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GAMPAHA LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION

Lawyers' Chambers, District Court Complex, Gampaha, Sri Lanka.
Tel: 033-2222324

22nd July 2026

His Excellency
Anura Kumara Dissanayake
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Presidential Secretariat
Galle Face
Colombo 01.
Your Excellency,

**RE: CONCERNS REGARDING THE PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT OF THE RETIREMENT AGE OF
THE HONOURABLE JUDGES OF THE COURT OF APPEAL AND THE SUPREME COURT OF SRI
LANKA**

We, the Members of the Gampaha Lawyers' Association, respectfully write to Your Excellency regarding the reported proposal to increase the retirement age of the Honourable Judges of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka.

As members of the legal profession actively engaged in the administration of justice, we consider it our duty to draw attention to the constitutional and institutional implications of any proposal affecting the tenure and conditions of service of Judges of the Superior Courts.

The independence of the Judiciary remains one of the most fundamental pillars of our constitutional democracy. Public confidence in the administration of justice depends not only upon the actual independence of Judges but also upon the public perception that judicial appointments, promotions, tenure and retirement are regulated strictly in accordance with constitutional principles and free from executive influence.

The retirement ages presently prescribed for Judges of the Superior Courts form part of the constitutional framework governing the administration of justice. Any proposal to alter such provisions warrants the highest level of scrutiny and broad consultation with stakeholders within the legal profession, the Judicial Service and civil society.

We are particularly concerned that an extension of the retirement age of sitting Judges may have significant consequences for the progression of officers within the Judicial Service. Many experienced judicial officers serving as Magistrates, District Judges and High Court Judges legitimately anticipate advancement through the established judicial hierarchy. Prolonging the tenure of incumbent Superior Court Judges may delay such advancement and adversely affect morale within the Judicial Service.

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We are further concerned that, at a time when several vacancies within the Superior Courts remain unfilled, priority should be given to ensuring that those vacancies are promptly filled through the constitutional appointment process. Timely appointments are essential to reducing delays in the administration of justice and ensuring the effective functioning of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court.

The Gampaha Lawyers' Association is also of the view that any measure affecting the tenure of Judges must be assessed not only from the standpoint of legality but also from the standpoint of public confidence. Even where a proposal is advanced in good faith, it is important to avoid any perception that the composition or tenure of the Judiciary may be influenced by the Executive. The preservation of public confidence in the independence and impartiality of the Judiciary is of paramount importance.

Accordingly, we respectfully urge Your Excellency to:

1. Reconsider the proposal to enhance the retirement age of the Honourable Judges of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court;
2. Ensure that any reform affecting the Judiciary is undertaken only after meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the Bar Association of Sri Lanka, Judges, judicial officers and professional associations;
3. Take immediate steps to fill existing vacancies in the Superior Courts through the constitutional process;
4. Reaffirm the Government's commitment to the independence of the Judiciary, the separation of powers and the rule of law.

We wish to emphasize that this representation is made in a constructive spirit and solely in the interest of preserving public confidence in the administration of justice and safeguarding the constitutional institutions of our Republic.

We remain confident that Your Excellency will give due consideration to these concerns.

Thank you

Yours faithfully,

Chandima Wijerathna
President
Gampaha Lawyers' Association

Sudarshani Rathnayake
Secretary
Gampaha Lawyers' Association

Copy: President, Bar Association of Sri Lanka
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