

04 August 2025

1. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nation High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the High Commission for Human Rights
Palas Wilson, 52 rue des Paquis,
CH-1201 Geneva
Switzerland.
2. Heads of Missions
Member States of the UN Human Rights Council
Geneva/Colombo

Your Excellency/Sir/Madam,

OHCHR's Report and Resolution on Sri Lanka at the 60th Session of the UNHRC

We, the undersigned Tamil political parties and civil society organisations from across the North and East of the island of Sri Lanka and such other organisations working in solidarity with the same, write this letter to express our views in relation to the report to be submitted by the High Commissioner at the 60th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in September 2025.

We recall our communication dated 15 January 2021 in which a cross section of Tamil elected representatives and Civil Society Organisations wrote to Heads of Missions of the 47 member states represented in the UNHRC at that time, urging decisive and concrete action on accountability for the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity - particularly asking that the OHCHR and UNHRC take steps to refer the matter to the UN General Assembly and eventually to the UN Security Council for a referral to the International Criminal Court.

We also wish to draw your attention to the letter dated 14.0.7.2025 signed by more than 70 CSOs expressing concern regarding the closing remarks made by the High Commissioner during his visit to Sri Lanka in June 2025.

As a Stateless Nation subjected to the very same crimes, the Tamils are witnessing with dismay the lack of real action in ending the genocide in Palestine. We wish to remind that the failure of the UN during the last stages of the war in Sri Lanka May 2009 and further failure to ensure accountability in Sri Lanka is emboldening ethnocratic, autocratic and undemocratic regimes worldwide to carry out mass atrocities with impunity.

In this context we wish to demand the following:

1. That Member States represented in the UNHRC at their 60th session should pass a resolution asking the UN General Assembly, the UN Secretary General and the UN Security Council acknowledging the lack of any real accountability process in Sri Lanka in the last 16 years since the end of the war and explicitly in that resolution call for the UNGA, UNSG and the UNSC to initiate a process, without any further delay, that results in referring Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court for crimes committed during the entire span of the conflict. We also urge the High Commissioner to include this recommendation in his report. We also further request that Member States consider bringing Sri Lanka to the International Court of Justice like in the case of Myanmar and Israel, to consider in specific Sri Lanka's state liability for the crime of Genocide.
2. We object to any attempt in the resolution that directly or indirectly gives the new regime in Sri Lanka political space and time to initiate domestic mechanisms and urge the OHCHR to refrain from making any recommendations that gives time and space to the GOSL. In this regard the OHCHR and the UNHRC should critically consider their experience and engagement with the regime that was elected into office in January 2015. The said regime led by President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe held out promises of truth, justice and reconciliation – promises that were similar to the ones that the regime that was elected in September 2024 has made, if not better. All promises made in relation to accountability by the Sirisena-Wickremesinghe regime failed to materialise and was replaced by a Government with a thumping mandate from the majority Sinhala Buddhist community, which explicitly refused to engage with the question of accountability. The pendulum has shifted again and there is now a Government in Colombo again paying lip service to reconciliation (not to accountability) and unless the OHCHR and the UNHRC wish to reinvent the wheel, there is no reason to believe that the current dispensation would deliver anything significantly better.

The above leads then to the conclusion that the fundamental flaw in the UN system's approach to accountability in Sri Lanka is its facetious recycling of analysis and application of the principle of complementarity. The UN must realise that the ideological and ethnocentric character of the Sri Lankan State is what leads to persistent lack of accountability in Sri Lanka. The solution does not come through change in Governments. The solution cannot be also 'positive engagement' with Governments who rhetorically play obeisance to reconciliation – empty promises of change that do nothing to repudiate deeply rooted bonds to the politics of ethnic domination and ideological supremacy. No change in Government can lead to accountability in Sri Lanka – the UN must come to terms with this reality.

We learn that there are moves being made in Colombo and elsewhere to suggest that the establishment of an 'independent public prosecutor's office' could be the solution to Sri Lanka's domestic accountability processes. For reasons mentioned above an 'independent' public prosecutor would not be sufficient to deal with the

inherent unwillingness of the system for accountability, that is rooted in the ideological orientation of the State. Any number of structural fixtures on a system that is fundamentally rotten will be inadequate.

3. While we are concerned about the accountability process being trapped in Geneva, we also recognise and appreciate the work that OHCHR staff have put into the OSLAP project. We have no objection to OSLAP's mandate being extended but it MUST be time bound and coupled with an explicit message urging the UNSG/UNGA/UNSC asking for a referral of Sri Lanka to the ICC. Furthermore, OSLAP must be willing to engage more meaningfully with the victim community by providing information on how evidence that it has collected and processed is being shared with parties that wish to initiate accountability processes invoking universal jurisdiction. A more proactive effort on the part of OSLAP with countries in which accountability through universal jurisdiction is a possibility should be a top on OSLAP's priorities in the event of an extension of its mandate. Evidence gathering has been happening at the OHCHR first through OISL and now through OSLAP for more than 10 years, the time now is to move for international prosecution for the crimes committed.
4. The recent re-excavation of mass graves in Chemmani reminds the urgent need for international monitoring, supervision and technical support in the excavation process. Such international monitoring, supervision and involvement is essential for the safety and proper custody of the evidence that emerges from the mass graves and to ensure that the excavation follows proper procedures so that they can be used in an international criminal justice process. A proper re-mapping of mass graves in the North and East and an internationally mandated mechanism for the proper supervision, monitoring is an urgent necessity. The OHCHR must give topmost priority to this matter. A better alternative is if the UNHRC entrusts the UN Special Rapporteur on Extra Judicial Killings to coordinate such international monitoring and involvement. We also wish to remind that while excavations need monitoring the inquiry process itself has to be internationally pursued as outlined in issue (1) above. Chemmani also reminds us that the temporal jurisdiction of any international inquiry must go back in time to cover the entirety of the conflict.
5. We also would like to urge the OHCHR to give adequate space in his report on issues of militarisation, Sinhala Buddhisisation, land grab, repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Online Safety Act threats and surveillance emanating from the security sector targeting human rights activists and victim groups and the use of law to regulate speech that challenges the state's dominant ideology *et al*. There has been precious little, if any, progress on these matters. Continuous attention to these matters is essential to restoring normalcy in the lives of the Tamil people. The only pressure that the GoSL understands is accountability and hence we are compelled to reiterate that unless issue (1) is pursued there will be no progress on any of these matters.

For the last 16 years Tamils have in one voice, through their elected representatives, their civil societies, electoral mandates and the advocacy by victim groups asked for the UN system and the international community to deliver on the promise held out by international institutions entrusted with delivering justice. We write this letter with weariness, without much hope that action will follow, but hope is all we can. We write this letter also because, as representatives of a wide cross section of the Tamil community, we wish to make clear that anything that is passed or suggested in our name and for the benefit of the victim communities must take into account the considered opinion and demands of such affected communities.

We most respectfully urge you to put aside national interests, geo-political calculations and to come together and act in a manner that instils hope in a future for the Tamil people – a future that will guarantee us dignity and decency.

Thank you

CC: The UN Secretary General, UN Secretariat, New York, NY10017, USA

SIGNATORIES

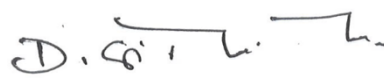
I. Political Parties


G.G. PONNAMBALAM M.P.
LEADER, TAMIL NATIONAL COUNCIL & T.N.P.F.
GENERAL SECRETARY, ALL CEYLON TAMIL CONGRESS

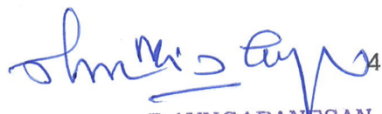
G.G. PONNAMBALAM
Member of Parliament
Jaffna Electoral District
48, Nallur Cross Road,
Jaffna.


A. Adaikalanathan. M.P.
President, TELO
Leader, DTNA

A. Adaikalanathan
Member of Parliament
Wanni District.


D. Sithadthan.
President - DPLR
CoLeader - DTNA

P. AYN GARANESAN
PRESIDENT
TAMIL NATIONAL GREEN
ORGANIZATION


P. AYN GARANESAN
President
Tamil National Green Organization
109 - Arasady Road, Kantharmadam, Jaffna

K. Premachandran
President
EPRLF
Co-Leader DTNA
U. Premachandran

N. Srinantha
Leader (N:SRINATHA)
Tamil National Party
(Tamil National Council)

K.V. Thangavelu

K.V. THAVARASHA
LEADER
Democratic Tamil Arasu Kadchi

MAHESHBABU
Ongg' Owarman
Sulgi Oadun Loedim Olojooon?
GENERAL SECRETARY
TAMIL NATIONAL PEOPLE'S FRONT

M. Chandrakumar
M. Chandrakumar
Ex MP & DCC Parliament
General Secretary
Samaththuva Kadchi

II. Religious Dignitaries

Rt. Rev. Dr. A. Gnanapragasam, Bishop of Mannar Diocese
Rt. Rev. Dr. Christian Noel Emmanuel, Bishop of the Diocese of Trincomalee,
Rev. Fr. P. Jebaratnam, Vicar General, Diocese of Jaffna
Archdeaconry of Jaffna - Church of Ceylon (Anglican)
Rev. Fr. Sherard Jayawardane
Rev. Fr. Terence Fernando
Rev. Fr. M Sathivel
Rev. Sr. Rasika Pieris
Ven. Fr. Samuel J Ponniah
Rev. Fr. I. D. Dixon
Suwamy Akathiyar Adikalar, Thenkailai Aathinam, Trincomalee

III. Civil Society Organisations

1. Adayaalam Centre for Policy Reserch(ACPR)
2. Agriculture federation, Malwaththai, Amparai.
3. Aham Humanitarian Resource Center(AHRC)
4. Alternative Youth Federation – Batticaloa
5. Alternative Youth Federation – Trincomalee.
6. Ammanthanveli Rural Development Society, Vaharai, Batticaloa
7. Ampara District Women's Network (ADWN), Ampara
8. Amparai District civil Society Forum
9. Anaikkoddai Women Rural Development Society
10. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Amparai District
11. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Battcallo District
12. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Killinochi District
13. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Mannar District
14. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Mullaithivu District
15. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Trincomalle District
16. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared ,Vavuniya District
17. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared, Jaffna
18. Association for Relatives of the Enforced Disappeared, North & East Provinces
19. Balaththappaddi Rural Development Society, Amparai.
20. Batticaloa District Aruvi Women's Network (BDAWN), Batticaloa
21. Bharathi Kalai Manram - Chulipuram
22. Center for Peace and Reconciliation (CPR),Northern province
23. Christian Solidarity Movement
24. Civil and Political Rights AMAYAM, Eastern Province.
25. Democratic Actors in the Eastern Province
26. Eastern Journalist Forum, Eastern Province.
27. Eastern University Tamil Students Union
28. Economical and Community Development Organization (ECDO), Mullaitivu
29. Farmers' Society in Thiriyai, Trincomalee.
30. Forum for Affected Families (FAF), Mannar
31. Ilavalai Varuthapadatha Valibar Sangam
32. Island Civil Community, Jaffna
33. IYAL ,Human Resource Development Organaiation.
34. Jaffna Christian Union
35. Jaffna District federation
36. Jaffna District womens samaasam

37. Jaffna Economists Assosiation
38. Jaffna Institute for Law and Policy
39. Jaffna Islands Women's Network
40. Jaffna Press club
41. Jaffna University Students' Union
42. Justice and Peace Commision,Diocese of Jaffna
43. Kareveppankerny social Development Society, Batticaloa
44. Kaithady Rural development society union
45. Kaithady South West Women Rural Development Society
46. Kaithady Women Rural Development society Union
47. Kalaikalam Visual, Trincomalee.
48. Kathiraveli Rural Development Society Batticaloa
49. Kithusara Group
50. Kurinchi Kumaran Community Centre, Kuppilan
51. Land Back Network in the Eastern Province
52. Law and Human Rights Center (LHRC), Jaffna
53. Livestock Farmers' Association – Batticaloa.
54. Manitham Foundation Trincomalee,
55. MANITHANEYAM, Trincomalle
56. Mannar Social and Economical Development Center (MSEDO), Mannar
57. Maruthi Sports Club, Vaharai, Batticalo,
58. Mullaitivu Press Club
59. Mullivaikal Memorial General Structre-North-East
60. Navaly Women Rural Development Society
61. Nimirvu Social Development Centre
62. North - East Students' Federation
63. North East Coordinating Committee (NECC)
64. North East Pasumai illam.
65. North East Social Movement(NESM)
66. Organization for Community Empowerment and Development, Batticalao.
67. Panichchayady Rural development society.Batticaloa.
68. Panichchayady viggelent Committe Batticaloa
69. Parish Pastoral Council ,Sillalai Parish
70. People for Justice (PFJ), Vavuniya
71. People's Action – Annaiya Vilaku
72. People's Collective for Climate Justice (PCCJ), Eastern Province
73. Periyapullumalai National Coexistence Association, Batticaloa.
74. Priests and Religious for Justice and Peace North-East
75. PUZUTHI Organaiation for Social rights
76. Rural development Planning organization (RDPO) Batticaloa.
77. Rural Laborers Society
78. Santhively Rural development society Batticaloa
79. Saththurukkondan Sri Alayadippillaiyar Aalayam Batticaloa
80. Save Vaharai Organization, Batticaloa.
81. Sirakukal Amayam
82. Social Science Research Centre
83. Sri Ganesha Community Center - Chulipuram
84. Student Union Faculty of Arts and culture,Eastern University
85. SUYAMPU, Art and Culture Active, Jaffna
86. Tamil Civil Society Forum (TCSF)
87. Tamil Heritage Forum, Mullaitivu.
88. Tamil Social Activist Network (TSA)

89. Thalam Organization, Trincomalee
90. Thamilar Kalai Pannpaadu Maiyam
91. Thennaimaravadi Fishermen Society, Trincomalee.
92. Thirukadaloor Vipulananda Fishermen Development Society
93. Thirukadaloor vipulanda Youth Organaiation
94. Trincomalee District Women's Network (TDWN), Trincomalee
95. United Women Voice, Trincomalee
96. University Employees Union - University of Jaffna
97. University Students Union - University of Jaffna
98. University Teachers' Association - University of Jaffna
99. Uravukalin Thedal Organisation, Batticaloa.
100. Vaharai Fishermen Society, Batticaloa.
101. Vaharai Rural Development Society, Batticaloa.
102. Vali North Resource Center (VNRC), Jaffna
103. Vali-North Forum for land Release
104. Vellaveli Rural Women Development Society , Batticaloa.
105. Vellaveli Sanasamuka Nilaiyam, Batticaloa,
106. Vilisiddi community Centre
107. Village Development Association of Chulipuran
108. Vipulananthapuram Rural Women Development, Batticaloa.
109. Vivehananda fisherman Development Society, 10th Division
110. Voice of the Voiceless
111. Voluntary Organization for Vulnerable Community Development (VOVCOD)
112. Wigneswara Fisheries society, Kumpurupitty Navatsolai
113. Women Life and Rights Association (WLRA), Kilinochchi
114. World Tamil Students' Union
115. Youth Forum, Sillalai