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சர்வோதய பெண்கள் இயக்கம்  
**Sarvodaya Women's Movement**



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Press Release

**International Migrants Day**

**18<sup>th</sup> December 2015.**

We wish to congratulate the 18 lakhs of Sri Lankan Migrant Workers for celebrating their 16<sup>th</sup> Migrants Day. International Migrants Day is an international day observed on **18 December** as International Migrants Day appointed by the General Assembly of United Nations on **4 December 2000** taking into account the large and increasing number of migrants in the world.

Sri Lankan Migrant Workers have contributed USD 7 Billion to the Sri Lankan economy last year. In short we can take for granted that they only have been keeping the Sri Lankan economy rolling along. Which is by far the highest Foreign Exchange earner overtaking the contributions made by the exports of Apparels, Ceylon Tea or Ceylon Cinnamon.

At the same time we wish to highlight that the Good Governance Government must give them their voting rights which has been enshrined on them by the Sri Lanka's 2<sup>nd</sup> Republican Constitution. We are made to understand that the issue in undertaking the same is logistical issues and that such issues are overcome and the coming Local Government and Provincial Council elections they would be able to exercise their franchise at the Sri Lankan High Commissions or Embassies in the country in which they currently work in. Further learning on this matter could be obtained from the Filipino system, where all Filipino are able to exercise their franchise in through the embassies in the countries they work in at election time.

In addition to which we also wish to highlight that the Good Governance Government also allows Migrant Workers to form in to trade unions and be able to register their Trade Union under the Commissioner General of Labour.

Also we wish to highlight that all embassies in the Middle East Countries be able to retain a Legal Consultant on a full time basis, as was done by the Bangaladeshi government to look into the legal aspects of nationals who are held in jails and detention centres for various crimes and other charges.

We wish them well in their future struggles and to keep the Sri Lankan Flag flying high!



Ms Wimla Ranatunga

President