



TAIWAN FOUNDATION
for DEMOCRACY

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Press Release

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**Centre for Human Rights and Development Received 2014 Asia
Democracy and Human Rights Award**

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy held the annual award ceremony of Asian Democracy and Human Rights Award this morning on December 10th at Far East Plaza Hotel Taipei; and the laureate of this year goes to Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) of Sri Lanka. CHRD is a leading Sri Lankan human rights organization established in 1997 by human rights lawyers and activists. CHRD aims to protect and promote human rights development and has long been engaging in defending human rights in Sri Lanka. It is also considered a source of legal support and strategic guidance for minorities, the disadvantaged and grassroots human rights organizations. Despite intense surveillance and being branded traitors by the government, CHRD works tirelessly still to defend marginalized segments of society and expose the government's undemocratic ways.

President Ma Ying-jeou was invited to offer the award sculpture to Mr. Kanagasabai Sanmugaratnam Ratnavale, Director of Centre for Human Rights and Development; and the Legislative Yuan Speaker Wang Jin-pyng, also the Chairman of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy,

provided the award grant of 100,000 US Dollars to Mr. Ratnavale, validating the remarkable performance of CHRD.

During his speech, President Ma illustrated his admiration to the outstanding accomplishments of CHRD, praising organization's high involvement in lobbying and helping those ethical minorities and women to earn their basic rights. President Ma also stated that Taiwan has also been through the long dark night of human right violations back to 1970s, yet the government has continued to work on the political reforms and promoted human right protection activities these years. Taiwan's advancement on human right protection has gradually been recognized by the international society, which can be evidenced by the great honor given by U.S. Freedom House who released a report which marks Taiwan as the democratic and free state at all levels.

Later on, Speaker Wang Jin-Pyng, the Chairman of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, also stated that since the establishment of Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award in 2006, through open nominations and two stages of reviewing process, each year TFD has awarded individuals or organizations that have demonstrated long-term commitment and outstanding leadership in advancing democracy or human rights through peaceful means. CHRD was chosen as the winner of the 2014 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award. Taiwan Foundation for Democracy is delighted to honor CHRD in recognition of their efforts in promoting and protecting human rights.

Mr. K. S. Ratnavale, Director of Centre for Human Rights and Development, expressed his humility to accept this year's Award on behalf of CHRD. He considered this award signifies the achievement of

the centre. Yet currently Sri Lanka still suffer from the oppression coming from the government, racial violence, institutionalized discrimination and violent crimes, therefore, a group of Sri Lankan human right lawyers and social activists established Centre for Human Right Development, dedicating themselves with whole hearts to sort out human right violations.

CHRD addresses these issues with a multi-faceted approach that includes litigation, public campaign, research and documentation, advocacy, legal and human rights education and network building. Their intended impact is not only to win legal victories, but also to strengthen and make more effective the movement for human rights in Sri Lanka as a whole.

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