

The Editor,
Daily Mirror,
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

Your newspaper of 14 July carries a column by Upul Joseph Fernando which states – “But, soon after Mahinda Rajapaksa became President he made Jayantha Dhanapala to withdraw his candidature, and decided to support Ban Ki-moon for the UN post. For a long time South Korea had been requesting Sri Lanka not to field a candidate for the post of UN Secretary General. South Korea had also promised financial aid to Sri Lanka in return, if their request was complied with. Despite it, the Sri Lanka government of that period fielded Jayantha Dhanapala as its candidate against Ban Ki Moon. However, immediately after Mahinda became the President he changed the decision.”

I would like to state that this is totally false.

H.E. President Mahinda Rajapakse, both as Prime Minister and as President, supported my candidacy for the post of Secretary-General and did not, at any stage, persuade me to withdraw my candidature. The decision to withdraw was taken by me after the informal straw polls indicated that Mr. Ban Ki-moon had overwhelming support from the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council and in the interest of facilitating a consensus around an Asian candidate. The chronology of the election process and my statements at the time of my withdrawal make this abundantly clear.

Jayantha Dhanapala
Kandy.
14 July, 2010.