

## **Draft Template for letter to President**

---

*Organisation Name*

*Address*

*Email / Website*

*Date*

His Excellency Anura Kumara Dissanayake

President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

President's Secretariat, Colombo 01, Sri Lanka

### **Re: Urgent Call to Halt Illegal Forest Clearing and Protect Community Rights in Hambantota**

We write to you on behalf of [*Organisation Name*], [*a brief description*]. We have been following with deep concern the situation unfolding in the Hambantota district of Sri Lanka and write in solidarity with the farming communities and conservationists who are raising the alarm.

It has come to our attention that 17 solar energy companies have commenced large-scale clearing of over 1,000 acres of forest within the Hambantota Managed Elephant Reserve (MER), land that local communities fought to have legally protected as an elephant corridor and adjoining forest lands, using heavy machinery and deliberate burning, without mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) or Archaeological Impact Assessments, and in disregard of the protests of residents and conservationists. The consequences are immediate: the destruction is driving elephants into villages, more than 5000 farming families face threats to their safety and livelihoods, elephants too face threats to life, and experts warn that burning dry-zone forests releases stored carbon and disrupts local rainfall, directly undermining the project's stated climate goals.

We firmly believe that a just and credible energy transition must be inclusive, transparent, and ecologically sound. Renewable energy development that displaces rural communities, destroys

biodiversity, and circumvents the rule of law is not a climate solution, it replicates the very extractive logic of the fossil fuel era that a genuine transition must leave behind.

We therefore respectfully urge Your Excellency's government to immediately intervene through:

**1. Immediately halt** all forest and land clearing within the Hambantota Managed Elephant Reserve and the adjoining forests lands pending full legal review.

**2. Enforce strict adherence to the law** by ensuring that comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessments are conducted and made fully public before any further development proceeds.

**3. Redirect solar development** to degraded lands, abandoned mine sites, and rooftop installations, as recommended by local environmental experts, rather than primary forests and productive agricultural land.

We trust that Your Excellency's government will act swiftly to uphold Sri Lanka's own laws, protect the rights and livelihoods of its farming communities, and ensure that the country's transition to renewable energy is one that the world can genuinely hold up as a model of justice and sustainability.

We remain available for further dialogue and stand in solidarity with the people of Hambantota.

Yours sincerely,

*[ Authorised Signatory Name & Title ]*

*[ Organisation Name ]*

*[ Email Address ]*

*[ Phone / Website — optional ]*

---

## COMPLETING THIS TEMPLATE

- All text in *italics* and brackets [ ] must be replaced with your own details before sending.
- Send via email to: [president@presidentsoffice.lk](mailto:president@presidentsoffice.lk) (official contact of the President's Secretariat)
- Copy the Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform: [ [monlar@sltnet.lk](mailto:monlar@sltnet.lk) ]

- You may also send a physical copy to: President's Secretariat, Republic Square, Colombo 01, Sri Lanka.
  - Feel free to adapt the language to better reflect your organisation's voice, while retaining the three core requests.
- For further background and reference articles, please contact the Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform