

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 9, 2018

His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena  
President of Sri Lanka  
President's House  
Janadhipathi Mawatha  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Dear President Sirisena:

We are gravely concerned about the decision to suspend your country's Parliament and replace the Prime Minister through an extra constitutional mechanism. We urge you to call for the immediate reopening of the Parliament and to diffuse this crisis through a democratic process.

Your election in 2015 brought new hope for democratic reform, accountability, and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. Actions from your government to initiate a reconciliation process, to amend your Constitution, and to support the rule of law signaled a new commitment to democratic governance in Sri Lanka.

In response to these efforts, the United States has undertaken several initiatives to invest in the relationship, including welcoming Sri Lanka's Parliament into the House Democracy Partnership, considering Sri Lanka for a Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact, and transferring a U.S. Coast Guard high endurance cutter, formerly the USCGC Sherman, to the Sri Lankan Navy.

Unfortunately, we fear that recent actions, if not corrected, will threaten your country's democratic development and derail the progress made in recent years. It has caused a political crisis which Speaker Karu Jayasuriya has warned could result in a "bloodbath," and could have an impact on the MCC program, U.S. foreign assistance, and other U.S. engagement and programs.

The U.S.-Sri Lanka partnership is built on shared goals of good governance and a commitment to democratic values. As such, we urge you to signal your commitment to these values and rule of law by allowing Parliament to perform its constitutional duties without interference.

His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena  
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Sincerely,



Eliot L. Engel  
Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



Dina Titus  
Co-Chair  
Congressional Caucus on Sri Lanka



David Price  
Ranking Member  
House Democracy Partnership

CC: Sarath Dissanayake at the Embassy