

## **Media Statement**

### **Transparency International Bangladesh condemns the killing of Award winning Sri Lankan journalist**

Dhaka, 11 January, 2009. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) strongly condemns the assassination of the award-winning Sri Lankan journalist Lasantha Wickramatunga, the Editor of Sunday Leader of Colombo. Dr. Iftekhar Zaman, executive director of TIB and a member of the international board of directors of the Berlin-based Transparency International (TI) said, “the global anti-corruption movement represented in over 100 countries around the world is deeply disappointed and outraged by the brutal killing of the TI Integrity Award-winning Sri Lankan journalist **Mr. Lasantha Wickramatunga**, the Editor of Sunday Leader of Colombo, and a fearless anti-corruption campaigner”.

“We demand immediate and impartial investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice, failing which the authority’s commitment to challenge impunity will be questioned”, he said. TIB expects that the Government of Sri Lanka shall demonstrate that it is committed to the rule of law and human rights, especially the right of every citizen to freedom of expression.

Mr Wickramatunga was a pioneering journalist who devoted his life to fighting corruption as a media professional. His extraordinary contribution, integrity and commitment was aptly recognized in 2000 when he became the first ever Sri Lankan winner of the Transparency International’s Integrity Award. The TI movement conveys its deepest condolences to the members of Mr. Wickramatunga’s family and hopes that they will have the courage and capacity to cope with this irreplaceable loss.

Recalling that earlier on September 27, 2008, Mr. J.C. Weliamuna, Executive Director of TI Sri Lanka was the target of a life-threatening grenade attack, from which he miraculously escaped, Dr. Zaman called upon the Government of Sri Lanka to demonstrate the courage and commitment to create conditions in which the right to freedom of expression can be freely exercised.

Sri Lanka is a nation that has many reasons to be proud for its democratic traditions and significant achievements. “It is with this confidence that we call upon the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that all its citizens, especially anti-corruption activists, the media persons and human rights campaigners can work with a sense of unfettered security without any threats or intimidation”, the TIB statement said.

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