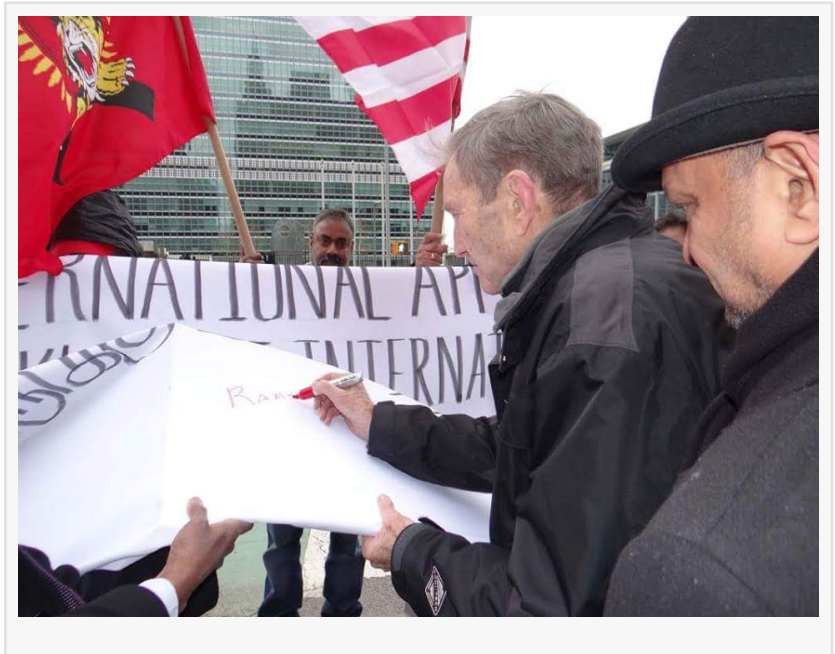


Refer Sri Lanka to International Criminal Court – Million Signature Campaign Launched in 15 Languages by TGTE

A former US Attorney General formally launched the campaign.

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- A People Centered Campaign for Justice
- The Perpetrator of the International Crimes is the State itself
- There is no political environment for a domestic mechanism
- The campaign is in conformity with R2P
- UN should represent the ideals and values of humanity
- Campaign is also in Sinhala.



A million signature campaign in fifteen

languages (www.tgte-icc.org) was launched to urge the United Nations to refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed against Tamils by the Sri Lankan State.

Former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark formally launched the campaign by signing the appeal outside the UN headquarters in New York. "The suffering of the Tamils should come to an end, and Tamils should get justice."

The event began with the singing of the Tamil National Anthem. It was followed by the reading of the petition, both in Tamil and English by Ms. Nivetha Jeyakumar and Ms. Soumeya Karunakaran.

Prime Minister of Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam Mr. Visuvanathan Rudrakumaran addressing the crowd, said "this Campaign is in conformity with the norm of responsibility to protect (R2P) which proclaims that when a state manifestly fails to protect its citizens from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, the international community has the responsibility to intervene to protect." He further said that "this Campaign is compatible with the public interest litigation pioneered by the Indian Supreme Court Justices, Bagawathi and late Krishna Iyar, which allows public spirited individual to seek justice on behalf of a victim." He also said "that this Campaign is not against neither the United Nations nor the states, but this people centered campaign is to ensure that the states represent the values of their citizens, and the United Nations represents the ideals of the humanity at large."

Several events around the world, including one outside the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, were launched to bring international appeal to this campaign.

The petition observed that the presence of the former Commander of the Sri Lankan military in the present Government, and the potential culpability of the new President, Mr. Sirisena, will not be conducive to meting out justice in any manner other than through a referral to the International Criminal Court.

The appeal highlight the fact that “according to the UN Internal Review Report on Sri Lanka, there were “credible estimates” of civilian casualties of 70,000 Tamils during the first six months in 2009. As the former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pointed out, Sri Lanka is one of the notable countries, along with Bosnia, Burma, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and elsewhere, where rape was used as a tactic of war.”

The Petition states inter alia

The current situation in Sri Lanka constitutes an ongoing “threat to the peace” under Chapter 7 Article 39 of the UN Charter, because there has been absolutely no accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

We firmly believe that neither a domestic mechanism nor a hybrid mechanism will mete out justice to the Tamil people. The call by the new Sri Lankan government for a domestic or hybrid mechanism to replace any international judicial process is an attempt to deflect the call for referral to the ICC and to delay other meaningful actions on accountability. Efforts to establish a domestic Truth and Reconciliation Commission is another diversionary tactic to protect those who committed serious crimes against Tamils.

It is emphasized in the Petition attached to the Campaign that the crimes against the Tamils on the island of Sri Lanka were perpetrated by the State itself. The petition also pointed out, as observed by the UN Panel of Experts Report, that there existed no political environment to mete out justice for Tamils. It also noted that the promise made by the Sri Lankan Ambassador to the UN following the 1983 racial pogrom - that they will hold an investigation - has never been kept.

The Petition is available in Tamil, Sinhala, English, Russian, Chinese, Malay, Bangla, Urdu, Hindi, French, German, Arabic, Swahili, Turkic and Spanish. A website has been created for the purpose of collecting signatures www.tgte-icc.org

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