



**Australian High Commission
Colombo**

MEDIA RELEASE

4 November 2015

**Australian High Commissioner speaks on the continuing importance of
International Humanitarian Law**

Australian High Commissioner, HE Robyn Mudie, was Chief Guest today (4 November) at the opening of the Advanced Seminar on International Humanitarian Law for members of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, jointly organised by the Faculty of Law of General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The High Commissioner spoke about the continuing importance of International Humanitarian Law, also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict. As High Commissioner Mudie said, International Humanitarian Law remains as relevant as ever despite the changing nature of warfare. “These changes pose challenges... and highlight the dire need for improved compliance with International Humanitarian Law.”

High Commissioner Mudie welcomed Sri Lanka’s constructive engagement over the past four years of consultations on a possible mechanism which will be considered when the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions (including Australia and Sri Lanka) gather in Geneva for the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December this year.

High Commissioner Mudie reiterated Australia’s support for the Sri Lankan Government’s democratic reform and good governance agenda, and its commitment to improving human rights, meaningful reconciliation and a credible domestic accountability mechanism to account for alleged violations during the conflict. “Australia continues to encourage the Sri Lankan government to ensure that allegations of serious international crimes committed by both sides to the conflict are investigated and prosecuted in a transparent and independent manner”.