

Office on Missing Persons Act (2016)

The 2016 Act establishing the OMP as a permanent independent institution to search and trace the missing and disappeared and to provide families with administrative outcomes (Certificates of Absence, interim relief).

The OMP is the only one of the four transitional-justice institutions promised under 30/1 that has been operationalised. Family groups (notably the Mothers of the Disappeared) and PEARL have documented serious limitations: scope, resourcing, the absence of a truth-seeking function, and the dependence of families on the institution for outcomes that do not include criminal accountability.

§1 What the OMP does, and does not, do

The OMP searches and traces; it does not prosecute. It can issue Certificates of Absence, which permit administrative resolution (succession, property, welfare). It cannot of itself deliver criminal accountability or full truth-recovery; for those, the case file points to the un-implemented hybrid court and the un-established Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Non-Recurrence Commission.

OHCHR's January 2026 report 'We Lost Everything' and successive PEARL submissions record the gap between the OMP's mandate and what families have actually received.

Sources

- Office on Missing Persons (Sri Lanka) — official mandate and reports.
- PEARL — disappearances reporting.

What this is not

- This article does not name OMP staff.
- This article does not name individual families or disappeared persons.