

War Crimes in Aleppo: Sri Lanka Yesterday, Syria Today - TGTE

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The brutal war crimes committed in recent days against residents of Aleppo, Syria by Russian and Syrian government forces are painfully reminiscent of the genocide of Eelam Tamils carried out by the Sri Lankan regime in 2009. And this time too the international community has abjectly failed to protect the lives of innocent civilians and uphold global conventions and rule of law in any manner.

According to a document submitted to the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria by several human rights groups Russian air strikes in the Aleppo region have killed some 1,207 civilians, 380 of them children. The document lists some 304 alleged attacks carried out primarily between July and December in violation of international laws prohibiting killing of civilians.



In mid-2009 when Sri Lankan forces surrounded and indiscriminately bombed Tamils taking refuge inside a government declared 'No Fire Zone' the numbers killed was estimated to be over 100,000. At that time too the United Nations and the world community turned a blind eye to the deprivations of the Sri Lankan government. Nobody has been punished to date for these crimes and so far the global powers do not seem to be interested in bringing those guilty to book too.

We at the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) are committed to pursuing justice for those killed at Mullaivakal at all costs and however long it takes. However, this is not an effort only on the behalf of Tamils but the countless number of civilians around the world who repeatedly become 'collateral damage' in the wars of power and territory launched by various governments and their proxy private militia groups.

After the horrors of World War 2 it was believed that the dominant global powers will uphold international law, pursue diplomacy and dialogue as a means of resolving conflict and prevent a repetition of what the Nazis did in Europe. Sadly, it is very evident today that the global community has not lived up to its own lofty goals and instead has itself become culpable in committing such crimes very often.

In the globalised world we live in today, more than at any point of time in history, there is a need for genuinely non-partisan and independent world bodies that can deliver justice to the citizens of the planet. It should no longer be possible for war criminals to hide behind the cover of the nation-state or using the excuse of 'sovereignty' –as without putting them to trial for their crimes the future of humanity itself is in question.

To set up such global institutions there will however need to be serious and radical reforms, particularly to the United Nations, which has ended up representing 'governments' but not the people of the world. There will have to be concerted efforts to bring in civil society into the highest echelons of these institutions to restore the balance between state apparatus and ordinary citizens in these important bodies.

If such reform happens it will still be a tribute of sorts to those civilians who have died needless and painful deaths due to the complete breakdown of international law and order. It will also give hope to very ordinary people of the world that in the larger scheme of global geopolitics and realpolitik they still stand the chance of being heard as human beings and have not been reduced to mere expendable numbers.

ABOUT TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL EELAM (TGTE):

Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) is a democratically elected Government of a million strong Tamils (from the island of Sri Lanka) living in several countries around the world. TGTE was formed after the mass killing of Tamils by the Sri Lankan Government in 2009.

TGTE twice held internationally supervised elections among Tamils around the world to elect 132 Members of Parliament. It has a bicameral legislature and a Cabinet. It held one of its Parliamentary sittings in the British Parliament.

TGTE is leading a campaign to realize Tamils' political aspirations through peaceful, democratic and diplomatic means. 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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BACKGROUND:

Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka faced repeated mass killings in 1958, 1965, 1977, 1981 and 1983 and the mass killings in 2009 prompted UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to appoint a Panel of Experts to report on the scale of the killings.

According to UN internal review report on Sri Lanka, over 70,000 Tamils were killed in five months in early 2009 and Tamil women were raped by the Sri Lankan Security forces. There are over 90,000 Tamil war widows and thousands of Tamils disappeared due to the conflict.

According to this UN report, 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.

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

A Buddhist Monk shot and killed a Sri Lankan Prime Minister in 1959 for having talks with Tamil political leaders.

Tamils overwhelmingly voted in a Parliamentary election in 1977 to establish an independent and

sovereign country called Tamil Eelam. This Parliamentary election was conducted by the Sri Lankan Government.

Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam

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