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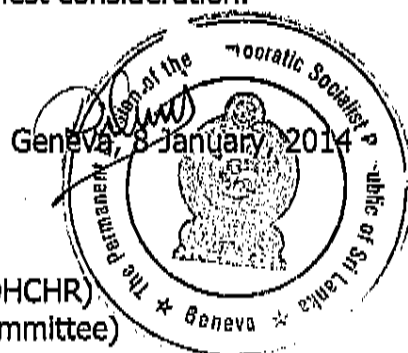
HR/3

The Permanent Mission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office in Geneva and Other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee and has the honour to refer to its communication dated 14 November 2013 transmitted to all Permanent Missions in Geneva with regard to a Questionnaire on humanitarian assistance in post-disaster and post-conflict situations as mandated by the Human Rights Council resolution 22/16.

The Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka has the honour to transmit herewith the response received from the Ministry of Disaster Management of the Government of Sri Lanka to the aforementioned Questionnaire.

The Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka would appreciate acknowledgement of receipt of this communication by the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee.

The Permanent Mission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office in Geneva and Other International Organizations in Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee the assurances of its highest consideration.



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# Response by the Government of Sri Lanka.

## Part I : General

### 1. Disaster

## Part II :

1. Yes. The Government of Sri Lanka has specific mechanisms to deal with disasters according to the National Disaster Management Act No. 13 of 2005, Flood Protection Ordinance, The Soil Conservation Act, Tsunami Special Provisions Act, Budget Circular No 152 (1) and the Guideline No. 1/2013 of the Ministry of Disaster Management. Also, the National Council for Disaster Management chaired by the President established to provide policy guidance. Sri Lanka has already developed a National Emergency Operation plan where responsibilities of state sector institutions for disaster response are identified and standard operation procedure for 21 hazards prepared.

Disaster Management is regulated by these laws and regulations of the country which ensures the equal treatment for the people irrespective of their race, gender, ethnicity, religion and political opinion. Ministry of Disaster Management has the vision of "Safer Sri Lanka" and thus it is mandated to protect human life, property and all relevant physical and non-physical material and relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the disaster damages to reinstate the people of the country. National Disaster Management Policy recognizes the right of the community to receive information, taking part in decision making process and receive disaster relief based on the need irrespective of nationality, religion or social status.

There are two separate organizations under the purview of Ministry of Disaster Management, National Disaster Relief Service Centre to provide relief to disaster affected people and Disaster Management Centre to coordinate pre and post disaster activities. Disaster Management Centre has established Emergency Operation Centre functioning 24 hours a day 7 days a week to coordinate emergency response and relief activities.

2. According to the Budget Circular and the Guideline, the District Secretary and the Divisional Secretary of the relevant area are responsible for the disaster response and post disaster activity. The decision taken from the Ministry of Disaster Management is implemented through District Secretary, Divisional Secretary with the assistance of officers from the Ministry of Disaster Management, Grama Niladhari, Other relevant agencies and officials. The first respond officer from the village level is Grama Niladhari who is responsible for providing relief services and making better coordination with other stake holders to provide the assistance. The disaster

response is performed through this channel and the updates are published in the web sites and the media. The data is preserved in the relevant government institute and it is available to monitor.

Government policy is to provide food to all victims of disasters irrespective of social status. Village level committees are established prior to disaster for food distribution, camp management, maintenance of sanitary facilities. Government has provided cooking utensils to village committees to prepare meals at temporary shelters. In order to ensure transparency and accountability in providing food and assistance to reconstruct houses, victims of disaster are involved to decide who will be qualified to receive food and housing assistance.

3. Yes. The Ministry of Disaster Management gives special attention to the needs of the mentioned groups and Policy document has also recognized the importance of involving marginalized groups such as women, children, differently able people and elderly persons in disaster management and treat them as resource persons. These groups are identified through the village disaster management committee prior to the disasters and the relevant information is available in the district and divisional level to have special attention on them throughout the disaster management cycle. In developing preparedness plans at village level special guidelines are issued to identify locations of these marginalized groups and establish a mechanism to evacuate them to safe locations. Special needs of these groups are identified in advance and so that these needs could be met in the event of a major disaster.

4. According to the Budget Circular No 152 (I) and the Guideline No. 01/2013 issued by the Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management has specified guidelines for the distribution of relief to affected people irrespective of social status, religion, nationality or any other criteria as well as provision of financial assistance to repair and rehabilitation of damaged houses. Quantities of food provided are based on the number of members in the family. Government is in the process of establishing village level management committees and involves them to supervise the distribution of relief items to ensure the transparency and impartiality.

5. The Ministry of Disaster Management is responsible for providing cooked meals and dry rations and other assistance which was described in the Budgetary Circular 152 (I) to the disaster victims. When disaster occurs this Ministry establish safety centers according to the

international guidelines which facilitate the disaster victims to make use of special area of the safety centre to worship and other special needs. In establishing temporary shelter for disaster affected communities cultural needs of different ethnic groups are considered. For example privacy of women in general and Muslim women in particular is given special attention. Safety of women and children are also considered in establishing temporary shelter site. Toilet and washing facilities for women and men are establish at separate locations. Temporary shelters are established in most cases in temples, churches, mosques, Hindu kovils, etc,. There is no prohibition for them to observe their religion at these locations.

6.Awareness of people assisting the disaster victims on human rights requirements will assist to promote human right requirements.

7.The Ministry of Disaster Management has taken action to establish village disaster management committees representing village leaders, religious leaders and including all communities at the village level and when disaster occurs village disaster management committee and Grama Niladhari of the village is responsible to take response action, to protect the human rights of the disaster victims and for distributing the relief materials in collaboration with the Divisional Secretary. Educating the people in disaster prone areas about their rights by conducting awareness programmes would further help to promote human rights in post disaster situations.

8.The proper top to bottom and bottom to top monitoring and evaluation systems are implemented from various tires of the government system. Divisional Secretary at the divisional level District Secretary at the district level and nationally, the Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management have the responsibility and accountability for the monitoring and evaluation of the disaster relief services and to ensure transparency of the distribution of disaster relief. In addition to this mechanism, the Internal Auditors of the Ministry of Disaster Management and the Auditor General's Department is also responsible to ensure the accountability and transparency of the activities.

Part III : Post conflict situation : Not Relevant