

## **FROM DEATH TO LIFE**

### **A Reflection on The Easter Sunday bombings**

*Bishop Duleep de Chickera (Bishop of Colombo, 2001 - 2010)*

#### **Our condolences**

The tragedy of Good Friday returned on Easter Sunday when death suddenly struck scores of Christians celebrating the Festival of Life, yesterday.

Our condolences and continuing compassion must be extended to those whose loved ones were snatched away or injured, in places considered safe. Our sorrow and compassion should also specially encircle the families of all those visitors to our country who were killed and injured. We are deeply sorry at your loss in our land of hospitality.

#### **Work for the people**

The abrupt termination of Easter Day services on the advice of the police, was a strong reminder that our work is not yet finished. The solemn rising of the people to move out in their twos and threes, somewhat symbolized that this unfinished work now lies with the people of our country.

#### **Bankrupt legislators**

This is because our legislators are no longer able to steer our common destiny with responsibility. Most are simply unable to anticipate conflict and work for the common good; they have been immersed in self-interest for too long. Few can offer empathy to the victims of these crimes and even fewer have the ability to call the nation to engage in introspection, the need of the hour. The predictably emerging blame game, along with the typical public exploitation of human suffering, is ample evidence of this bankruptcy.

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## **The potential of the people**

The spontaneous response of medical and para- medical personnel, the police and armed forces and general public, in assisting the injured and the dying, is to be commended. This behavior is a sacred sign of the immense potential our people have, to cross boundaries and heal wounds. It also indicates that we reach our highest human stature when we move beyond the invasion of political party agendas. We are to consequently prevent legislators from stealing our integrity to further their devious ends, in our work of nation building.

## **A day of national mourning and reflection**

These heinous crimes must be condemned in the name of our common humanity. But with the condemnation we are to counter the intentions of the perpetrators who seek blood for blood. The declaration of a day of national mourning and reflection, will help us rise to this task. If on this day people of diverse religious and secular persuasions will publicly gather to demonstrate solidarity with the grieved and ask what went wrong, our actions will be stronger than the intentions of the perpetrators.

If out of this crisis we will even now, read the signs of the times and come together to form continuing people's movements to build social trust and assert dialogue as the best method of resolving our differences, we will then rise to a new life out of the ashes of the Easter Sunday bombings.

With peace and blessings to all