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Dear Mr Fernando,

I am writing to invite you to attend an international conference, *Enhancing Human Rights and Security in the Asia Pacific*, hosted by the University of Sydney and to be held in **Bangkok, Thailand from September 15 – 17, 2014**. I believe that our partner, the Centre for the Study of Human Rights (CSHR), University of Colombo, has already been in contact with Right to Life, as an organisation that has been working for several years with victims of human rights violations. I also believe that my colleagues Kiran Grewal and Avanka Fernando met with you on 19 September 2012 to discuss the project.

By way of a brief background, this international conference marks the culmination of a three-year project, led by the University of Sydney in collaboration with our partners in Nepal and Sri Lanka, the Kathmandu School of Law and the Centre for the Study of Human Rights at the University of Colombo. The principal objective of the project has been to identify more effective methods for preventing torture in security forces. Specifically, we have sought to identify strategies to assist in developing the capacities of security personnel to address and resist torture within their own organisations. To this end, we have conducted extensive research on the root causes of torture, developed a novel approach that focuses on the systemic risk factors and, in working closely with the Military and Police in Sri Lanka and the Armed Police Force and Police in Nepal, have now commenced trialling the approach.

The conference will bring together participants in the project from Sri Lanka and Nepal, representatives from other Military and Police Forces in the region, international organisations and civil society working on human rights and humanitarian law issues in the security sector and scholars, with a view to reflecting on the work that we have done and lessons learned, and sharing other strategies and approaches. We anticipate that this conference will provide an

invaluable forum in which to share the research and findings of the project, reflect on current regional practices and discuss the development of more effective strategies for protecting human rights in the armed forces across the Asia Pacific.

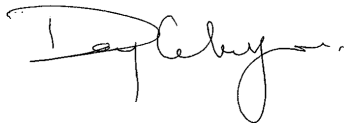
To make this happen, we need you. The presence, participation and active input from civil society organisations actively working on human rights, humanitarian and security issues within the region will be critical to the quality of these discussions. **Delegates' travel costs will be covered, including return flights to Bangkok, four nights accommodation and most meals.**

In participating in this conference, we would hope that you would be able to discuss with other NGOs, scholars and the invited members from the security forces, relevant initiatives that your organisation is undertaking in the protection of human rights in the security sector and to provide critical reflection on their approaches. We appreciate that in bringing together security organisations and civil society actors, tensions may be raised, but we hope that careful management of the agenda will provide a forum for any differences to become the ground for productive discussions. Indeed, we are hoping to use this conference and the project as the platform for the formation of a network of security organisations and relevant human rights organisations that will support ongoing work in the area of human rights protection in the security sector.

To ensure fruitful discussions we are seeking to limit the number of organisations attending and so we have only extended this invitation to those directly working in the field and those whose work has come to our attention. In this context, we would also ask that you advise us by May 9 of your attendance, as should you be unable to attend, we would be in a position to fund a representative from another organisation.

I thank you in advance and look forward to welcoming you in September in Bangkok. Please let me know if I can furnish additional information about the project or the international conference. More details about the conference logistics are also available by emailing my project team on [EHRP.admin@sydney.edu.au](mailto:EHRP.admin@sydney.edu.au).

Sincerely,



Associate Professor Danielle Celermajer  
Director