

Dearest fellow protestors/ citizens,

We are at a watershed moment in our history. At this moment, we have stepped out onto our streets as one, with one dream enshrined in our hearts; that of a People's Republic that will secure the future of our current and unborn generations.

Ours is a movement that stands firmly upon a foundation of love, peace and courage. The main aim of our protest is to end the corrupt Rajapaksa regime headed by Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, and to create a collective agreement that will usher in a new era of governance.

To this end, we as Sri Lankans stand united in heart and soul, regardless of religion, ethnicity, caste, or creed.

The epicenter of the movement, GotaGoGama at Galle Face Green, stands as a silent ode to our hope for a better tomorrow. It is a symbol of a courageous effort to give birth to a new culture of citizenship devoid of the corruption that has plagued Sri Lankan politics for over 7 decades, and free from the regressive political rhetoric of the Rajapaksas that has rooted itself in the collective psyche of our people.

The Rajapaksa regime (with Gotabhaya at its helm) has managed to amplify the effects of the flaws inherent in a weak system that is founded upon 7 decades of corruption, mismanagement and violence. The rash, arrogant decisions made by Gotabaya and his clan have reduced our motherland to a bankrupt, broken wasteland where chaos reigns and even the most essential of services can no longer be provided. The economic and social crisis created by the Rajapaksas has now moved beyond a political crisis to a humanitarian crisis. Therefore, we unanimously agree that the first step in solving this situation is the removal of Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and his regime.

However, the slogan "Gota Go Home" should not be interpreted to be confined to the removal of Gotabaya Rajapaksa alone. Rather, "Gota Go Home" is merely shorthand for a set of implicit and explicit demands/agreements which we now set out to express through this document.

These solutions are by no means exhaustive and are merely representative of the minimum that can be agreed upon by the majority of the stakeholders of our movement. If you find that these points are satisfactory, we invite you to sign this document, indicating your name and the organization you represent (if any). We wish to emphasize that the signing of this petition does not and will not limit you from presenting solutions or advocating for specific issues that go beyond the scope of this document.

Considering that the only productive way to release the death grip of the Rajapaksa regime upon our democracy is to form a broad alliance of citizens, we invite you to consider supporting this petition as a first step towards establishing a common consensus among all stakeholders of the movement.

## Demands of Sri Lankan citizens

- 1. The Rajapaksa regime headed by President Gotabhaya Rajapaksa must relinquish power immediately. Post resignation, the members of the regime should refrain from exerting any undue influence on the governance and rule of law in Sri Lanka.**
  - a. To prevent the current crisis in the country from deepening, the current president Gotabaya Rajapakse should agree to resign from his position immediately.
  - b. The Speaker of the Parliament should call a meeting with all party leaders and take necessary steps to establish an interim Cabinet headed by a new Prime Minister. The nominee for the post of Prime Minister should a) not be a supporter of the Rajapakse regime and b) be a person not legally accused of fraud, corruption or any other crime.
  - c. The president should resign immediately after appointing a prime minister and the parliament should then appoint a new president as per the provisions of the Constitution.
  - d. All political appointees recruited or promoted by the Rajapakse regime to executive positions of state authorities, departments, enterprises and ministries (i.e.: chairman and/or directors) should resign with immediate effect.
- 2. An interim government must be established for a predetermined period (no greater than 18 months) to steer the nation onto the path of recovery.**
  - a. The parliament should immediately set up an interim government for a limited period of time, with the goal of restoring social, political and economic stability in the country. Appointing the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Ministers of this interim government should be done through a party leaders' conference chaired by the Speaker. The time period for which the interim government will function should be agreed upon at the same conference and duly communicated to the public.
  - b. The new cabinet members of the interim government should not include Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, Mahinda Rajapaksa or members of the family regime AND should not be persons legally accused of fraud, corruption or any other crime.
  - c. The number of Ministers should be limited to a maximum of 15. A number of Parliamentary Sectoral Oversight Committees should be appointed in keeping with the number and thematic areas of the newly formed ministries, and the Committees should be endowed with the necessary powers to correct the courses of action of the line ministries, thus assuring the active involvement of all parliamentarians in the governance of the country.

- d. All benefits afforded to Cabinet and non-Cabinet Ministers as well as Members of Parliament should be re-evaluated with the intention of reducing unnecessary wastage of resources.
  - e. At the point of dissolution of the interim government, free and fair Presidential and Parliamentary elections should be conducted to ensure that a new government is established with a clear mandate from the people of Sri Lanka.  
**The pre-determined timeframe for which the interim government will be valid should not be extended for any reason.**
- 3. Essential amendments to the Constitution to be enacted as soon as possible, in order**
- a. The first task of the new interim government should be to abolish the 20th Amendment, then finalize and enact the 21st Amendment to the Constitution so as to limit the powers conferred on the Executive Presidency.
  - b. Following the above, necessary arrangements should be made to abolish the executive presidency, within a reasonable, specific period of time ( not exceeding **18 months**) through constitutional reforms.
  - c. The process of constitutional reform should lead to the drafting and implementation of necessary legal reforms that safeguard the right of all marginalized communities to live in a just and equitable society. A nationwide program should be initiated alongside these legal reforms to engineer positive social change in this regard.
  - d. The “transitional justice mechanism” and National Reconciliation Program recommended by the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) should be implemented to create a societal foundation of true long-term peace and justice.
- 4. The government must take urgent measures to manage the current crisis and all processes shall be transparent. : The prevailing social, economic and political crises have transformed into a humanitarian crisis. Therefore, short, medium and long term solutions are required to resolve the prevailing crises at hand.**
- a. Propose a budget to provide relief to the people to overcome the emergency situation (food and drug shortage) that people are currently facing.
  - b. Activate a social empowerment programme based on the above proposed budget
  - c. Establish an economic reform process with expert advice to bring about economic stability
  - d. Create a social security net to provide security to groups that would be vulnerable during the execution of economic reform programmes
  - e. Establish a mechanism to regulate the black market economy and impose price controls and ensure the quality of goods and services
  - f. Audit all existing development projects, review all unnecessary or less important projects and draft a priority list with regards to future development projects
  - g. Include all civil society groups and stakeholders in various sectors when bringing about economic reforms
  - h. Focus on the climate debt concept and attract relevant diplomatic interventions to generate relief to Sri Lanka)

- 5. All elected and appointed officials should declare their assets and investigations should be carried out to apprehend and recover unlawfully acquired assets through lawful means.**
  - a. Conduct a surveillance audit on close associates of the Rajapaksa regime and all public representatives
  - b. Freeze all illegal assets exposed from the audit and punish people who have illegally acquired assets
  - c. Implement a mechanism to reclaim illegally acquired assets deposited overseas by inviting diplomatic interventions along with necessary legal and technical expertise
  - d. Enact the 2003 United Nations Convention Against Corruption and introduce its legal provisions to Sri Lanka's legal framework
- 6. Rule of law must be re-established immediately to respect the rights of all citizens and visitors to the country.**
  - a. Establish a mechanism to ensure transparency and accountability of the Auditor General for example by establishing a Parliamentary review committee to include ideas from civil society groups
  - b. Bring about law reforms to revoke draconian laws that would hinder people's rights to freedom of speech and expression (for example, revoke provisions that would hinder fundamental rights of the people in laws such as the PTA and proposed CTA)
  - c. Expedite legal proceedings with regards to ongoing court cases on victims of politically sponsored murders, abductions and disappearances without any political interferences and punish perpetrators accordingly
  - d. Establish a 'Commission to ensure justice to crimes' to probe into the truth behind violence, rape, abuse, disappearances, looting of public property, extrajudicial killings and punish perpetrators based on revelations
  - e. Ensure justice to victims who were forced to misuse and abuse the law and were subsequently imprisoned or were harassed
  - f. Bring all prisons under the purview of the Human Rights Commission and enlist actual details of all prisoners while releasing all political prisoners
  - g. Investigate and punish those who were involved in environmental destruction, bio-theft and bio-piracy activities
- 7. Include the right to life as a fundamental right of all citizens in the Constitution of Sri Lanka. (Follow the Indian Constitution and its clauses on the Right to Life)**
- 8. Laws must be amended as necessary to allow free and fair elections after the dissolution of the interim government.**
  - a. Bring about special legal reforms to vest more powers on the independent elections commission so as to monitor all media to ensure that they use public statistics in a free and fair manner
  - b. Establish a special committee to monitor all media stations to ensure that they publish all statistics in a free and fair manner and to regulate unjust programmes so as to execute a free and fair election

- c. Bring about legal reforms to regulate campaign financing by drawing examples from foreign countries
- d. Amend election laws to improve participation of women and youth in politics