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ISSUE 1005

## Hold criticism until LLRC releases its report – HR Minister

By Shamindra Ferdinando

(Island.lk) - Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe says those demanding an independent international probe into Sri Lanka's war on LTTE terrorism should at least wait till the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) presented its final report.

The Minister says once the LLRC report is published anyone can point out shortcomings, if any. Minister Samarasinghe criticised ongoing attempts in some quarters to undermine the LLRC on the basis that it comprised retired public servants, including former Attorney General C. R. de Silva, Foreign Secretary H. M. G. S. Palihakkara and Dr. Rohan Fernando, former advisor to the External Affairs Ministry.



Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe addresses the media on Tuesday. (Photo Coralie Favre)

Samarasinghe, who also holds the Plantation Industries portfolio, was responding to human rights watchdogs, the Amnesty International, International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch and a section of the international community critical of the 'LLRC process.' These organisations declined an invitation to testify before the LLRC late last year. Addressing the media at the Plantation Industries Ministry on Tuesday (8), on his return from Geneva, where he briefed the Human Rights Commission of post-war reconciliation and rehabilitation efforts, Minister Samarasinghe said that it wasn't fair by Sri Lanka to criticise the 'LLRC' process even before it released the report. Responding to a query by The Island whether the international community as well as local and foreign NGOs would accept the LLRC's recommendations having rejected out of hand its appointment and the 18th

Amendment to the Constitution, under which President Mahinda Rajapaksa had set up the five-member Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, Minister Samarasinghe said that the majority member states of the UN appreciated Sri Lanka's reconciliation efforts. During his recent visit to Geneva, he said, he had had an opportunity to brief senior representatives of

about 50 countries on the post-war recovery measures and ongoing efforts to rehabilitate ex-LTTE cadres. **CONT ON P6**

### Talking SEE P10 Point!

We are starting a new column for our readers to express their views on any story that we carry or on any article pertaining to current affairs. Please keep your comments short and to the point. Our first comments come from a reader who replies to our front page article in issue 1002 - 17/02/11. You can see the paper and our archive at:

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Do you agree with these comments? Is there anything you want to say? Send us an e-mail to:

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(Please do not use bad language as this is meant to

### No resolution against Lanka?

By Wilson Gnanadass

(Nation.lk) - Contrary to speculations that the United Nations will move a resolution against Sri Lanka at the ongoing United Nation Human Rights Council (UNHRC) session, it is now confirmed there will be no resolution against the island nation. The 16th UN session that commenced on February 28 in Geneva will conclude on March 25. Speculations were rife that Sri Lanka would be put on the mat by the UN, citing human rights violations during the last stages of the war against the LTTE in 2009. Plantations Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe led a Sri Lankan delegation last week to Geneva to participate at the UN session, where he met with nearly 50 key ambassadors and permanent representatives and briefed them about the country's position with regard to human rights. The minister also briefed the UNHRC chief Navaneethan Pillai shortly prior to the session and explained to her the pressure the country was put under by the anti-Sri Lanka lobbyists influenced by the Tamil Diaspora. Meanwhile Minister Samarasinghe told The Nation that it is unlikely that there will be any resolution against Sri Lanka. The Nation also learns that the agenda of the UN session has no mention about a resolution against Sri Lanka. Deputy Minister of External Affairs also said that since the agenda of the UN did not have any indication of any motion against Sri Lanka, he was convinced that there would not be any resolution against Sri Lanka.

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