



## PRESS RELEASE

**-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-**

**ICPPG CALLS UPON ALL TAMIL DIASPORA ORGANISATIONS TO UNITE ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MULLIVAICKAL GENOCIDE AND URGES THE UK GOVERNMENT TO PROVE ITS COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE FOR TAMIL VICTIMS.**

**London:** The International Centre for Prevention and Prosecution of Genocide (ICPPG) urgently calls upon the United Kingdom to officially recognise Sri Lanka's genocide against Tamils.

As we mark the 15th anniversary of the Mullivaikkal Genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka, on behalf of recent victims of systematic torture and sexual violence by the Sri Lankan army, family members of the forcibly disappeared, and representatives of the ICPPG submitted a petition to the UK Prime Minister urging the United Kingdom to officially recognise Sri Lanka's genocide against Tamils.

Mrs Ambihai K. Selvakumar, Executive Director of ICPPG, stated, "It is time for the UK government to demonstrate its commitment to global leadership by recognising the genocide of Tamils perpetrated by successive Sri Lankan governments. As Martin Luther King, Jr. aptly said, 'The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people.' The ongoing silence of the UK government and the international community, even after fifteen years since the Mullivaikkal Genocide, emboldens the Sri Lankan government and its allies to continue their genocide against the indigenous Tamils with impunity. ICPPG, ITJP, and numerous INGOs and NGOs operating in the UK possess ample evidence to prove the genocide of Tamils. What is lacking is political will."

ICPPG also highlighted that Sri Lanka has categorically refused to implement the 2015 UN resolution (30/1), which called for a hybrid court with foreign judges. Tamils around the world, including the mothers of the forcibly disappeared, appreciated the Canadian parliament for recognising the Tamil Genocide and designating 18th May as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day by a unanimous motion on 18 May 2022, giving hope that justice will eventually be served.

Based on this, ICPPG urged The British Prime Minister to:

1. Recognise the Tamil Genocide: A resolution was passed unanimously in the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka on 10 February 2015 acknowledging Sri Lanka's genocide against Tamils.
2. Establish a Tribunal: If necessary to officially recognise the Tamil genocide, arrange to set up a tribunal either in the UK or jointly with other countries.
3. Impose Travel Bans: We request the UK to immediately apply a travel ban under Magnitsky sanctions on the Sri Lankan army chief Shavendra Silva and former Sri Lankan Presidents Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Mahinda Rajapaksa. The United States has already imposed a travel ban on Shavendra Silva, and Canada has sanctioned Gotabaya and Mahinda Rajapaksa on 10 January 2023.



Further, the ICPPG highlights the following actions taken by other jurisdictions and international organisations:

1. On 27 March 2013, the Tamil Nadu Assembly in India unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to impose an economic embargo on Colombo until the “suppression” of Tamils ceased and those responsible for “genocide and war crimes” faced an international probe.
2. On 10 December 2013, in Bremen, Germany, the Second Session of the Peoples’ Tribunal on Sri Lanka found guilty of genocide against the Eelam Tamil people.
3. On 10 February 2015, the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka passed a resolution seeking a UN inquiry into the genocide of Tamils.
4. On 7 May 2018, the 2nd International Tamil Conference in Ottawa, Canada, endorsed by 21 Tamil organisations and student unions worldwide, passed a resolution calling for an independent international investigation into the charge of genocide.
5. On 12 May 2021, Ontario’s Bill-104, designating Tamil Genocide Education Week, became law.
6. On 18 May 2022, the Canadian parliament unanimously passed a motion recognising 18th May as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day.
7. On 9 November 2022, during a UK House debate, MPs called on the government to recognise the crimes against the Tamil population as genocide.

The ICPPG also pointed out that the UK has rightly recognised other genocides, such as the Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide, the Bosnian Genocide, and most recently, the Uyghur Genocide in 2021. It is disheartening that the UK has not yet recognised the Tamil Genocide despite hosting a significant Tamil diaspora.

As we mourn the 15th Anniversary of the Mullivaikkal Tamil Genocide on 18 May, the ICPPG reminds everyone that we owe the victims the courtesy of taking real steps towards accountability and justice. Thus, the ICPPG requests everyone to unite during this most painful time and set practical targets towards justice, however small, that can be achieved each year. This would be the real tribute to the victims, rather than letting the years pass with memorial events filled with empty speeches from politicians. Accordingly, the ICPPG believes that getting the Sri Lankan alleged war criminals designated would be a fitting tribute for this year. Therefore, we call upon all Tamil Diaspora Organisations and other Human Rights organisations to unite and urge the UK government and Members of Parliament to officially recognise the genocidal acts committed against Tamils by the Sri Lankan government as “genocide” at the earliest opportunity.

**-ENDS-**

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### **About the ICPPG;**

The formation of the International Centre for the Prevention and Prosecution of Genocide (ICPPG) in London was initiated by Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE). The ICPPG, however operates as an independent body, serving all people who have been affected by or threatened with genocide. Its immediate focus remains the genocide that occurred in Sri Lanka. The ICPPG remains as an International Non-Governmental Organisation and an Independent Legal Body and one of our primary objectives is to collect evidence against perpetrators of genocide and work towards justice, peace and reconciliation.

The operational strategy was designed under the guidance of Professor Muthucumaraswamy Sornarajah LLB (Ceylon), LLM (Yale), LLM, PhD, LLD (London) is CJ Koh Professor at the Faculty of Law of the National University of Singapore. He is Visiting Professor at the Centre for Human Rights, London School of Economics. He was the Tunku Abdul Rahman Professor of International Law at the University of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur. He was Head of the Law School of the University of Tasmania, Australia. He studied law at the University of Ceylon, the London School of Economics, King's College, London and the Yale Law School. He remains as an independent advisor and we to operate with his blessings.

We began assisting the Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) investigations on Sri Lanka by submitting testimonies and organising victim interviews in 2014. In its resolution A/HRC/25/1 adopted in March 2014 on “Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka”, the UNHRC requested the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to “undertake a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties in Sri Lanka during the period covered by the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), and to establish the facts and circumstances of such alleged violations and of the crimes perpetrated with a view to avoiding impunity and ensuring accountability, with assistance from relevant experts and special procedures mandate holders”. The Council requested the High Commissioner to present an oral update at its twenty-seventh session and a comprehensive report on the investigations at its twenty-eighth session. In accordance with this mandate, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights established the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL), based in Geneva<sup>6</sup>. The final report of the OISL commission was published in September 2015 confirming the serious violations, abuses of human rights and war crimes committed by the Sri Lankan authorities. In the basis of this report, we continue to work with international prosecutors with a view to bringing criminal and civil prosecutions.