

Adopted from Amnesty International, this is an A-Z guide of all practical information you may need [upon arrival at the venue of](#) the International Consultation on Women Human Rights Defenders. The items are arranged alphabetically.

If there is any other information you require not addressed in this list, please contact the hotel reception desk or any of the members of the WHRD-ICC Secretariat.

ACCOMMODATION AND VENUE

The participants will be accommodated at the Hotel Taj Samudra and the Grand Oriental Hotel. All participants will be accommodated in **TWIN SHARED ROOMS**.

The venue of the consultation will all be at the Hotel Taj Samudra. Participants should contact hotel staff only regarding a problem in their hotel room or hotel services.

More information on the hotels can be found on the web sites:

Hotel Taj Samudra <http://www.tajhotels.com/Business/Taj%20Samudra,COLOMBO/default.htm>

Grand Oriental Hotel

<http://www.grandorientalhotel.com>

ADDRESS AND CONTACT NUMBERS

Hotel Taj Samudra

25, Galle Face Centre Road

Colombo 3

Sri Lanka

Tel: (+9411) 2446622

Fax: (+9411) 2446348

Grand Oriental Hotel

2, York Street

Colombo 1

Sri Lanka

Tel: (+9411)2320391

Fax (+9411)2448734

AIR-CONDITIONING

All the rooms are air-conditioned.

The venue is located in an area that is at sea level, with a very temperate and dry climate.

ASSISTANCE

You any assistance, can reach the members of the WHRD-ICC Secretariat at the **Hotel Taj Samudra (see phone and fax numbers above)**:

Mary Jane N. Real (Jane), Room No. _____

Punika Shinawatra (Ja) **Finance**

Adriana Cortes (Adriana) **Documentation, Speakers**
Gita Meidita (Gita) **Service providers, media**
Rachel Rouhana **Participants**

For **any other logistical queries, including travel arrangements**, you can reach Ophelia at mobile no. 0714004169, or Janice at mobile no. 0777761675.

AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT

Arrangements have been made for audio-visual equipment to be available during the consultation. If you are giving a power point presentation or using any other audio-visual materials during the programme or the workshops, please contact Adriana at documentation@apwld.org at least one day before your presentation so she can set it up for you.

BANKING

The Grand Oriental Hotel is situated close in the middle of the Commercial Capital in Colombo and is walking distance to many banks like the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) , (24, Sir Baron Jayathilake Mawatha) Sampath Bank and the Standard Chartered Bank.

The Closest Banks to the Hotel Taj Samudra would be the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation in the World Trade Centre at Echelon Square, Colombo 1. There is also a branch of HSBC at 46/38, Forbes and Walker Building, Navam Mawatha, Colombo 2.

Most Banks in Colombo are closed on Saturdays and Sundays so you can draw money on weekends from ATM machines. There are also many ATM machines located at the Colombo Plaza (crescat), walking distance from the Hotel Taj Samudra.

COMPUTERS/EMAILS

There is a Business Centre at the Hotel Taj Samudra that is accessible 24 hours. Please note that participants would have to make payments directly to the hotel for any service used in this centre at the following rates:

Printouts per page (black and white) Rs. 61

Photocopies Rs. 10 per single side, Rs. 15 for both sides

Use of Microsoft word Rs. 200/- per hour ; the operating system is Windows XP.

The hotel has also a wireless internet connection which you can access from any of the computers at the Business Centre or through your own laptop at the following rates:

1 hour – US\$5

2 hours – US\$ 7

24 hours – US\$20

The Crescat Residencies Shopping Complex walking distance from the Hotel Taj Samudra, has a cybercafé that operates at nominal rates. (*see instructions on how to get there under Shops.*) The cybercafé is located at Street level in the area close to the escalators.

CONFIRMATION OF TICKETS

Some airlines, such as Thai Airways, do not require confirmation of the return flight. **For those participants holding air tickets from airlines that require confirmation, please drop your ticket or a copy of it to Janice or her representative at the WHRD-ICC Secretariat Desk by 30 November 2005.**

CURRENCY

The Sri Lankan Currency is the Rupee (Rs.). The exchange rates are approximately:

GB£1 = 177 Rs.

US\$1 = 100 Rs.

EU€1 = 121 Rs.

DEPARTURE TAX

Airport departure tax is normally included in the price of the airline ticket so no departure tax will be charged at the airport. Please ensure that all taxes are included in the purchase price of your tickets.

DOCTOR

A doctor is on call at the hotel. Should you need medical treatment or have to go to the hospital, please inform the WHRD-ICC Secretariat so they can assist you accordingly (*also see under emergency*).

Should it be necessary, please note that immediate payment in cash will be expected for all medical services. A receipt will be issued.

DRINKING WATER

Only **bottled water and water served at the hotels are safe** for drinking in Colombo. Under no circumstances should participants drink tap water, this includes from the hotel taps.

ELECTRICITY

The electrical system in Colombo operates on 240volts.

EMERGENCY

Dial 110 - Ambulance

 119 - Police

For emergencies you can reach Mary Jane N. Real at Hotel Taj Samudra, Telephone no. 2446622, Room _____ or Ophelia at mobile no. 0714004169.

FAX

Participants can receive faxes at the Hotel Taj Samudra at the general fax no: (+9411) 2446348; or fax no. (+9411)2448734, if the participant is staying at the Grand Orient Hotel. Please ask the sender to mark it to the attention of the WHRD Internacional Consultation, and the participant's name. Incoming fax is free of charge.

All outgoing faxes will have to be paid for directly by the participant to the hotel.

INSURANCE

It is the responsibility of each participant to have arranged for their personal travel and accident insurance. The WHRD-ICC Secretariat will not be responsible for this.

INTERPRETATION

Interpreters have been contracted to provide simultaneous interpretation from English to French, Spanish and Arabic, and vice-versa, for all plenary sessions.

The interpreters will also provide translations during the workshop sessions. Since there are a limited number of interpreters, we will be requesting some participants to also act as interpreters, if necessary.

Interpretation in Sinhalese and Tamil will also be provided for the local participants.

LAUNDRY

All the hotels provide a laundry service. Please note that all laundry must be paid for by participants personally.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost property service will operate from the WHRD-ICC Secretariat Desk.

Lost items should be reported missing and items found should be handed in immediately to the WHRD-ICC Secretariat Desk.

MEALS

Participants have been booked on bed and breakfast basis. Lunches will be organized at the Hotel Taj Samudra as part of the consultation. Tea Breaks will also be catered for by the hotel.

A welcome dinner will be hosted by the organizers on 29 December; and a Farewell dinner will be hosted by the organizers and Madame Kum-Sil Kang, Ambassador on Women's Human Rights, Republic of Korea on 2 December.

The participants will have to make their own arrangements for all other meals.

For those that have specified special diets in their application forms, we have made arrangements with the hotels catering for the meals that the buffet should include provisions for these special diets.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Please note that some of the participants are WHRDs at risk so may not want to be photographed or reveal their identities. So photographs may be taken only with the permission of the person/s being photographed and it should not disrupt the proceedings.

POSTAL SERVICE

The Hotels would be able to arrange for postage of letters.

PRINTING & PHOTOCOPYING

Printing of all official documents of the consultation will be coordinated by the WHRD-ICC Secretariat.

Photocopying non-official documents can be done at various photocopy shops in the city. There is one on Galle Road, right opposite The Barrista Coffee shop, a short walk from the Hotel Taj Samudra. Please note that this shop usually opens from 7.00am - 7.00pm (*see instructions on how to get there under Shops.*)

RECORDING

The plenary sessions and workshops will be audio-recorded. Please ensure that you speak into the microphones, so that you are recorded. This will be necessary for translations and interpretations as well.

REIMBURSEMENTS

Punika Shinawatra (Khun Ja), our Finance Officer will be in charge of reimbursements. Reimbursements will consist of the following:

For WHRD-ICC sponsored participants – only the per diem; (cost of the participant's air ticket, visa and other travel expenses will be reimbursed by the respective WHRD-ICC organisation that nominated the participant);

For participants sponsored by the WHRD-ICC Secretariat – reimbursements will be for per diem and travel expenses, **excluding cost of air ticket**. Reimbursement for the air ticket will be transferred to the participant's bank account after the consultation, **unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Secretariat beforehand**.

Participants must complete the reimbursement form included in their kit, and attach original receipts. A copy of the air ticket of each participant will also be needed so please present it when you submit your completed reimbursement form. Please submit your completed reimbursement form by 30 November 2005

Reimbursements will be **every day** from 30 November – 3 December 2005 at:

7:00 – 9:00 am at the WHRD-ICC [Secretariat Desk at the](#) Hotel Taj Samudra

12:00 – 1:00 pm ([lunch time](#)) at the WHRD-ICC Secretariat Desk outside the plenary hall, Hotel Taj Samudra

Or by appointment with Khun Ja.

REGISTRATION

The Registration Desk will be located at the lobby of the Hotel Taj Samudra. It will open on the following dates and time:

26 November at 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
27 November at 9:00 am – 12:00 noon
28 November at 9:00 am – 9:00 pm
29 November at 9:00 – 12:00 noon

Participants should claim their name tags and conference kits upon registration.

Self-funded participants are requested to pay for their registration fee upon registration.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

There are Temples, Kovils, Mosques, Catholic and Anglican churches in Colombo. Times of prayer and services can be obtained on request at the hotel reception desk.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Hotel Taj Samudra and the Grand Oriental Hotel are safe areas and have security services operating within the premises.

When going out of the hotels, please exercise some caution, especially at night, for your safety. It is best to arrange for a 'buddy system' and no wander around on your own especially at night.

Do not keep valuables, such as jewellery or large amounts of money, in your rooms. If you require a safety deposit box please contact the reception of your hotel.

SENSITIVITY

The consultation includes participants from different countries, ethnic groups, class and social orientation. Please ensure that you relate with sensitivity and do not act to prejudice any of your fellow participants.

SHOPS, BARS and RESTAURANTS

There are many bars, restaurants shopping places in Colombo, easily accessible from either Hotel Taj Samudra or the Grand Orient Hotel:

BAREFOOT – 704, Galle Road, Colombo 3. Telephone 2589305. This a famous shop that has unique handloom materials, handicrafts, clothing, toys and typically Sri Lankan Products. A ride in a trishaw from the Taj Samudra Hotel should cost no more than Rs. 200/-; Open from 10am-6pm.

BARRISTA – Galle Road Colombo 3. On leaving Hotel Taj Samudra, turn left and keep walking till you see it on your right. This is a branch of the famous Indian chain of coffeehouses. It encourages, singing scrabble and lounging; Open from 10am – midnight.

CHEERS PUB, Colombo Plaza, Crescat Boulevard, Galle Road, Colombo 3. Telephone 232001. A Slick up-market pub, suitable for a chat, while retaining a pub atmosphere.

CRESCAT BOULEVARD, Galle Road, Colombo 3. It is a five-minute walk from Hotel Taj

Samudra. The shopping complex houses select shops, a food court, a pleasant coffee shop (DELIFRANCE), a cyber café and a supermarket; open from 10.00am – 7.00pm, but the food court, supermarket and Delfrance are usually open much later.

DELIFRANCE – Crescat Boulevard and Odel. A pleasant coffee shop with a variety of snacks as well. The one at Crescat Boulevard has a pleasant outdoors atmosphere, while the one at Odel is ideal for a mid shopping break.

THE GLOW & TANTRA – 3rd and 4th Floor, Automobile Association Building, 42A, Sir Mohamed Macan Marker Mawatha, Colombo 3. Telephone 4714666. The closest Pub to the Hotel Taj Samudra, usually attracts a teeny bopper clientele; has good cocktails.

GALLE FACE GREEN – Right in front of the Hotel Taj Samudra. Originally used by the British Army as a parade ground and a place to execute mutinous soldiers, this wide expanse of land is the ideal chill out zone to watch the sunset, fly kites and dip your feet in the sea. Please note that it is not advisable to bathe in the sea.

Caution should be taken when eating from the shops along the green, if you are not used to street food. Consumption of alcohol on the green is prohibited. Cigarettes can be purchased from the little shops on the green.

GALLE FACE HOTEL – CHECKERBOARD. Diagonally across the Hotel Taj Samudra, this is a good place to have a drink, smoke and watch the sun go down. It serves a choice of chilled beers and cocktails and other finger foods.

HOUSE OF FASHION – 28, Duplication Road, Colombo 5. Telephone 2504639. A store for reduced priced garments. A trishaw ride from the Hotel Taj Samudra should cost no more than Rs. 300/-

KEELLS SUPER - A supermarket housed in the basement of the Crescat Shopping Complex, (Crescat Boulevard) walking distance from Hotel Taj Samudra. Sells liquor too, but does not sell cigarettes.

LAKSALA -60, York Street, Colombo 1. – Telephone 2329247 Housed in the heart of Fort, walking distance from the Grand Oriental Hotel. A trishaw from the Hotel Taj Samudra should cost no more that Rs.100. This typically Sri Lankan handicraft store closes by 6.00 pm.

ODEL – 5, Alexandra Place, Colombo 7. Telephone 4722723. (close to the Town Hall) Famous for its export quality garments and sportswear. A trishaw ride should cost no more than Rs. 300/-

SMOKING

Smoking will not be permitted at the working sessions of the consultation. Additionally you are advised not to smoke in indoor restaurants or shops.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Information on other parties and social events will be posted on the information board upon registration.

SPORTS FACILITIES

Hotel Taj Samudra has a swimming pool and gym that can be used by resident guests free of charge. Those who are resident at the Grand Orient Hotel can use the pool at the Hotel Holiday Inn (30, Sir Mohomad Macan Makar Mawatha Colombo 3 – Telephone 2422001), free of charge. The Hotel Holiday in is a 2 minute walk away from the Hotel Taj Samudra.

TAX

15% Value added tax is normally excluded in published prices in menus at the hotels and restaurants. In some cases there is an additional 10% service charge that is added to the bill too.

TELEPHONE

The WHRD budget will not cover participant's call charges. The participants can use the hotel telephone service or there are both coin and card pay phones available at the hotel. Phone cards can be purchased from the shops along the Galle Road.

To call outside of Colombo, dial 00, then the country code, the area code and the number you are calling.

Incoming calls can be taken at hotels 24 hours a day. Please advise your callers of your hotel name and room number, and wherever possible pre-arrange a time to receive calls.

Reception staff at the hotels will be taking messages. Urgent messages during the day can be forwarded to the WHRD-ICC Secretariat.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Colombo is six (6) hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

TIPPING

A tip of 5% is customary, though not compulsory. A charge of 10% for services is often added to the bill total in restaurants and bars. In these cases, it is not expected that you add an additional tip.

TOURISM

November to December is the high season for travel in Sri Lanka. Participants planning to spend time before or after the international consultation are advised to book accommodation in advance.

For those wishing to take trips outside of Colombo, to Maldives or any other places of destination, you can contact the hotel travel desk or Eva Travels and Tours, Ltd., the travel agent of INFORM, the local organiser of the international consultation. The contact details of Eva Travels and Tours Ltd. is:

No. 50, 2nd Floor, Walikada Plaza
Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka
Tel: 887549; 074403331
Fax: 887549
Mobile: 0777487694

Email: evatrpls@isplanka.lk

TRANSLATION

All documents in the consultation kit are available either in English, French, Spanish or Arabic. Each participant will get the documents in the language they are comfortable with as they have specified in the application form.

TRANSPORTATION

The general means of transportation around Colombo is the motorised rickshaw. This local transportation does not have a fixed route or transport fare. So you will have to negotiate the fare for each trip. It is best to ask any Sri Lankan local of the usual fare so you will have an idea how much it would cost you.

Should you wish to take a taxi or a van, you can use the hotel services or you can call a taxi company. The organisers are using Airport Express Ltd. Telephone nos.: 5555050 or 5555151 or 2554343. This is a 24-hour taxi service.

Transportation service will be provided to pick up participants from the airport and to bring them to the airport after the consultation. **No taxi or bus fares will be reimbursed from airport pick-up and drop-off. Participants must advise the WHRD-ICC Secretariat of their departure date and time.**

VOLUNTEERS

Please remember that the volunteers are an integral and indispensable part of the international consultation. They should be respected in the same way as any other participant at the event. Please do your best to make them feel very welcome.