



# මහින්ද රාජපක්ෂ

කාලුවන නිව්ස, තංගලේ, ශ්‍රී ලංකා කාල්ටන් ප්‍රාසාදය, තංගලාව, නිව්‍යාපක Carlton House, Tangalle, Sri Lanka  
T: +94 47 2240344 www.mahindarajapaksa.lk F: +94 47 2241113

f PresidentRajapaksa

 @PresRajapaksa

8+ +PresidentRajapaksa

 news@mahindarajapaksa.lk

23 February 2017

## MEDIA RELEASE

## **Vilification of our armed forces by Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga in statement to the international media**

The statement made by Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga to foreign correspondents in Colombo last week to the effect that war widows in Sri Lanka now face ‘widespread’ sexual exploitation by members of the army among others, is a matter of grave concern. The rape and sexual exploitation of women in the war zone both during and after the war was one of the main unsubstantiated accusations made by two irregularly set up investigations against Sri Lanka within the UN system – the Darusman report of 31 March 2011 and the Navi Pillai/Zeid Al Hussein report of 16 September 2015. The latter report had a whole chapter of about ten pages devoted to the subject of rape and sexual exploitation. Now with days to go for the 34<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the UN Human Rights Council, a former President of Sri Lanka and a former Commander in Chief of our armed forces says that our armed forces are sexually exploiting war widows in the north.

What we have here is a former President of Sri Lanka and a former Commander in Chief of our armed forces echoing the accusations made by our enemies in what is obviously a deliberate attempt to vilify our armed forces on the eve of the UNHRC meeting. Mrs Kumaratunga holds the position of head of the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) which functions under the Presidential Secretariat and the statements she makes goes to the world as the official position of the Sri Lankan government. The Sri Lanka Army's statement rebutting Mrs Kumaratunga's accusations does not carry any weight. When a former President and commander in chief makes such a statement the person to respond should be the present President and the Commander in Chief. As a former President and Commander in Chief myself, I call upon the President to publicly condemn the statement made by Mrs Kumaratunga. The government should also seriously consider whether Mrs Kumaratunga is fit to be the head of ONUR as she is using that position to bring disrepute upon the armed forces of Sri Lanka.

Aug 26th 6th

*Mahinda Rajapaksa  
Former President of Sri Lanka*