

Session Summary

Session Chair: **His Lordship Jayantha Jayasooriya PC**, Chief Justice of Sri Lanka

Rapporteur: Mr Managala Wijesinghe, Dean, Faculty of Law, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University

Chair of the Plenary Session in Law was His Lordship Jayantha Jayasooriya PC, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka.

The first speaker, His Lordship Yasantha Kodagoda PC currently serves as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka. He served as a Deputy Solicitor General from 2005 to 2015 and as an Additional Solicitor General from 2015 to 2019 at the Attorney General's Department. He was the President of the Court of Appeal of Sri Lanka from 2019 to 2020 until he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka. Formerly, he was a Public Prosecutor, and a Criminal Appeals Counsel who served as a Law Officer cum Legal Advisor to the Government of Sri Lanka for about 3 decades. He served as the second in command of the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's Department, and also as the Secretary cum Chief Executive Officer of the Presidential Task Force for the Recovery of State Assets (Proceeds of Crime) located overseas. Additionally, he had functioned as the Director of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies of the Incorporated Council of Legal Education.

The second speaker Justice Mohan Peiris, PC was called to the Bar in 1975 and joined the Attorney General's Department in 1981 as a State Counsel, later serving as a Senior State Counsel for over 15 years. During this time, he received training at the National Institute of Trial Advocacy at Harvard Law School, the Centre for Police and Criminal Justice Studies at Jesus College, Cambridge and at George Washington University. After leaving the Attorney-General's Department he started practicing in the Unofficial Bar. He

appeared both in original and appellate courts mainly in the areas of Public Law, Commercial Law, Land Law, Industrial Law and Criminal Law. He was an Examiner at the Sri Lanka Law College, a visiting lecturer in the Faculty of Law of University of Colombo, Deputy President of the Sri Lanka Bar Association (BASL) and a member of the Sri Lankan Delegation to the Universal Periodic Review at the 8th Session of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations. He served as the Attorney General of Sri Lanka from 2008 to 2011 and as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka from 2013 to 2015.

The third speaker Dr. Charika Marasinghe holds a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) Honours degree from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, and is an Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka and a Solicitor of the United Kingdom. As a Commonwealth Scholar, she obtained a Master of Letters degree (M.Litt.) and a Doctor of Philosophy degree (D.Phil) in International Law from the University of Oxford, specializing in International Human Rights and Child Rights Law. In a career spanning over 35 years, she has served as a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law of the University of Colombo, as Deputy Chairperson and a member of the National Child Protection Authority, and a trainer and a resource person in the field of human rights, child rights and women's rights at diverse conferences and institutions, both local and international. She was the co-recipient of the 'Women and Engaged Buddhism Award' (2008) of the Buddhist Council of Midwest, USA, for conceiving a counselling programme for Tsunami survivors, and the recipient of 'An

Outstanding Woman in Buddhism Award' (2009) from Thailand, for exceptional development of wisdom and compassion in the protection of child rights. At the invitation of the Sri Lanka-India Friendship Society, Dr Marasinghe delivered the 2014 Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Oration based on her personal experiences as a human rights and child rights lawyer who had travelled extensively in the former war affected areas of Sri Lanka.

The final speaker of the session, Rear Admiral (Retd.) Shavindra Fernando PC holds a Master of Laws in Public International Law from the University of Colombo and Master of Laws in Corporate and Commercial Law from Kings College, University of London. He is currently in active practice as a President's Counsel practicing in both Superior Courts and Courts of First Instance in the areas of Criminal, Civil, Corporate and Public Law.

He also appears before other judicial tribunals for state and non-state entities. He has held many prestigious positions both at international and domestic levels, including the posts of Additional Solicitor General of the Attorney General's Department of Sri Lanka, Justice of Appeal at Court of Appeal of the Republic of Fiji, Senior State Counsel at Attorney General's Department of the Republic of Seychelles and Legal Advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sri Lanka. He has been awarded the North Humanitarian Operation Medal and the East Humanitarian Operation Medal for his service rendered to the Sri Lanka Navy as Judge Advocate General and Director General of Legal Services.

Transcribed speeches of the plenary speakers are continued in the following pages.