



**SRI
LANKA
CAMPAIGN**
FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

Annual Report 2024



Introduction	4
• Message from Our Chair	4
Our Objectives	5
Personnel	6
• Organisational Structure	6
Achievements in 2024	8-11
• Magnitsky Month: Targeted Sanctions as a Tool for Justice	8
• Enforced Disappearances	9
• International Advocacy	10
• UK Advocacy	11
Country Visit: Sri Lanka	12
Events	13-14
• <i>SRI LANKA: Interrupted</i> Art Exhibition	13
• <i>Anatomy of a Protest</i> ICA Film Screening	14
A Look Ahead to 2025	15-16



Message from Our Chair...

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners of the Sri Lanka Campaign,

As we start the new year, we reflect on a pivotal time for human rights globally and for Sri Lanka in particular. The recent elections in Sri Lanka, the UK and the U.S. highlight both opportunities and challenges for the pursuit of accountability and justice.

This year, we stood alongside victims and survivors in their pursuit of truth and justice, addressing enforced disappearances, gender-based violence, and ongoing systemic impunity. We have continued to demand accountability for all human rights violations, including war crimes and crimes against humanity through our online platforms, and advocacy with the UK and other governments and during the UNHRC sessions in Geneva.

Your support fuels our efforts to uphold the values of justice, dignity, and peace. Let us continue working together to champion human rights and pave the way for a brighter future for those who continue to be impacted by the war as well as others across Sri Lanka.

Warm regards,

Ingrid Massagé

Chair



DONATE NOW



OUR BLOG



TAKE ACTION

The Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice (SLC) was established in 2009, and formally constituted in 2010, to push for accountability for mass atrocity crimes committed in the final stages of Sri Lanka's civil war, as well as the many other human rights violations that have occurred in Sri Lanka.

SLC's work rests on our analysis that impunity for human rights abuses is the root cause of multiple cycles of violence in Sri Lanka. We believe that to prevent future violence and achieve lasting peace and reconciliation, individuals must be held accountable for the crimes they have committed.



Organisational Structure

The Sri Lanka Campaign is entirely non-profit and independent and is coordinated by the Campaign Director, Communications Coordinator and Strategy Coordinator. A Board of Directors and a group of independent human rights advisors provide strategic and advisory support. All board members and advisors are unpaid and all support the Campaign in their personal capacities to maintain its independence.

Board of Directors

The Campaign's decision-making body is its Board of Directors. The Board decides on the Campaign's organisational structure, overall objectives, and work programme. The Campaign Director is an ex-officio member of the Board but does not have a vote. The current board members are:

- **Ingrid Massagé** (*Chair*)
- **Yolanda Foster**
- **Simon Long**
- **Aura Freeman**

Staff

- **Yvonne S. Schofield** (*Campaign Director*)
- **Mia Gray** (*Communications Coordinator*)
- **Affaf Ahmed** (*Strategy Coordinator*)

Volunteers

The Campaign relies on a dedicated team of unpaid volunteers, drawn from a variety of ethnic and professional backgrounds. Our volunteers carry out a range of roles, including undertaking research, contributing articles, and fundraising.



Achievements in 2024

Magnitsky Month: Targeted Sanctions as a Tool for Justice

Magnitsky Month honours the legacy of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer who exposed massive corruption and lost his life in custody in November 2009.

Sergei Magnitsky's story inspired the creation of global Magnitsky-style sanctions, which target perpetrators of human rights abuses and corruption through measures such as travel bans and asset freezes. These sanctions provide a focused approach to accountability, isolating violators while sparing civilians from harm.

In November, we used Magnitsky Month to spotlight the urgent need for sanctions against Sri Lankan perpetrators of war crimes and human rights abuses. Through a social media campaign, we profiled individuals such as Shavendra Silva, Kamal Gunaratne, and Pillayan, highlighting their impunity. Posts explained how Magnitsky sanctions work, their global successes, and the critical role the UK could play. Our blog offered a more in-depth exploration of these issues, calling for public action such as signing petitions and contacting MPs. We were pleased to see our blog translated into Sinhala and reposted by NewsReport, The Leader and Ceylon News. Together, these efforts amplified the call for justice and accountability in Sri Lanka.

SANCTIONS MATTER FOR SRI LANKA

Shavendra Silva, accused of war crimes, is banned from entering the U.S. It is time the UK follows suit.



#TimeToSanction
#MagnitskyForSriLanka



NewsReport

உள்ளநாடு பிரதான செய்தி முக்கிய செய்தி

சுவேந்திர சிவ்வா உள்ளிட்ட மூவருக்கு எதிராக தடை விதிக்க கோரிக்கை

By Editor November 24, 2024



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THE LEADER WE LEAD THE NATION



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Ceylon News

Home » 938

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November 24, 2024

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Enforced Disappearances

Sri Lanka has the second-highest rate of any country in the world for enforced disappearances, with between 60,000 and 100,000 cases since the 1980s.

Our work on enforced disappearances focuses on amplifying the voices of the families left behind and holding the government accountable for these atrocities. Through campaigns around the *International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances* (August 30) and Sri Lanka's *Day of the Disappeared* (October 27), we launched social media initiatives highlighting personal stories, the legacy of broken promises, and the urgent need for independent investigations and justice.



Interview quotes from Sri Lankan activists:

“Sri Lanka is an island broken by impunity.”

“Impunity in Sri Lanka simply means a lack of political will to investigate grave crimes and hold anyone responsible.”

Our detailed review, *A New Era? An Analysis of the Sri Lankan Elections and the Implications for Truth and Justice*, examined the potential of Sri Lanka's new leadership to finally address this issue. By coupling historical data with forward-looking advocacy, we aim to break the cycle of impunity and push for meaningful reform and reparations for victims and their families. The elections in 2024 provided a moment of hope for many Sri Lankans, particularly with the appointment of Prime Minister of Harini Amarasuriya, a respected activist who has championed the rights of marginalised communities. Since the election, SLC has called on the new government to uphold their original promises in their manifesto to work towards accountability and we will continue to do so into the new year.

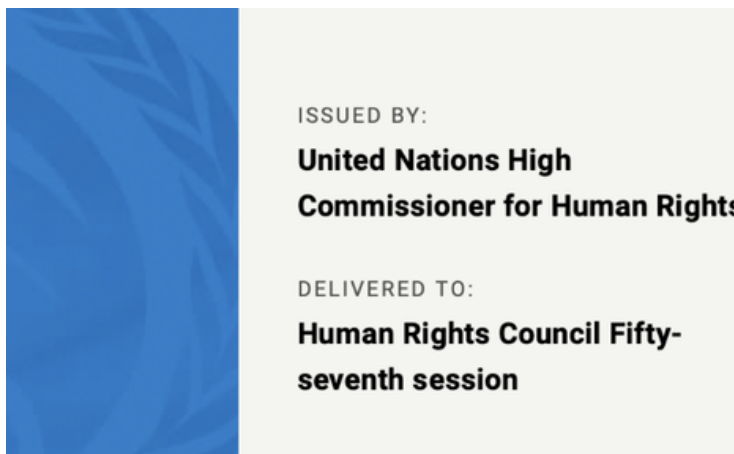
SLC has been working closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and OHCHR Sri Lanka Accountability Project (OSLAP) to ensure that Sri Lanka remains firmly on the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) agenda. These efforts have been critical to pushing forward accountability and justice for victims of past and ongoing human rights violations in Sri Lanka.

OSLAP, established by resolution 46/1 (2021) as part of the UNHRC's framework to promote accountability in Sri Lanka, released two pivotal reports in 2024 (linked below). These reports underscored the need for continued international scrutiny, highlighting systemic impunity, the lack of progress in domestic accountability mechanisms, and ongoing concerns over repression and militarisation. Their findings provided a strong evidentiary basis for advocating renewed action by the international community.

SLC collaborated with six other civil society organisations to publish a **joint statement urging the 57th session of the UNHRC to extend OSLAP** and we were pleased to see that in October it was renewed for one year. Although we called for a two-year renewal, we still have hope that this renewal will allow the OHCHR to continue collecting evidence of human rights violations in Sri Lanka that may be used in future war crimes trials.

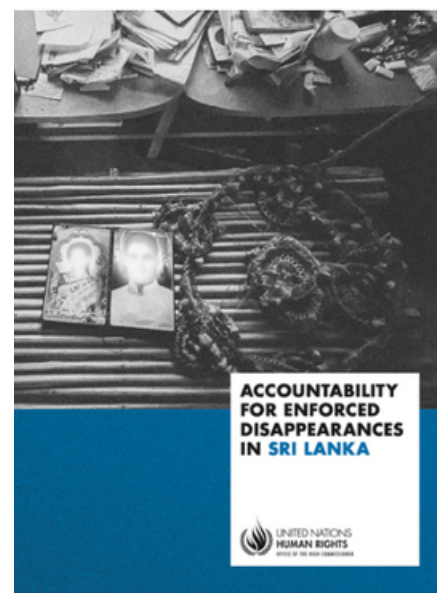
We played an active role during the 57th session of the UNHRC and between sessions, attending side events organised by our partners and meeting with diplomatic missions. We provided critical updates and analysis to ensure informed decision-making. The progress made underscores the power of collective advocacy and the importance of international mechanisms in supporting human rights and peace in Sri Lanka.

[Click on the reports to read](#)



ISSUED BY:
**United Nations High
Commissioner for Human Rights**

DELIVERED TO:
**Human Rights Council Fifty-
seventh session**

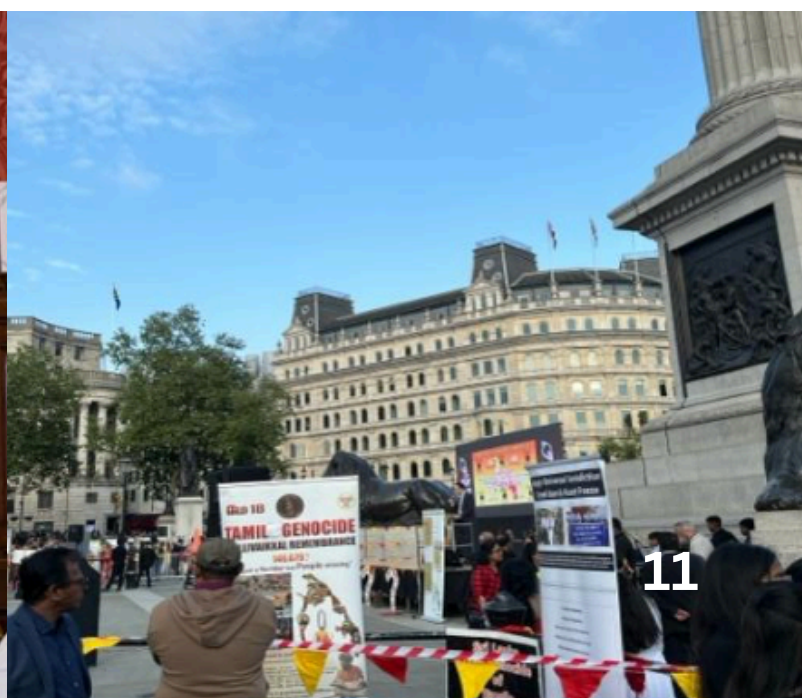


SLC has also been actively engaging with UK Members of Parliament (MPs) and key government departments to further international accountability efforts.

Over the last year, we have held numerous discussions with MPs on the imposition of targeted sanctions against individuals accused of serious human rights violations in Sri Lanka. Our advocacy extended to meetings with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the UK's War Crimes Unit, where we provided updates and recommendations to bolster the UK's response to ongoing issues in Sri Lanka.

In addition to direct advocacy, SLC participated in high-profile events that brought attention to Sri Lanka's human rights situation. In May, SLC marked the Mullivaikal Massacre Remembrance Day by delivering a speech at the Houses of Parliament. This event, attended by our partners and senior figures within the Labour Party, underscored the importance of remembering the victims and advocating for justice. We also spoke at a remembrance event hosted by the British Tamils Forum in Trafalgar Square, London, which drew over 2,000 attendees. Addressing this large and engaged audience, we reiterated our commitment to seeking accountability and amplifying the voices of those affected by Sri Lanka's legacy of violence and repression.

These engagements demonstrate SLC's commitment to keeping Sri Lanka's human rights concerns at the forefront of the UK's political agenda, while fostering solidarity with the Tamil diaspora and other advocacy groups. By leveraging parliamentary channels and public events, we continue to press for meaningful action and sustained attention to Sri Lanka's accountability challenges.



Over the summer of 2024, SLC travelled to Sri Lanka to engage directly with key stakeholders, victims' groups, and international actors working on justice and accountability. The purpose of this trip was to assess the current landscape of human rights advocacy in Sri Lanka, build partnerships, and identify opportunities to strengthen our campaigns.

During the trip, SLC held discussions with experts and advocates to explore effective mechanisms for achieving accountability. It was highlighted that sanctions and universal jurisdiction remain crucial international tools for addressing human rights violations. These mechanisms serve not only as a deterrent but also as a means of maintaining international pressure on Sri Lanka to comply with its obligations.

SLC also engaged with victims' groups, including families of the disappeared, who shared their diverse and often divided perspectives. While mothers from the South emphasised compensation and domestic mechanisms like the Office on Missing Persons (OMP), Northern mothers expressed deep mistrust in local institutions and called for international interventions. Recognising these challenges, SLC discussed strategies to bring these groups together, identifying natural leaders and supporting their advocacy through capacity building, safety measures, and the provision of basic needs.

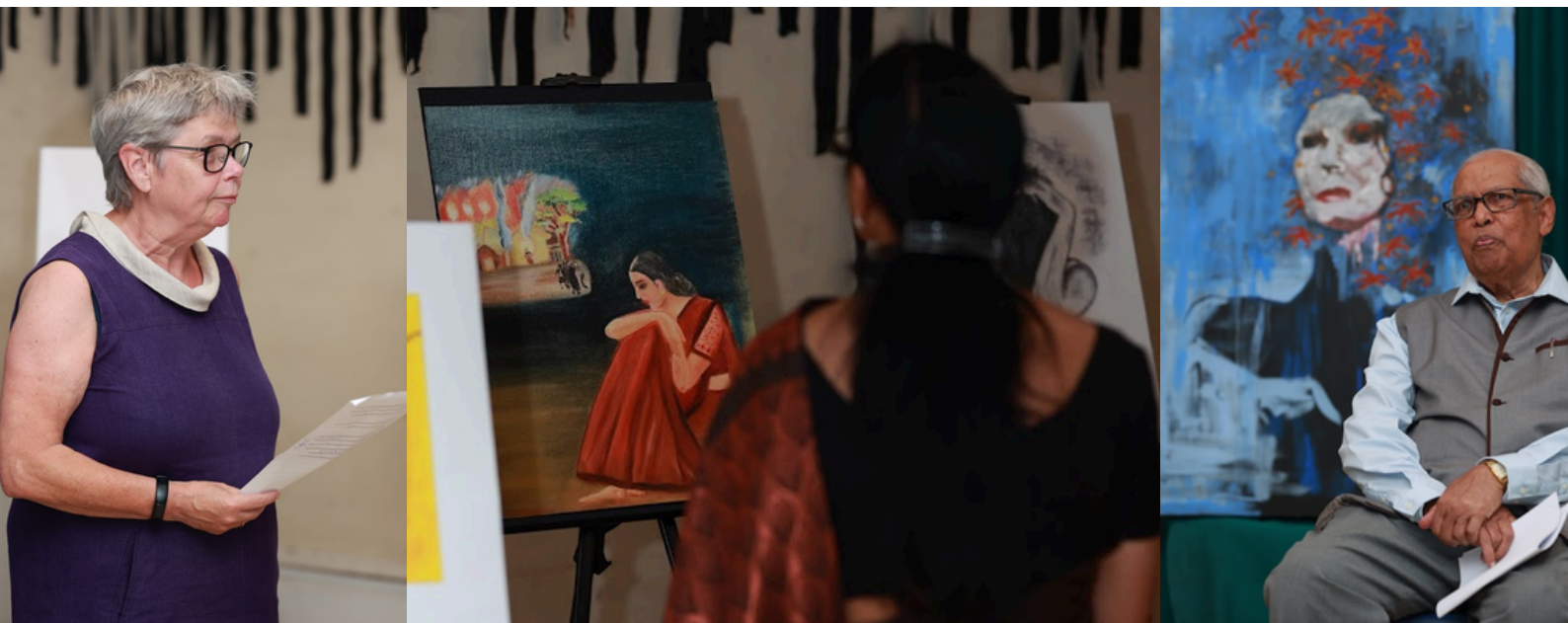
Meetings with international missions reaffirmed the importance of coordinated advocacy to support mechanisms like OSAP. Collaborative efforts with these missions remain essential to sustaining momentum for accountability.



SRI LANKA: Interrupted Art Exhibition

On June 25, SLC hosted a powerful art exhibition *Sri Lanka: Interrupted* at the Northolt Village Community Centre, marking the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

This event highlighted the transformative power of art in amplifying the voices of victims and advocating for justice.



The exhibition featured compelling artworks by Sri Lankan artists, capturing the themes of loss, resilience, and hope. Among the highlights were *Every Day* by Kirushan Sivagnanam, exploring identity and transformation and *The Glorious Army* by Sabes Sugunasabesan, critiquing militarisation through photo collages. The event also included interactive video installations, poetry readings, and keynote speeches from Ingrid Massagé, Chair of SLC, and MCM Iqbal, a renowned human rights advocate.

Attended by supporters, advocates, and members of the Tamil community, the event served as a powerful reminder of the collective responsibility to challenge injustice and work towards a just and accountable future. The exhibition's **ONLINE CATALOGUE** is available for those who wish to explore the artworks and support the cause further.

Anatomy of a Protest ICA Film Screening

In June SLC, the International Working Group on Sri Lanka, and Retold World hosted a screening of *Anatomy of a Protest* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London.

The documentary, directed by Kannan Arunasalam, explores the 2022 Aragalaya protests in Sri Lanka, sparked by economic crises and widespread shortages. The film delves into the movement's demands for accountability, the advocacy of marginalised groups, and the broader implications for justice and unity in Sri Lanka. The event attracted a full house, reflecting significant public interest.



Following the screening, a panel discussion featured the director Kannan Arunasalam, activist Jeana De Zoysa who featured in the film, and Tamil human rights barrister Shivani Jegarajah, moderated by SLC Board Member Aura Freeman. The panel explored themes of historical reckoning, socio-economic inequality, ethnic divisions during the protests and what the future of civil movements are in an unstable, fast-changing world.

As we enter 2025, the Sri Lanka Campaign will continue our work for justice and accountability, building on the momentum of the past year.

Early in the year, we will be submitting our joint CEDAW shadow report to the UN, urging the Committee to hold the Sri Lankan government accountable for its persistent failure to protect women's rights and tackle systemic gender-based violence. Through this submission, we aim to shine a light on the experiences of women, female-headed households, and other marginalised groups, while pressing for meaningful legal reforms and the full implementation of Sri Lanka's own Women's Empowerment Act.

Our focus on targeted sanctions will continue, with renewed engagement with UK parliamentarians and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to advocate for Magnitsky sanctions against known perpetrators of war crimes and human rights violations. We are also working closely with the UK's War Crimes Unit on universal jurisdiction cases. In 2025, we intend to collaborate with international partners and visiting countries to encourage similar measures in other jurisdictions, ensuring that perpetrators who travel freely risk being arrested and held to account for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and cannot evade accountability by shifting assets across borders.

A key priority for the year ahead will be closely monitoring the actions of the new government led by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. While the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)-led coalition has promised reforms, including measures to tackle corruption and improve governance, we will be watching closely to see whether these commitments translate into genuine progress on accountability, human rights, and transitional justice. We will also push for the new government to end the culture of impunity that has shielded alleged war criminals for so long – and remind them that international scrutiny will not ease until meaningful action is taken.

Our work on enforced disappearances will expand further in 2025, with a focus on supporting victims' families, strengthening their ability to engage with international mechanisms, and ensuring that their calls for truth and justice remain central to our advocacy at the UN Human Rights Council. We will continue to argue that only independent international mechanisms can deliver the justice that survivors deserve.

We also plan to deepen our partnerships with civil society groups in Sri Lanka, recognising that many of them operate under increasingly difficult conditions. In 2025, we aim to support them through joint campaigns, capacity building, and emergency assistance for those facing threats or harassment.

In addition, we will continue to use art and culture as tools for advocacy, building on the success of our 2024 exhibition by hosting new creative platforms that amplify the voices of victims and survivors. Our public education work will also expand, using these platforms to raise awareness of how accountability connects to economic justice, land rights, and the impacts of militarisation.

Finally, 2025 marks 16 years since the end of the war – a stark reminder that despite the passage of time, justice remains elusive for many. We will intensify our calls for comprehensive transitional justice, urging both the new government and the international community to uphold their obligations to survivors and their families.

As always, our work will be led by those directly impacted – survivors, families of the disappeared, human rights defenders, and Sri Lanka’s courageous civil society. With their voices at the heart of everything we do, and with your continued support, we will keep working to ensure that justice, truth, and accountability are no longer deferred.

Sri Lanka Campaign Team





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