



**THE EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA
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European Parliament upholds Sri Lanka's 'right of reply'

The Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament has upheld the procedural anomaly raised by Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the EU, following the denial of Sri Lanka's 'right of reply' at an exchange of views on the post conflict period in Sri Lanka, which was held at the European Parliament on 06 December 2010.

In a letter dated 16 December 2010 addressed to Sri Lanka Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU Ravinatha Aryasinha, with reference to his written protest made to her regarding the denial of Sri Lanka's 'right of reply', Ms. Heidi Hautala, Chairperson of the Sub-committee on Human Rights of the Foreign Affairs Committee, has requested him to "send me [her] your views in writing, expressing your Government's response to our grave concerns, I assure you it will be distributed to my colleagues of the sub-committee".

In his earlier letter of protest addressed to Ms. Hautala who was not present during the discussion, which was also copied to the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, members of the Human Rights sub-Committee and the Diplomatic Advisor to the President of the European Parliament, Ambassador Aryasinha had pointed out that in the over one hour long discussion on Sri Lanka on 6 December, of the 32 MEPs on the Sub-Committee only one chose to speak, and other than for a few comments by the European Commission, most of the time was given to a number of Non-Governmental Organizations". In it, the Ambassador had noted that despite his being present and demanding Sri Lanka's 'right of reply', its denial by the Presiding officer at the time, "leaves the unmistakable impression that the Human Rights Sub-Committee is not interested in having a reasoned and balanced discussion on Sri Lanka, but is merely content to allow itself (the European Parliament) to be used as a platform for LTTE apologists to discredit the Government of Sri Lanka".

Embassy of Sri Lanka
Brussels

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