b>

<b>16.00</b>	
<b>16:00 – 17:00</b>	<b>Session 4: General tips &amp; comments on good UPR submissions</b> - Moderator – Priyalal - UPR Info & FORUM-ASIA (15 minutes each, followed by Q & A)
<b>17.00 – 18.00</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>18.00 – 20.00</b>	<b>Session 5: Sharing of some UPR draft submissions &amp; comments</b> - Moderator – Sandun
<b>20.00</b>	<b>Dinner</b>
<b>DAY 2 [17 February 2017]</b>	
<b>07.30 – 08.30</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>
<b>08:30-09:30</b>	<b>Session 6: Recap, Q &amp; A from previous day, additional inputs</b> - Moderator: - Panelists: Core Group + FORUM-ASIA + UPR Infor
<b>09.30 – 10.00</b>	<b>Tea</b>
<b>10:00 – 13:00</b>	<b>Session 7: Planning</b> <b>Planning till March 30<sup>th</sup> –Herman / Sampath</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next steps in finalizing local / thematic UPR submissions ones as well as national collective one – who will do what by when etc.</li> <li>• Combining with March HRC session &amp; treaty body processes</li> </ul> <b>Planning after April –Ruki / Priyalal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparing lobby materials – e.g. fact sheets / infographics / advocacy briefs with suggested questions, recommendations</li> <li>- Translations of submissions</li> <li>- Other plans – e.g. follow up meetings in Colombo and district / sectoral level</li> <li>- Lobbying – SL Govt. / Embassies in Colombo, Delhi, Geneva</li> <li>- Other plans</li> </ul>
<b>13.00 –</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>



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<b>13.45</b>	
<b>13.45-15:00</b>	<b>Session 8: Concluding session – finalization of plans, questions &amp; answers - Moderators &amp; panel: Core Group</b>
<b>15:00</b>	<b>Tea Meeting of drafting team of national collective submission and core group Departure</b>



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## Contact

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