

**“DEMANDS CHARTER” OF
PEOPLES ASSEMBLY IN SRI LANKA**

Held on 25 September, 2021

Led by SUNFO Global (GCAP Sri Lanka)

We are the people of Sri Lanka, representing all segments including Youth, Children, Women, Citizens, Indigenous, marginalized, internally displaced, farmers, workers, labor movements and civil society networks led by SUNFO, GCAP Sri Lanka, Peoples Vaccine Campaign SL, SDG Youth Network of Sri Lanka, SDG Women Platform of Sri Lanka, SDG Citizens Forum of Sri Lanka, SDG Children’s Parliament of Sri Lanka, SDG Business Network SDG Action Decade Volunteers Club and wider SDG Civil Society Actors resolved the DEMAND CHARTER at the PEOPLES ASSEMBLY OF SRI LANKA held on 25 September, 2021 parallel to Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030 the day of sixth Anniversary.

At the outset we remember, salute and honour our brothers, sisters, family members, friends, colleagues and all human being who left us due to this unexpected global pandemic Corona- Covid 19 pandemic never assumed or dreamed during the process of planning and signing Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals six years ago.

The potential impact from COVID-19 –Sri Lankan Economy has faced, severe setback in 2020/21 due to many sectors being at a standstill, lockdowns, and enforced curfews across the island to encourage social distancing, and has completely banned inter-district travel. Some districts (such as Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Puttalam, Kandy and Jaffna) are regarded as ‘high-risk’ areas and placed under an indefinite curfew. Inflation driven by high food prices and supply chain disruptions, poor performance in industrial activities - including construction, university and school education, tourism sector, agriculture and all most all other economic and livelihoods.

We mainly focused three sectors as follows and identified 15 demands from each sector widely consultations of views and ideas of staked holders joined for people’s assembly in Sri Lanka

1.Health 2. Social Protection 3.Climate Justice

Health

Our Demands:

- (a) Speed vaccination process for all citizens Free of Charge according to WHO guidelines
- (b) Adequate health care facilities, drugs, medicine for all infected persons by Covid Virus
- (c) Improving Quarantine facilities for associates of Covid infected persons
- (d) Sufficient economic and moral support for family members of Covid victims
- (e) Free and universal access to the Covid 19 vaccines by changing World Trade Organization rules with advocacy for TRIPS waiver and Technology Transfer.
- (f) Improving Mental Health care for family members of death persons due to Covid
- (g) Proper after effects management system for infected persons and community health facilities.
- (h) Facilitation of wider awareness campaigns and media programs of safety as virus is primarily transmitted from person-to-person by coming into contact with an infected person's droplets
- (i) Investment for new systems, equipment's, ambulances, technological updates to manage the pandemic .
- (j) Avoid any discrimination of treatments, testing, quarantine and health care irrespective of gender, , class or creed.
- (k) Management of other health issues .(Dengue, Non-communicable diseases, Cancer etc) without any negligence due to the pandemic.
- (l) Allocation of adequate resources for funerals with due honour and respect of religious believing of dead persons due to Covid infection.
- (m) Arrangement of the safety and care for health workers and frontline service personalities providing necessary facilities such as transportation, accommodation , personal protective equipment's, allowances and improved systems required.
- (n) Special attention to Senior Citizens, marginalized communities, disabled persons e, migrants, indigenous persons etc ensuring No One Left Behind.
- (o) Adequate PCR, RAT and Vaccine Certification facility for all who need those.

- (p) Providing guidance for integration and unity of all medical professionals (western, native, aurvedic etc) in the process of Covid health management.

Social Protection

Our Demands:

- (a) Creating a Social Protection Special Covid Fund with proper transparency and multitasked holder advisory team to manage the said fund
- (b) Adequate attention for Human Rights and Human Values of all by authorities during the Covid pandemic crisis management
- (c) Providing special cash grant system who lost income for basic requirements such as food, health and shelter due to pandemic.
- (d) Reschedule bank loans and leasing's for the people who lost income to pay their loan installments on time with a grace period.
- (e) Creating special financial grant systems who lost their working capital to continue businesses and livelihoods with a special focus to small scale manufacturers, farmers, fisherman's, manufacturers, construction contractors, labor contractors, self-employed personalities etc.
- (f) Relief for Depositors, specially senior citizens who lost their monthly interest income for livelihood (Self-made pensioners) in collapse financial companies (Such as Sri Lanka's oldest Finance Company named as The Finance Company) during the pandemic by changing rules of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.
- (g) Providing necessary support to return to the mother country, for large number of Sri Lankan migrant workers who lost their jobs while serving in other countries.
- (h) Providing necessary devices, internet connectivity, data facilities, improving broadband signals especially in rural areas for children and teachers to continue their educational activities online due to continuous closure of schools, Universities and other educational institutes during pandemic.
- (i) Ensure same online education for all students by "No One Left Behind" for economic reasons and poor internet connectivity.

- (j) Providing special psychological care, motivation and moral support especially children and other marginalized persons now only limited to their homes for a long period. without any social interactions
- (k) As prices of essential goods such as food, medicine, gas etc going up mainly due to inflation and imports restrictions introducing methodology to price control of basic needs affordable to poor and marginalized persons particularly.
- (l) .During the pandemic economic disparity between richest and poorest segments widening, its necessary to revise the tax systems to reduce this gap to protect low income wider group of personalities.
- (m) .Avoid all form of discrimination on ethnical, religion or social status with a special focus to people below poverty line, minorities , indigenous , women, refugees, disables, women, children and elders.
- (n) All measures to bring down to zero level corruption, malpractices, negligence, wastage and robing public finance by authorities and make sure of proper using those.
- (o) Building a Culture of Peace and Non-violence by promoting mutual understanding, mutual respect, Unity among diverse opinions, among all to overcome the setbacks of the pandemic together without discriminating or leaving behind anyone.
- (p) Immediate approach and plan to overcome **Debt Crisis** and shortage of foreign reserves in Sri Lanka to make sure together in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Agenda 2030 with full focus and commitments by all segments of the society facing numerous hardships and sufferings in this Covid era and we call for **Debt Justice** in order to Reenergize Sri Lankan economy. And its people.

Climate Justice

Our Demands:

- (a) Immediate attention for a permanent solutions (with wider experts and peoples consolation) to end “Human –Elephant” conflict which claims several hundreds of lives of both elephants and peoples annually.

- (b) Taking all steps to protect the forest coverage in Sri Lanka by strict law enforcement for illegally destroying and approaching national forest reserved lands especially by greedy powerful persons.
- (c) Creating Wider awareness among all society segments including children to seniors about proper management of plastic and electronic waste bringing down zero plastic pollution in nature including soil, air ,river paths and ocean.
- (d) Promoting “e-justice app” Hot Line created by a civil society conservation group in Sri Lanka which offers citizens a quick and easy platform to anonymously report environmental crimes relating to forests and water lands in Sri Lanka.
- (e) Systematical conversion to more organic fertilizer and less chemical fertilizer usage in farming while assuring food safety as well as farmers economical sustainability during the transition period of such a policy change.
- (f) Taking all meaningful steps to protect the rich biodiversity and healthy ecosystems in Sri Lanka
- (g) More public awareness campaigns, educational tools about the environment protection among all people in order to protect the Mother Nature we received from our ancestors to safely hand over to our future generations without harming and destroying the environment.
- (h) Proper attention and security measures to protect the lives of our wildlife from hunters and illegal wildlife businessmen get safe passage specially during the lockdowns of this Covid pandemic.
- (i) Make sure Environmental action and Development initiatives to be consistent with UN declarations on the rights of indigenous peoples, peasants and others.
- (j) As an island Sri Lanka surrounded by sea and special attention to protect our beaches, and sea without damaging our protected sea animals , dumping waste to the ocean by respecting all international laws and conventions to protect oceans.
- (k) Avoid inequality in water allocation, distribution and access to water resources avoiding social inequalities among affluent class and have-nots while protecting natural water sources.

- (l) Actions to conserve the environment by increasing environmental literacy to avoid pollution and protect environmental beauty and its existence during this Covid lockdown period.
- (m) Improving the capacity of institutions and volunteer organizations to cope up with Disaster management from increasing natural disasters such as floods, landslides, droughts, sea erosions etc
- (n) Stream actions of filling marshy lands, illegal construction by blocking natural water drainage paths, unauthorized sand mining, and all other such environmental damages
- (o) Activating all environmental acts and proper systems to implement those by relevant authorities without allowing powerful persons to violate those .
- (p) Respect, and follow all UN agreements and International conventions including COP to protect the environment all Sustainable Development Goals and its targets specially live on land, life below water, Climate Action, affordable Clean Energy etc for Climate and Environmental Justice.

We believe FIVE “P” s of Sustainable Development:

People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership

To end poverty in all its dimensions and craft an equal, just and secure world and better Sri Lanka for people, planet and prosperity by achieving Sustainable Development Goals Agenda Seventeen SDGs and 169 targets together by 2030.

We believe the timely necessity of reform United Nations too for new world challenges after COVID era. We call for United Nations openness and inclusivity by

- (a) A process to create a “UN Parliamentary Assembly” in Global Level and Regional Level***
- (b) A “UN World Citizens Forum” in Global Level and Regional Level***
- (c) A Special officiate of “UN Civil Society Envoy” in Global Level and representatives in Regional and Country Level***
- (d) Mechanism to Strengthening UN-Civil Society Partnerships in Country level for peoples friendly new transparent UN Mechanism.***

-//-