



A ROADMAP TO VICTIMS' JUSTICE

Sri Lanka Monitoring Accountability Panel



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CAUTIOUS WELCOME OF REPARATIONS BILL

This week the Sri Lankan Government approved a Bill to pay reparations to war affected and missing persons, including the families of missing persons. The 'Reparations Bill' will establish an Office for Reparations to be based in Colombo. The Bill will be sent to Parliament for enactment.

The Monitoring Accountability Panel ("MAP") welcomes this move. Reparations for victims of war-related crimes is a requirement under international human rights law. It was also specifically referenced in the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka,' of October 2015. The Sri Lankan Government co-sponsored the HRC Resolution and therefore agreed to offer reparations. It is long overdue.

Unfortunately, any enthusiasm must be tempered with caution. Since the passage of the HRC Resolution, the Sri Lanka Government has acted with a lack of transparency and bad faith, breaching both the word and spirit of the HRC Resolution. Assuming the Reparations Bill becomes law, it remains to be seen whether the Office for Reparations will assess claims in a fair and objective manner, irrespective of ethnicity. Careful monitoring is required.

The incoming UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council, and concerned governments, must ensure that the Government of Sri Lanka fulfills all its obligations to victims.



The MAP provides independent monitoring, advice, and recommendations, focusing on the effectiveness of accountability measures from a victims' perspective. The views and recommendations of the Panel will enable victims and other stakeholders to participate more effectively in the process and thus enhance the legitimacy of the measures. For more information, please visit: <http://war-victims-map.org/>

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