

INTERNATIONAL  
TRUTH  
AND JUSTICE  
PROJECT

**Sri Lanka is not a world leader in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.**

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**Geneva:** *"We are astonished at Sri Lanka's [statement](#) that it will today become a member of the UN Secretary-General's '[Circle of World Leadership on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse](#)'"* said Yasmin Sooka, head of the International Truth and Justice Project, *"and equally surprised that they will be allowed to do so. This flies in the face of the Secretary-General's commitment to victims, manifested in his recent appointment of a Victims Advocate. Haitian victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by Sri Lanka peacekeepers have received scant reparation and justice",* said Ms Sooka. *"Surely, justice for the victims should be the Secretary-General's priority. Accepting a country into his 'circle of leadership' which has yet to rectify its poor record on sexual violence and exploitation sends the wrong signals to victims".*

An entire contingent of 134 Sri Lankan peacekeepers was repatriated from Haiti in 2007 after allegations surfaced that they were involved in child sexual exploitation between 2004-7. Sri Lanka said it took disciplinary action against 23 soldiers - one officer had his commission withdrawn, one was retired early, one soldier was discharged and others were "given corresponding punishments based on the gravity of the offences committed". In its review of Sri Lanka in 2017 (CAT/C/LKA/CO/5), the UN Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) said it remained concerned that only 23 of the accused were convicted. UNCAT also asked why Sri Lanka had failed "to clarify the type of disciplinary punishments meted out and the penalties that were imposed for these serious crimes".

Meanwhile a 2015 UN investigation into human rights violations in Sri Lanka found "incidents of sexual violence were not isolated acts but part of a deliberate policy to inflict torture" on the part of the Sri Lankan security forces (Para 591).

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