



# INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ETHNIC STUDIES

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5<sup>th</sup> December 2017

## By Registered Post and Email

The Chairperson  
Right to Information Commission  
Room Nos. 203 – 204, Block 2  
BMICH  
Buddhaloka Mawatha  
Colombo 7

Dear Madam/ Sir:

## Request for Information under the Right to Information Act No. 12 of 2016

I am writing further to my request for information, addressed to the Ministry of Social Empowerment, contained in my letters of 13<sup>th</sup> July, my reminder of 23<sup>rd</sup> August, and my letters of 29<sup>th</sup> September and 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017. My request sought **the release of the draft law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** and information on its status.

We received a letter from Mr S.D Udawatta dated 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017, stating that the information sought could not be disclosed until the draft has been gazetted. Section 5 of the RTI Act states the grounds on which information may be withheld. 'Until it has been gazetted' is not a reason for refusal to disclose information according to Section 5 of the RTI Act. Moreover, it is in the public interest, including the interest of all persons living with disabilities, for this information to be disclosed, see Section 5 (4) of the RTI Act.

On 25<sup>th</sup> October we wrote to the Secretary, Ministry of Social Empowerment again. We received a response dated 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017 from the Secretary that did not provide the requested information and did not provide reasons for such refusal.

I am writing to seek the intervention of the Right to Information Commission with regard to the release of the following information:



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1. I understand that the Ministry of Social Empowerment has commenced a process to draft a new law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I am writing to request a copy of **the most recent version of the draft law** on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I would appreciate copies in Sinhala, Tamil, English and braille.
2. Could the Ministry of Social Empowerment please let me know the current status of the draft law? When is the draft law likely to be approved by Cabinet and tabled in Parliament? I would appreciate a response in English.

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies is registered under the Companies Act of 2007, three-fourths of its members are citizens of Sri Lanka, and it falls within Section 43 of the RTI Act.

My correspondence with the Ministry is attached.

Sincerely,

Mario Gomez  
*Executive Director*  
Email: [mario@ices.lk](mailto:mario@ices.lk)