



the OXFORD UNION

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H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa,
President of Sri Lanka.

Your Excellency,

I am writing to you from the Oxford Union, in the hopes that you will do our society the historic honour of allowing us to receive your second visit here as President of Sri Lanka. Though we understand there must be many pressures upon your time, still we hope that you might do us the unique honour of such a visit, in what would be the first return of an incumbent Head of State to our society.

The occasion for our renewed invitation lies in the treasured historic links between our institution and the country of Sri Lanka, and the congratulations we would thus like to extend you for your successful campaign to win second term as President of Sri Lanka. In this and in many other ways your Presidency has without doubt been of unique importance in the history of your country. Your extraordinary leadership has seen the momentous achievement of a final and total victory against the forces for so long threatening the peace and stability of your people.

Your successful conclusion of this 30 year military conflict ranks as one of the most significant acts seen by the world in recent years; and, in conjunction with the Sri Lankan Society of Oxford, we humbly wish to use the occasion of your visit to present you with a mark of the Oxford Union's respect for your accomplishment in fostering lasting peace.

As would befit such an important occasion, and a moment which would without doubt be the highlight of the Oxford Union's year, we hope to host you and leading delegates from the international diplomatic community resident in the United Kingdom for this talk, for which we shall be working closely with the Sri Lankan Society of Oxford. In honour of your visit, we hope to invite many distinguished guests to share in the moment before us and to mark the historic nature of this occasion in a manner befitting your record as a uniquely successful peace and wartime leader of your country.

Indeed, in order to give you the fullest benefit from your time in Oxford, it would be my pleasure to arrange for you a tour of one of our University's greatest institutions; Christ Church, seat of Oxford Cathedral and the traditional alma mater of many leading British political and spiritual leaders. A unique college, Christ Church has produced thirteen British Prime Ministers, and continues to be at the very heart of modern British political and intellectual development. Christ Church also has had historic ties with Sri Lanka, for it was here that S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike (who also held the role of Treasurer at the Oxford Union) was educated during his time in Oxford.

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It would be a profound privilege for the members of our society to once more welcome you here, and it is my personal hope as President of the Union to ensure that any appearance you might make would be of the highest importance in the annals of our institution, remaining preserved in our memories as a day of unique significance in the forward progress of our society.

With our termcard deadline fast approaching on the 20th September, I would be humbly grateful if you could let me know your thoughts on this soon, as it will enable us to better organise the full publicity the unparalleled honour you might accord us would deserve. We sincerely hope that you will once more allow us the pleasure of your presence.

Yours Sincerely,

James Kingston
President
Oxford Union Society