



International Council of Eelam Tamils  
அனைத்துலக ஈழத்தமிழர் மக்களவை



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Press Release

4 February 2021

**Tamils Globally boycott Sri Lanka's Independence Day on 4 February  
Stage peaceful protests from 3-6 Feb 2021 from Pottuvil to Polykandy  
calling for UN intervention and sanctions to end the continuing Genocide**

The Tamil speaking people in Sri Lanka are conducting peaceful protests against the ongoing structural genocide being committed by Sri Lanka. Under the leadership of civil society organisations and with the support of political parties, a rolling 4 Day protest is being conducted from towns in the eastern to the northern parts of Sri Lanka from 3-6 Feb 2021.

Coincidentally, this protest will also mark Sri Lanka's Independence Day on 4<sup>th</sup> Feb as a day of mourning. Having been subject to gross, consistent and concerted violations of their individual and collective rights and being denied political freedom, physical security, equality, peace with justice, and destruction of attributes of the Tamil Nation, the Tamil people have been mourning this day for the best part of over seven decades since Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948.

The protests are aimed at drawing the urgent attention of the international community to the following: absence of any accountability for the mass atrocity crimes committed by Sri Lankan state; intensified military occupation of Tamil areas and interference in civil administration; indefinite detention of political prisoners; land grab in Tamil areas in the name of archaeological exploration; installation of Buddhist religious symbols in Tamil areas; efforts to colonise Tamil areas with Sinhala people from the south; denial of traditional, collective land rights including cattle grazing; increasing surveillance and intimidation of political and civil society activists; denial of burial rights of Muslim and Christian communities during COVID19 pandemic; denial of the right to mourn.

Currently the Government of Sri Lanka continues to challenge the International Community by way of repudiating its obligations to the resolutions of UNHRC and conducts other questionable provocations. The International Community which remains hesitant to take action, has not yet used its most vital levers in this current climate, namely Economic levers. ([Please click here for the publication.](#))

Also, application of Universal Jurisdiction (Travel Bans, asset freeze, etc.) against the perpetrators of atrocity crimes by individual member states will build the confidence that such serious crimes will not be tolerated. The leverages available to the International Community in the form of the Magnitsky Act and its International variants, must be applied on alleged perpetrators listed on the report released by the Office of the High Commissioner of the UNHRC (OHCHR) Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL, 2015).

The Tamil people and Human Rights defenders need to strengthen the campaign to call the International Community to apply these leverages to target impunity, lack of accountability and bring to justice the perpetrators for their atrocities of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

In this context, the Tamil people welcome the January 2021 report from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that acknowledges the failure of Sri Lanka to abide by the previous UNHRC Resolutions and strongly recommends referral of the alleged war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed by the Sri Lankan state, to the UN General Assembly and/or the UN Security Council for investigation and prosecution through the appropriate independent international mechanisms such as International Criminal Court (ICC) or *ad hoc* International Criminal Tribunal for Sri Lanka.

Encouraged by this report, the Tamil speaking people and the Tamil diaspora call on the 47 member UNHRC to adopt a new resolution at its 46<sup>th</sup> sessions in Feb-March 2021, addressing the recommendations of the High Commissioner. We also request the International community to arbitrate in finding a political solution to the long standing Tamil national question based on the principle of Tamil Nation and to exercise all necessary functions of self-governance without interference, in the traditional homeland in the North and East of Sri Lanka. This will prevent re-occurrence of cycles of violence and will ensure Tamil people's physical security and political authority to freely determine their own political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural affairs, which are integral to reconciliation and the full enjoyment of human rights.

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