

Honorable Mangala Samaraweera
Minister of Finance & Media
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Dear Minister Samaraweera

**SUPPRESSION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN STATE-OWNED
PEOPLE'S BANK IN SRI LANKA**

We are informed by our affiliate Ceylon Bank Employees' Union [CBEU] in Sri Lanka that the democratically elected trade union leaders of the People's Bank branch, of CBEU, are being subject to harassments and victimization by the management of the People's bank obstructing their legitimate trade union activities, carried out in the interest of the employees and the bank.

CBEU has been updating the UNI Global Union about their agitations against the management hostilities of the People's Bank. It is reported that People's Bank management has unilaterally abandoned the various structures instituted in the bank since its inception to redress grievances of the employees in the bank. We are surprised to note that bank has also withdrawn the facility of relieving the elected union officials from regular bank duties, enabling them to carry out trade union functions. This action is a violation of the provisions of the establishment code under the Labour law of the land. CBEU reports that the People's Bank has been extending this privilege to the branch union leaders for the past four decades. The People's Bank management's sudden prerogative; has deliberately obstructed the independent functioning of the trade union, contradictory to the principles of freedom of association under the ILO convention 87 ratified by Sri Lanka.

We regret very much to note the deteriorating industrial relations situations in Sri Lanka, deviating from its past, best practices and compliances of International Labour Standards; particularly violating the fundamental rights of the bank employees organized under the Ceylon Bank Employees' Union, one of the oldest trade unions in Asia.

The UNI Global Union is committed to promoting harmonious industrial relations through dialogue and discussions enabling our members to secure decent work at their respective workplaces. We represent 900 unions from over 140 countries encompassing 20 million workers in the skills and services industries including finance. UNI assures its full solidarity with Ceylon Bank Employees' Union to resolve the issues in the People's Bank in Sri Lanka.

UNI Apro urges your immediate intervention to help, resolve the dispute through negotiated settlement mutually beneficial to all stakeholders in People's Bank. UNI Apro firmly believes that in the current turbulent banking and finance industry, uninterrupted employee engagement is paramount to improve service standards to restore customer confidence to stimulate growth in the economy for shared prosperity in Sri Lanka.

I look forward to a positive response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Ng', written in a cursive style.

Christopher Ng
Regional Secretary

12th December 2017

Copies to:

Hon. W D J Seneviratne – Minister for Labour and Trade Union Relations
Hon. Kabir Hashim – Minister of Public Enterprise Development
Mr T G W Gunawardana – President, Ceylon Bank Employees' Union