

The 1st Niwano Peace Prize Visionary Award



Ruki Fernando

Nationality	Sri Lanka
Date of birth	1973
Position	Human Right Activist
Religion	Catholic

1. Reason

The Niwano Peace Prize Visionary Award Committee has decided to present the first Niwano Peace Prize Visionary Award to Mr. Ruki Fernando of Sri Lanka.

During what is said to be the longest civil war in Asia, Mr. Fernando served in various capacities with several Christian-based organizations. He was the Asia coordinator of the International Young Christian Student (IYCS) Movement, a former member of the Asia Pacific Chaplaincy team of the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS), as well as the peace sector coordinator of the Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC, the social action arm of the Sri Lankan Catholic Bishops Conference. Mr. Fernando has also worked as a freelance researcher in the field where he encountered divisions amongst people based on ethnicity (such as between Sinhalese and Tamils) and religious beliefs (such as amongst Buddhists and Muslims). He has continued to be sensitive to the suffering of ethnic and religious minorities such as the Tamils and Muslims who have been subjected to many human rights violations, and he has worked to promote and protect their rights. At the same time, he is committed to forming networks to foster democracy and continues to help search for missing persons who disappeared both during and after the war. Those activities and actions have earned him a reputation as a human rights activist contributing to democracy and peace in Sri Lanka.

As an ethnic majority Sinhalese and a religious minority Catholic in the country who speaks about the rights of minorities, Mr. Fernando is sometimes regarded as a traitor or enemy in Sri Lanka, but he continues to believe in the conscience of the people in their deepest hearts, not outward demonstrations of their hostility or prejudice. He continues to stand by the people of Sri Lanka in their suffering and work for justice. The Niwano Peace Foundation commends both Mr. Fernando's activities to foster peace and democracy in Sri Lanka founded on his belief in justice, and his practice of peace based on a religious spirit that the Niwano Peace Prize Visionary Award seeks to promote.

2. Photo



1. Protest outside Malaysian High Commission for persecuted Malaysian activist - 2017



2. Protest with families of disappeared - Maruthankerny (Jaffna) - March 2018



3. Press Conference - 08 July 2022



4. With a family of a disappeared - Colombo March 2018



5. Geneva Graduate Institute at UK Govt event on Magna Carta - June 2016



6. Exposure program for Christian religious - Sulugune - Sept2022



7. Talk to Christian religious - Kandy - Feb2022



8. With former (late) Bishop of Mannar and a Catholic sister in Madhu shrine - Feb2012

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