

As UN Human Rights Council meets, TGTE Urges Sri Lanka be Referred to the ICC

Failure to Refer Sri Lanka to ICC will encourage the security forces and government to increase mass atrocities against Tamil people without any hesitation.

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As UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) begins its Session on September 9th, Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) urged UNHRC member states to Refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide it committed against Tamil people in the island.



To highlight the importance of referring Sri Lanka to the ICC, TGTE recently organized a webinar with several international experts, including former War crimes judge Geoffrey Robertson AC, KC and former head of US War Crimes office Ambassador Stephen Rapp.

Former UN High- Commissioner for human rights in her March 2021 report to UNHRC called that Sri Lanka be referred to the ICC and this call was reinforced by all four former UN High Commissioners for Human Rights, nine former Special Rapporteurs who had visited and written reports on Sri Lanka, and all three members of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka.

We strongly believe that anything short of calling for the referral to ICC will permanently eliminate any chance of getting justice for the mass atrocities Tamils faced said TGTE.

"Additionally, failure to Refer Sri Lanka to ICC will encourage the security forces and government to increase mass atrocities against Tamil people without any hesitation."

BACKGROUND:

Within a week of the end of the armed ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka in May 2009, a joint communique was issued by the Government of Sri Lanka and the United Nations at the conclusion of the U.N Secretary General's visit to Sri Lanka on 23rd of May 2009, which inter alia stated:

"Sri Lanka reiterated its strongest commitment to the promotion and protection of Human Rights, in keeping with international Human Rights standards and Sri Lanka's international obligations. The Secretary General underlined the importance of an accountability process for addressing violations of International Humanitarian and Human Rights law. The Government will take measures to address those grievances". Sri Lanka has not taken any meaningful steps to address the above commitments in the last thirteen (14) years. During the intervening years the UNHRC has adopted seven (7) resolutions ending with UNHRC 46/1 in March 2021.

Sri Lanka even co-sponsored some unanimously passed Resolutions, including one about establishing Hybrid-Courts with the participation of international judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers.

Several years have passed, but Sri Lanka did not take any initiative to set up a Hybrid-Court as promised by the Government to UNHRC.

Furthermore, successive Sri Lankan Governments have adopted different tactics to drag the accountability process to hoodwink UNHRC.

In addition of not addressing the accountability issue, the government of Sri Lanka continues a program of oppression of Tamils, including keeping extremely large military in Tamil areas despite fourteen years have passed since the war ended, land grab to settle Sinhalese in traditionally Tamil areas with the aim to transform Tamil areas into majority Sinhala Areas.

* ABOUT THE TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL EELAM (TGTE):

The Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) is a democratically elected Government of over 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 held four internationally supervised elections among Tamils around the world to elect 132 Members of Parliament. It has two chambers of Parliament: The House of Representatives and the Senate and also a Cabinet.

TGTE is leading a campaign to realize the political aspirations of Tamils through peaceful, democratic, and diplomatic means and its Constitution mandates that it should realize its political objectives only through peaceful means. It's based on the principles of nationhood, homeland and self-determination.

TGTE seeks that the international community hold the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against the Tamil people to account. TGTE calls for an internationally conducted and monitored referendum to decide the political future of Tamils.

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