**Fourth Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of Sri Lanka**

**Geneva, 1 February 2023**

**Intervention by Ministry of Justice**

**Duration: 3 minutes**

Mr. President,

I would like to elaborate on the progress made by the Office on Missing Persons, Office for Reparations and Office for National Unity and Reconciliation, which come under the purview of the Ministry of Justice.

The OMP has conducted panels of preliminary inquiries as part of its verification process that leads to in-depth investigation. More than 85% of persons met with members of the panel and their testimonials were recorded. The high turnout at the inquiries signifies the level of public confidence placed in the OMP process. An Extraordinary Gazette was issued to extend the validity of provisions related to the Certificate of Absence of the Registrations of Death Act, by another two years from 2021 to 2023. At the request of OMP, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka has re-circulated guidelines to all the financial institutions, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the CoA as a legal document. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been a key international partner supporting the work of the OMP through the provision of legal and forensic expertise, as well as advice on data protection and data management. Additionally, the UN, donor agencies and several NGOs in Sri Lanka have expressed willingness to collaborate with the OMP and provide technical expertise and training.

**With regard to the Office for Reparations**,As at January 2022, 277.9 million Sri Lankan rupees was disbursed by the OR covering 4610 cases, mainly for death & injuries, missing persons and damaged properties mostly in the North and the East areas due to the conflict. The Office was allocated a budget of LKR 459 million and LKR 840 million in 2021 and 2022 respectively. 85% of the total recurrent expenditure budget of that Office for 2022 has been set aside to pay monetary compensation.

Relief and assistance provided through the OR extends to eight key interventions namely, provision of livelihood support, restitution of land rights, provision of housing, development of community infrastructure, administrative relief, psychosocial support and measures to advance unity, reconciliation and non-recurrence of violence. Further, the OR has participated in the Mobile services organized by the Ministry of Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms in the Districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu in 2022. The main purpose of these mobile services is to obtain the missing documents from those who have submitted their applications for compensation for loss of lives, injuries and loss of properties. 1031 families with issues related to documentation were assisted during this programme.

**With regard to Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)**

Collaborating with UNESCO, ONUR has provided an online Training to over 300 youths covering all parts of the country, and is combining a Small Grants Program to support grassroots level initiatives. Further, through its economic engagement programmes, over 1 million persons benefited from livelihood assistance and restoration of basic infrastructure facilities.

Thank you.