



Human Rights
Institute

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item 2: General debate

Date: 2 March 2026

Speaker: Harini Sivalingam

Oral Statement to the 61st Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, NGOs in special consultative status

Sri Lanka: Ensure measurable progress towards accountability

Lawyers' Right Watch Canada and the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute have for years witnessed statements before this Council regarding the persistent lack of accountability and justice in Sri Lanka. Resolution after resolution has been adopted, only to be consistently disregarded by the Sri Lankan government. The pattern is clear: commitments are made in Geneva, but impunity continues at home.

The current government was elected on promises of reform, transparency, and meaningful accountability. However, more than a year into its mandate, we have seen no measurable progress toward those goals. This is no longer a new administration entitled to the benefit of time. Victims and survivors cannot wait indefinitely.

It is time to move beyond declaratory resolutions and take concrete actions to ensure accountability for documented violations of international law and decades of entrenched impunity – without which lasting stability will remain unattainable.

We call on this Council to appoint a dedicated Special Rapporteur for Sri Lanka with a robust mandate to monitor, report, and advance measurable progress toward justice and institutional reform, ensuring that the aspirations and rights of Tamil and minority communities are meaningfully addressed.

We also urge all Member States in arrears to promptly fulfill their financial obligations to the United Nations to ensure the vital work of this Council and other UN mechanisms can be sustained.

Thank you.