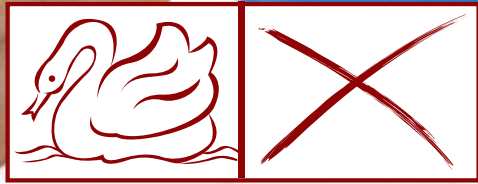




**Vishvasaneyya Venasak**

**SARATH FONSEKA**





# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## My Message

Now is the time for believable change.

## Your Choice

Life is hard under the Rajapaksas. Corruption, bribery, nepotism and ego-boosting extravagance is holding back the development of our country and hurting families. Now with the war over resources are available for development. But, instead of addressing peoples' needs the Rajapaksas are interested in themselves. Sri Lanka is at the crossroads.

***On 26 January you have a choice.***

You can have more of the same from Mahinda Rajapaksa. You can have corruption, bribery, nepotism and ego-boosting extravagance that is costing your family through high taxes and high cost of living, falling income and failing health and education.

Or you can support the believable change I am promising. I will restore democracy. I will eliminate corruption and help families by creating jobs, increasing incomes and lowering taxes and the cost of living. I am not a career politician but a public servant.

It is now or never. Sri Lanka deserves better. Having won the war we must now win the peace. On 26 January vote Sarath Fonseka for believable change.

SARATH FONSEKA



# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## Taking Stock

I believe that Sri Lanka, our resplendent land, is one of the best places in the world to live and raise families. The peace that the people expected at the end of the war has not materialized. Their hopes have been dashed. The economy has collapsed. Law and order has broken down. Life is hard under the Rajapaksas.

I know that families are unable to maintain a decent standard of living and quality of life. Some can't even afford three meals a day. Good paying jobs are hard to come by. Even existing jobs are disappearing. The few government jobs that are being doled out at election time are only for their supporters. The unemployed are beaten and tear gassed.

I am aware that farmers can't sell their produce to even cover their costs, fishermen can't sell their catch, public servants struggle to make ends meet, pensioners are suffering indignity, millions of private sector employees are reduced to just managing to get by and small and medium sector entrepreneurs are going out of business.

Every year hundreds of thousands are forced to go overseas to work in low paying and abusive environments. Samurdhi payments go to political henchmen and people who deserve assistance are on the streets. War veterans who liberated our nation don't have proper homes to live in, hundreds of thousands of the war displaced are in camps and the disabled are ignored.



# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



While a select few have amassed phenomenal wealth, life is hard under the Rajapaksas for the rest. I ask you why this is so? Unimaginable levels of corruption, bribery, nepotism and ego-boosting extravagance is holding back the development of our country and the prosperity of our families.

The magnitude of corruption in Sri Lanka is mind boggling. According to Professor A DV de S Indraratna, a Senior Advisor to the Central Bank and the President of the Sri Lanka Economic Association, "the total annual loss works out to around 9 percent of the GDP of 2006" (Impact of Corruption on Poverty and Economic Growth, 2007, Page 11). He states further that if not for corruption, Sri Lanka's growth rate could have increased at the very least by an additional 2 percentage points without any further increase in the rate of gross investment or productivity (Ibid, Page 12). Using 2009 projected figures, this loss amounts to anywhere between Rs. 350 to Rs. 400 billion; that is more than twice the approved estimate for the Ministry of Defence or more than 15 times that of the Ministry of Higher Education.

So how does this affect you and your family? If not for corruption the government would have been able to collect much more revenue, help create more jobs, control the cost of living and spend so much more on social services particularly for the poor. We could have built more hospitals, used better quality medicines, have better facilities in schools and generally improved the lives of our people.



# Vishvasanceya Venasak



Most importantly, if not for corruption I'm confident we could have reduced the heavy taxes on food and essentials people buy everyday. If not for corruption, we could have more investment that would help create hundreds of thousands of well paying new jobs. Life need not be so hard.

It is now very clear that President Rajapaksa leads a greedy Government mired in corruption. Mahinda Rajapaksa leads a Government where his family members have key positions of power. While Sri Lankans are struggling to get by, it appears that the Rajapaksas are phenomenally wealthy. It is evident to me that no meaningful steps are being taken to end corruption and the clan is thinking of the next fourteen generations.

I believe that is why the 17th Amendment to the Constitution is not being activated. That is why the independent commissions are not being established, and that is why the Bribery Commission is impotent. That is also why the media is so severely controlled and all dissenting voices remain silent.

Corruption hurts all Sri Lankan people. We must act now or our children will have to pay.

With the war over and resources available for development, Sri Lanka is at the crossroads. But the Rajapaksas don't want to take the path that will help our people.



# Vishvasanceya Venasak



I believe we need to have an economy where the private sector and the public sector work in partnership to serve the people in a corruption-free environment. We must ensure that there is the right amount of regulation and that rights and obligations of workers as well as employers are protected. We need to learn from the great recession of last year where even the largest of economies suffered, and fine tune our economic management. We also need to learn from the economic policies of our own previous governments, so future mistakes are avoided. We must undertake necessary reforms. We must adopt pragmatic approaches.

I believe it is time to unleash Sri Lanka's potential and boost economic growth. We need to create wealth in Sri Lanka by encouraging village businesses to supply food and other goods and services, not just for the 20 million of us, but to the whole world. As we move forward, we must take with us our traditional time-honoured Sri Lankan business knowledge and practices. We then need to ensure the distribution of this new wealth equitably to all people, not just for a select few.

To do this, I declare that Sri Lanka needs change. Sri Lanka needs believable change.



# Vishvasaneeya Venasak



## My Vision

I am different. I am change. I will bring about believable change.

With forty years experience in the Army, I am not a career politician. I am a leader who is not frightened to make tough decisions. Just as my decisions of the past my decisions in the future will always be in the best interest of the nation. I have delivered on my promises. When leading the Army, promotions I made were not solely on seniority but more on merit. Likewise, in the future I will get the right person for the job.

I have a vision of a free Sri Lanka, a country where decent and functional democracy prevails. A Sri Lanka, free of corruption. A Sri Lanka free of discrimination and with equal opportunities for all. A Sri Lanka with a strong identity based on our ethnic and cultural diversity.

A Sri Lanka with democracy restored and the Executive Presidency abolished. A Sri Lanka where the best men and women run for Parliament and those elected have the highest standards of ethics. A Sri Lanka where the media is free and all people have a right to information. A Sri Lanka where the 'white van' culture of disappearances and extra-judicial executions are firmly confined to the pages of history. A Sri Lanka where human and fundamental rights of all citizens are upheld.

A Sri Lanka where every family enjoys three square meals a day.

A Sri Lanka where families have the protection of a safe health service and know that their children learn in quality schools and universities. A Sri Lanka where our youth are trained and the rights of women are protected.



# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



**A** Sri Lanka where every agricultural household can live in dignity. A Sri Lanka where paddy farmers are free from the rice mill mafia and where they receive a fair guaranteed price based on the market.

**A** Sri Lanka where fishermen can be proud contributors to society.

**A** Sri Lanka where public servants and private sector employees earn a decent income. A Sri Lanka where our respected elders have social and financial security in retirement.

**A** Sri Lanka where small and medium businesses grow and where our quality exports take on the world. A Sri Lanka where our entrepreneurs can do business easily without interference by kappam politicians.

**A** Sri Lanka connected to the global knowledge economy where information and communication technology is widely available allowing men and women everywhere to provide high quality services.

**A** Sri Lanka that sees our family members working overseas in skilled positions and looking forward to their return to start their own business or vocation.

**A** Sri Lanka where those who fought to unite our country are well looked after. A Sri Lanka where all those who serve, whether it be in the Army, Navy or the Air Force live with pride.





# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



**A** Sri Lanka where the Police Force and the Civil Defence Force is dignified and where Police Officers are treated with respect.

**A** Sri Lanka where the families of those who paid the supreme sacrifice are looked after and a Sri Lanka that takes care of all victims of war.

**A** Sri Lanka where the real poor have real help and assistance to get out of poverty and where the differently-abled have the same opportunities as the rest of us. A Sri Lanka that helps those without a job to find one but in the meantime ensures their families are fed.

**A** Sri Lanka without IDPs.

**T**o achieve this vision I have a plan and a timetable for action. A plan to create a just and disciplined society. A plan to restore democracy, to fight corruption, to reduce the cost of living, to increase jobs and incomes and to create an equitable Sri Lanka for all. To achieve this vision, my Government will be one of action.



# Vishvasanceya Venasak

I pledge that:



1. I will restore democracy and win the peace
2. I will eliminate fraud and corruption
3. I will help families become financially secure
4. I will ease the cost of living
5. I will start a process of national reconciliation
6. I will restore health services and I will revive and invigorate education
7. I will empower women
8. I will provide jobs for our youth
9. I will lay the foundation for a just and disciplined society
10. I will safeguard the security of the nation



# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## I. I will restore democracy and win the peace.



The challenge facing us is to restore democracy by abolishing the Executive Presidency that is paving the way for a dictatorial regime. My first act upon assuming office will be to reactivate the 17th Amendment to the Constitution by appointing the Constitutional Council for the re-establishment of the Independent Commissions.

I will then dismantle the jumbo cabinet and invite all parties presently representing Parliament to nominate members to my caretaker cabinet. I will then dissolve Parliament. Urgent cabinet papers will then be brought forward to amend Emergency regulations. Within a month cabinet papers will be presented for the approval of a Constitution Amendment Bill to abolish the Executive Presidency, an Abolition of the Press Council Bill and a Freedom of Information Bill.

I will also take necessary steps to ensure that the most free-and-fair elections in Sri Lanka will be held under my caretaker cabinet. I expect the new Bills to be presented to the new Parliament within one month.

After abolishing the Executive Presidency I will continue to work as President with the support of the Parliament for the nation and the people.





# Vishvasanceya Venasak



## 2. I will eliminate fraud and corruption.



Within three weeks my multi-party Caretaker Cabinet will bring in new regulations to combat fraud and corruption in conformity with the UN Convention against Corruption. Persons found guilty will have their ill-gotten gains confiscated. A new powerful agency to combat fraud and corruption will be established.

An independent commission to audit all public finances will be established and I will take all necessary steps to remove obstacles in auditing public finances.

I will ask the new Parliament to pass Parliamentary codes on ethics similar to that of developed democracies. An independent Parliamentary Ethics Commissioner will be appointed to uphold Parliamentary ethics for finances. I will declare my assets and liabilities to the people on an annual basis.





# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## 3. I will help families become financially secure.



I will increase salaries of public servants by Rs. 10,000 and resolve all pension anomalies. I will increase the lowest Samurdhi payment to Rs. 500 and bring in all deserving families who have been politically excluded, into the social safety net. I will also address the grievances of all Samurdhi Niyamakas.

I will ensure that subsidized fertilizers of all types and of good quality are available in the open market.

I will ensure that the rice mill mafia is broken up and

a fair guaranteed price for paddy, based on the market is established. For the 2010 Maha Season I will ensure that Samba will be purchased at Rs. 40/Kilo and Nadu at Rs. 35/Kilo so that the farmer will get an even higher price in the market. I will ensure that dairy farmers receive a minimum of Rs. 45 per litre. I will also promote organic agriculture.

I will negotiate with the private sector to increase the salaries of employees by assisting in eliminating unwarranted taxes and payments that increase the cost of doing business. I will ensure the re-instatement of GSP+ concessions to save 300,000 jobs. I will appoint a powerful committee to urgently look into the burning issues of small and medium businesses. I will follow up on the negotiations to increase salaries of estate workers to Rs. 500 and take action to improve their living conditions.

I will also ensure families affected by the various financial scandals due to inaction by the Central Bank are compensated to the maximum possible. Pensions in agriculture will be increased and new pension schemes will be introduced for fisheries. Steps will be taken to provide protection to those in the informal sector in their old age.

Further, I will also ensure that goods for the New Year will be freely available at an affordable price and that all festival advances are paid on time.





# Vishvasanceya Venasak



## 4. I will ease the cost of living.



I will take immediate action to bring down the cost of food by slashing heavy taxes on essential food items. I will remove all taxes on diesel and kerosene oil and reduce the price of petrol as per the Supreme Court judgement.

I will significantly reduce taxes on LPG and other essentials as required. I will further reduce the cost of transportation by removing the payment for emission certification for school vans and three-wheelers and take action to provide spare parts at concessionary duties for private buses and three-wheelers.





# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## 5. I will start a process of national reconciliation.



I will help all Tamil, Muslim and Sinhalese affected by the war. A program of immediate relief measures for war affected persons and areas will be implemented, which will also address the burning problems of Tamil speaking persons. All remaining IDPs will be immediately re-settled and the grant for resettlement will be increased to a minimum of Rs. 100,000 per family and assessed upwards based on need.

Within the first month I will take steps to register all other persons displaced due to the war and see that they are re-settled without further delay. All detainees in relation to terrorism will be prosecuted, rehabilitated or released. I will promote and foster our Sri Lankan identity based on our ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. I will ensure the freedom of worship without any hindrance or discrimination.





# Vishvasanceya Venasak



## 6. I will restore health services and I will revive and invigorate education.



Within the first month I will declare a crisis situation in the health sector and take steps to stop the importation of sub-standard drugs and make available good quality medicines at Government hospitals. I will ensure that significant preventive measures are enforced to control the spread of epidemics.

Furthermore, in the first month I will restore confidence in the education system. Task Forces will be appointed to establish a credible examination system and an equitable system for Grade One school admissions for 2011. I will also take steps to eradicate the discrepancies between schools in the cities and rural areas. I will address the needs of undergraduates and provide accommodation to all undergraduates who are in need.







# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## 7. I will empower women.



Within the second month I will take steps to lessen the struggle women face on a daily basis and work towards presenting a Women's Rights Bill. I will take all measures to ensure the safety and security of women. I will appoint a Task Force to devise a plan to help women-headed households. I will take action to start a Women's Bank to provide micro-credit.

I will take immediate action to bring back all Sri Lankan women stranded overseas. I will initiate a programme to enhance the wages of those employed and wish to be employed overseas and to ensure their security. I will also take action to find solutions for the socio-economic problems faced by the families of women employed overseas.





# Vishvasanceya Venasak



## 8. I will provide jobs for our youth.



Within three months I will take steps to initiate the 'Youth Challenge Programme'. This will enable young people between the ages of 17 and 25 to serve the nation and improve their lives. They will be provided a monthly allowance of Rs. 2,000 while being trained in vocations including computer software, ICT enabled services and English.

I will establish the 'Youth at Work Programme' under which the Government and the Private Sector will find jobs for the youth who complete the Youth Challenge Programme. Daham Pasal teachers will also be included in this scheme. Any unemployed graduate in this program will be paid an additional Rs. 3,000 per month.





# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## 9. I will lay the foundation for a just and disciplined society



I will initiate action towards creating a society that upholds ethical and moral values. I will take urgent action to remove obstacles that prevent the further strengthening of an independent judiciary.

I will restore an honorable police force that will enforce the law equitably to all. Their dedication to serve will be recognized and those who wish to retire after 22 years will be permitted to do so with full pension.

I will take immediate action to eliminate the menace of underworld thugs and war lords. No criminal activity will be tolerated. Extra-judicial killings and disappearances will be investigated and the rule of law will be restored.





# Vishvasaneeya Venasak



## 10. I will safeguard the security of the nation



I will modernize the armed forces to meet the challenges of the 21st century keeping in mind the security concerns of our neighboring countries. I will adopt suitable measure to ensure high standards of welfare for the members of the armed forces and the civil defense force.

I will ensure the welfare of all those military personnel who were unfortunately disabled. I will arrest the mismanagement of public funds collected by "Api Venuvun Api" and ensure every cent is utilized for the welfare of military personnel. I will always remember those who sacrificed their lives and ensure the welfare of their families.

I will ensure that we maintain close relations with all countries throughout the world in order to achieve our national objectives.





# Vishvasaneyya Venasak



## Your Choice

On 26 January you have a choice.

You can have more of the same from Mahinda Rajapaksa. You can have more corruption, more bribery and more nepotism that will make life harder for you and your family.

Or, you can support the believable change that I promise for a better Sri Lanka.

I will lead this change.

It is now or never.

SARATH FONSEKA

