

Switzerland Urged to Exercise Universal Jurisdiction to Arrest Visiting Ex Sri Lankan Admiral for War Crimes: TGTE

In his report to the UN Human Rights Council on Sri Lanka, UN Rights Chief Urged Countries to Exercise Universal Jurisdiction to Prosecute War Crimes.

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Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE), have urged the Government of Switzerland to exercise Universal Jurisdiction to arrest visiting Sri Lanka's retired Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara for War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity committed against Tamils during his time as Rear Admiral of the Sri Lankan Navy.



It is not clear whether Sri Lankan Government will step in to protect retired Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara under diplomatic cover, since he belongs to the opposition political party led by former President Mahinda Rajapakse.

In his report to the UN Human Rights Council on Sri Lanka, the UN High commissioner for Human Rights have urged countries to: "Wherever possible, in particular under universal jurisdiction, investigate and prosecute those allegedly responsible for such violations as torture, enforced disappearance, war crimes and crimes against humanity;"

Sri Lankan Navy was accused by several International Organizations as involved in numerous acts of abuses amounting to war crimes and Crimes Against Humanity. Retired Navy Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara, in addition to leading Sri Lankan Navy in Tamil areas, also served as the first Director General of the newly formed Civil Defence Force, which replaced the Home Guards in the East of Sri Lanka.

Here are some information on Civil Defence Force that was headed by Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara:

The Office of the High commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) investigation into Sri Lanka (OISL, 2015) describes the Civil Defence Force (CDF) as one of the three civilian forces alongside the National Intelligence Bureau and the police. It replaced the Home Guards (who have been accused of human rights violations, some of which were documented by the Scandinavian ceasefire monitors, SLMM), and was a paramilitary force. In 2007, CDF was officially inducted as part of the country's

defence establishment and went from a force of 19,000 home guards, to 42,000 Civil Defence Force members . The CDF is named in the UN's OISL report in respect of 11 alleged perpetrators from the force of sexual violence .

Para 623 OISL: "Fifty-eight alleged perpetrators are accused in the 39 [sexual violence] cases, five cases having multiple accused. Thirty-two are members of the SLA; 13 are Police (five of whom were subsequently discharged and acquitted); one is from the police Special Task Force; one is SLN; 11 are Civil Defence Force members (of whom nine were discharged and acquitted)." Only one of the 58 accused is on remand, the rest having either been discharged and acquitted or allowed bail.

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