**Project Title:** Support to Strengthen the Independent Commissions to carry out their core functions in support of non-reoccurrence and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka.

**Recipient UN Organization(s):** UNDP, IOM, OHCHR

**Implementing Partner(s) – name & type (Government, CSO, etc):**

**Government**
- National Police Commission
- Department of Police
- Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
- Right to Information Commission (to be operationalized by February 2017)

**UN Agencies**
- UNWOMEN
- UNV

**Project Description:**

This project will provide strategic support to strengthen the core functions of the National Police Commission, Human Rights Commission and Right to Information Commission, to enable them to play a catalytic role in the peacebuilding process in Sri Lanka.

**Financing**

- **Peacebuilding Fund:** USD 700,000
- **Other source:** EURO 700,000
- **Government Input:**
- **Other:**
- **Total Project Cost:**

**Proposed Project Start Date:** 1 February 2017

**Proposed Project End Date:** 31 August 2019

**Total duration (in months):**

| Gender Marker Score² | Score 3 for projects that have gender equality as a principal objective.  
| Score 2 for projects that have gender equality as a significant objective.  
| Score 1 for projects that will contribute in some way to gender equality, but not significantly. |

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¹ PRF project duration must be within the approved dates for the Priority Plan (September 2016 – August 2019)

² PBSO monitors the inclusion of gender equality and women’s empowerment all PBF projects, in line with SC Resolutions 1325, 1888, 1889, 1960 and 2122, and as mandated by the Secretary-General in his Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender Responsive Peacebuilding.
1. **Rationale for the project (½ page)**

The 19th Amendment to the Constitution reinstated the independence of nine oversight bodies to a considerable extent, with the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) and the National Police Commission (NPC) being two Commission’s playing critical functions in the current country context. Having renewed space to perform their oversight functions independently, the NPC and HRCSL have expressed interest to work in partnership with the UN at this juncture to strengthen their capacity to perform core functions, with a view to also improve public confidence in and engagement with the Commissions.

The Right to Information (R2I) Act was unanimously approved by the Parliament of Sri Lanka on 24 June 2016, following over 20 years of advocacy by various stakeholders. The Act is by and large in line with progressive comparative legislation and creates a key entry point for strengthening transparency and accountability in government, addressing corruption, and ultimately strengthening participatory, effective and equitable governance. The operationalization of the Act requires the establishment of the Right to Information Commission which will play a vital role in enabling the public to exercise their right to information as a tool for peacebuilding, thereby contributing to greater accountability and facilitating reform processes.

In light of the above, the project proposes to support the NPC, HRCSL and the soon to be fully constituted RTI Commission. Support to the NPC and the HRCSL will be provided through a contribution from the European Union and the Peacebuilding Fund. The scope of work undertaken under each of these will complement or build upon the other.

2. **Objective of PBF Support (1-2 pages)**

Theory of change: IF the independent oversight commissions are capacitated to fulfill their mandated functions AND greater public engagement is secured THEN there will be greater accountability of and public trust in the peacebuilding and related reform processes.

PPP Governance Outcome: Sri Lankans feel safe, and trust government to effectively, efficiently, equitably and transparently respond to their needs.

*Project Outcome 1: Key independent commissions are able to contribute towards a culture of more accountable and transparent democratic governance*

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National Police Commission

The re-establishment of the NPC has created a window of opportunity for making the Commission a community-centric institution that promotes equal access to justice. As part of its catalytic support, the UN will aim to provide dedicated technical assistance to strengthening the exercise of powers and functions of the NPC. Accordingly, the proposed Project aims to develop an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) roadmap, of which the proposed Public Complaint Management System (PCMS) is a priority intervention. Dedicated technical assistance will be provided in relation to exercising the NPC’s core functions thereby reinforcing its mandate to serve its watch-dog function over the police. This support will also aim to include exposure to similar models of oversight mechanisms. The NPC’s outreach capacities for direct public engagement through the use of mainstream and social media platforms as well as regular, direct public engagement through the Provincial offices will be strengthened. Additionally, trainings will be provided, informed by the training needs assessment undertaken through the EU Contribution to the PPP.

The project will also ensure support the NPC to mainstream gender concerns across all aspects of its work. This will focus on but is not limited to, the inclusion of female officers into its ranks and champion similar actions to be taken within the police force. The Project will aim to work in close collaboration with the NPC at the central and provincial levels, the Police Department and the Community Policing structures at village level throughout the implementation of the project. The PCMS, once launched, will have countrywide outreach and scope. Women Development Officers will also be included for public outreach purposes at the district level.

Output 1.1 The National Police Commission has strengthened its capacity to engage in its core functions and engage in public outreach—EU Funded

a) Provide support to strengthen the communications and outreach capacities of the NPC  

b) Support for the preparation of essential and innovative informational products (including audio-visual), in Sinhala, Tamil and English Languages

c) Provide dedicated technical support to the NPC, including to prioritize activities, within its strategic plan, and devise an implementation strategy, including focusing on the review of laws relating to the Police, and to formulate and implement policies/strategies and practices which promote inclusiveness/diversity

d) Support NPC to conduct a training needs assessment for its staff (national and Provincial); develop an action plan for staff training, and provide capacity development support, informed by the training needs assessment (including focusing on research, communications and outreach capacities, and review of work process flows and enhance ICT capacities)

e) Strengthen investigation capacity and case management and complaints handling mechanism within the NPC, and linking with where required, to the work of the Special Investigations Unit of the Sri Lanka Police

f) Support the NPC with critical research support, required to inform evidence based decision making

Output 1.2. The Public Complaint Management System (PCMS) is functional, linked to the Police Department’s backend data system and the complaints lodging mechanism is accessible to the public. (IOM) - PBF Funded

a) Develop a technical system design report for a computerized PCMS in collaboration with the University of Moratuwa

b) Develop procedural frameworks to facilitate operationalization of the PCMS
c) Develop and operationalize the PCMS

d) Deliver a comprehensive training package to ensure effective implementation of the PCMS

e) Conduct a public information campaign

Human Rights Commission

The UN’s support to the HRCSL will comprise of expert technical assistance towards implementation of priority catalytic actions of the Commission’s Strategic Plan, which was finalized in January 2017. The Strategic Plan places a strong focus on strengthening the capacities of HRCSL and its staff across a broad range of its functions; such as research and monitoring (including monitoring of detention centres), advocacy, complaints handling and investigations, engagement with international human rights monitoring mechanisms, and human rights education and training to state bodies, media, CSOs and communities. To this end the Project will support HRCSL to conduct a training needs assessment of existing staff, develop an action plan for staff training, and roll out priority trainings that are identified. If required a skills assessment would be undertaken simultaneously to identify critical gaps and accordingly short-term knowledge and technical skills would be supported the Project. Additionally, HRCSL will need support to strengthen its capacities to address priority thematic areas with the participation of civil society, including torture; economic, social and cultural rights; education; group-based issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; disability; migrant workers; senior citizens; and the plantation sector. Therefore, required technical support will be provided to the thematic sub-committees working under the Commission. Informed by the training needs assessment, special attention will be paid to the Commission’s capacity to inquire, investigate and manage complaints of human rights violations. The support provided will also include adaptation/design of a simple ICT tool to support the Commission’s monitoring process. As the HRC is also planning to establish 7 additional regional offices and 4 sub-offices, which will require sustained capacity development support, it is proposed that the project will extend support to strengthening the regional presence and capacities of the HRCSL, which is critical to carrying out its mandate and functions effectively.

In keeping with the need for the HRCSL to build a better public understanding of its role and functions, as well as create public trust in the institution, the HRCSL will be supported to strengthen its outreach capacity including the use of mainstream and social media platforms, the production of human rights manuals for HRC trainers (with priority for manuals on human rights education and on gender rights), production of innovative audio-visual material for public education on human rights and community education through commemorations of international rights days. In order to change public perceptions and attitudes towards their role in promoting and protecting human rights and create greater engagement on human rights issues, support will also be provided to propagate community-based human rights education in collaboration with State, non-state, professional and community based organisations.

Output 1.3 Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) has strengthened its complaints investigation mechanism and capacity to engage in advocacy, reporting and outreach. - EU and PBF Funded

a) Provide expert technical assistance to support the implementation of priority actions of the HRCSL’s Strategic Plan, including support to strengthen HRCSL capacities to address priority thematic areas with the participation of civil society, including torture; economic, social and
cultural rights; education; group-based issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; disability; migrant workers; senior citizens; and the plantation sector.

b) Support HRCSL to conduct a capacity and training needs assessment for HRCSL staff, develop action plan for staff training and Provide support to strengthen the capacities of HRCSL and its staff across a broad range of its functions [such as research and monitoring (including monitoring of detention centres), advocacy, complaints handling and investigations, engagement with international human rights monitoring mechanisms, and human rights education and training to state bodies, media, CSOs and communities]

c) Provide support to strengthen the inquiry, investigation and complaints mechanism, including through innovative systems development

d) Support HRCSL to strengthen its outreach through strategic support for awareness programs through radio, social and other relevant and inexpensive media, production of human rights manuals for HRC trainers (with priority for manuals on human rights education and on gender rights), production of innovative audio-visual material for public education on human rights and community education through commemorations of international days, and to change public perceptions and attitudes and propagate community-based human rights education in collaboration with key partners.

e) Support to strengthen the regional presence of HRCSL in priority geographical areas

**Right to Information Commission**

The project aims to provide dedicated technical expertise and initially essential capacity support to the RTI Commission, with a view to enable it to fully initiate its operations. Given the role that the UN played in relation to drafting RTI legislation, it becomes critical that it supports the Commission in operationalizing the Act. UNDP, in keeping with core mandate of supporting democratic governance, is positioned to draw on its global governance centres to provide the required technical support, particularly with regard to monitoring of the implementation of the Act and share good practices and learning from relevant country contexts.

**Output 1.4 Right to Information Commission is able to perform core functions in operationalizing the Right to Information Act (in collaboration with development partners such as USAID) – PBF Funded**

a) Provide technical and capacity-development assistance to support key functions of the Commission, including developing a standard operating procedure in relation to monitoring performance and ensuring due compliance by public authorities; making recommendations for reform both of a general nature and those in regard to any specific public authority;

b) Support the Commission to undertake training activities for public officials on the effective implementation of the Act;

c) Support to publicize the requirements of the Act and the rights of individuals under it

The UN agencies proposed for engagement in this area, have complementary areas of expertise. IOM has extensive experience in working with the Government of Sri Lanka in institutional capacity assessment, process re-engineering and providing ongoing support to NPC including ICT needs assessment; UNWomen is the mandated agency to lead gender mainstreaming activities; UNDP will leverage its comparative experience working oversight bodies in promoting compliance with international normative frameworks. OHCHR is the UN mandated agency to protect and promote human rights.
3. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Project proposes to develop indicators to track key results as well as milestones, taking into account where relevant the requirements of Sustainable Development Goals monitoring framework. In addition, steps will be taken to keenly record strategies and processes followed by the contributing partners, given the importance of the role played by the Commissions in the current transitional country context. Monitoring frameworks and tools for measurement will also be developed at the project planning stage.

4. Estimated Budget (PBF Contribution)

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<th>CATEGORIES</th>
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<th>UNDP</th>
<th>OHCHR</th>
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