

# SRI LANKA: TERRORISM LABEL ON PEACEFUL ADVOCACY FOR INDEPENDENT STATE IS A DENIAL OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH – TGTE

*The Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE)'s Parliament & Cabinet have taken decisions to respond to Sri Lanka's listing of Tamil groups as terrorists*

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- TGTE to take this matter to:
  - a) UN Human Rights Committee,
  - b) the UN Special Rapporteur for freedom of speech,
  - c) the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Counter Terrorism and
  - d) the Anti-Terrorism Committee



established under UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

- TGTE will argue its clear position that labeling the peaceful advocacy for an independent and sovereign state of Tamil Eelam, which is based on the remedial right to self-determination, as terrorism is a denial of the freedom of speech.

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*TGTE*

- TGTE has formed three committees to coordinate response.
- TGTE will take forward the "Say No to Sri Lanka" campaign.

The Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE)'s Parliament and Cabinet have taken the following decisions in response to the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL)'s "list" of banned organizations, and also to intensify the TGTE's campaign to realize Tamils' political aspirations through

peaceful, diplomatic and democratic means.

The TGTE has decided to take this matter to the UN Human Rights Committee, the UN Special Rapporteur for freedom of speech, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Counter Terrorism and the Anti-Terrorism Committee established under UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

TGTE will argue its clear position that labeling the peaceful advocacy for an independent and sovereign state of Tamil Eelam, which is based on the remedial right to self-determination, as terrorism is a denial of the freedom of speech.

In order to carry forward these measures, the TGTE has formed three committees to coordinate response.

In order to create a measurable impact on the economic base of the Sri Lankan state, to the TGTE will take forward the "Say No to Sri Lanka" campaign and vitalize it on many fronts. In order to strategize for this campaign, to collect the necessary data and to explore innovative/political/ legal strategies, to the TGTE will hold a conference in United Kingdom in the week of May 18.

The TGTE will also accelerate and intensify the distribution of the Tamil Eelam National Cards, focusing on the task during the week of May 18th, coinciding with the week of national mourning marking the fifth year anniversary of the mass killing of Tamils in Mullivaikal in 2009.

Giving meaning to the measures the TGTE is taking forward at this critical hour will be a sacred and appropriate tribute to the Tamils who perished in Mullivaikal.

#### BACKGROUND:

Tamils have faced repeated mass killings since 1958 and the killings in 2009 prompted UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to appoint a Panel of Experts to report on the scale of killings.

According to the report by this UN Panel, tens of thousands of Tamil civilians were killed in five months due to deliberate and intense shelling and bombing of areas designated by the government as "no-fire zones", where Tamil civilians had assembled for safety.

According UN Internal Review Report on Sri Lanka over 70,000 Tamils were killed in five months in 2009. The Sri Lankan Government also restricted food and medicine for Tamils, resulting in large numbers of people dying from starvation and many of the injured bleeding to death.

According to the UN Panel, the killings and other abuses that took place amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Independent experts believe that there are elements of these abuses that constitute an act of genocide.

UN Human Rights Council in March 2014 established an international war crimes investigation for these killings.

Members of the Sri Lankan security forces are almost exclusively from the Sinhalese community and the victims are all from the Tamil community.

Tamils overwhelmingly voted in an election in 1977 to establish an independent and sovereign country Tamil Eelam. This election was held by the Sri Lankan Government.

#### ABOUT TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL EELAM (TGTE):

Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) is a democratically elected Government of Tamils (from the island of Sri Lanka) living in several countries.

It held internationally supervised elections among Tamils around the world to elect over 120 Members of Parliament and is leading a campaign to realize Tamils' political aspirations through peaceful, diplomatic and democratic means.

TGTE has a bicameral legislature and a Cabinet and held one of its Parliamentary sittings in the British Parliament.

The Constitution of the TGTE mandates that it should realize its political objective only through peaceful means.

The Prime Minister of TGTE is Mr. Visuvanathan Rudrakumaran, a New York based lawyer.

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