



National Council of Canadian Tamils

Address: 5310 Finch Avenue East, Scarborough, M1S 5E8, ON

Tel: 1-866-263-8622 Email: info@ncctcanada.ca Web: www.ncctcanada.ca

Three years after war Tamils suffer military occupation, state sponsored colonization and protracted genocide

Submission by the National Council of Canadian Tamils to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review

According to the United Nations Panel of Experts Report on Sri Lanka, the war in the island state of Sri Lanka ended amidst the backdrop of over 40,000 Tamil civilian deaths caused by the indiscriminate bombings of civilian “safe zones,” hospitals and humanitarian operations. Three years after the formal end of the war on May 18th, 2009 the Tamils living in the NorthEast of the country continue to endure violations of human rights and protracted genocide.

Through a sophisticated and protracted program the Sri Lankan state continues to enact policies, coupled with the mass killings of members of the Tamil nation, that aim at the destruction of the essential foundations of Tamil life in the NorthEast. The Tamils have endured not only well documented examples of violent persecution with the consequence of physical genocide but also a slower and deliberate scheme aimed at destroying their culture and livelihood. The protracted genocide of the Tamils today is carried out through a brutal military occupation and a deliberate program of Sinhala settlements.

Today, the military occupation of the Tamil homeland in the NorthEast of the island is the most blatant symptom of the ongoing genocide. The military controls all aspects of individual, social and professional life. A strong sign of the military’s ubiquitous presence is that the military is engaged in running commercial enterprises in the occupied Tamil homeland such as barber saloons, bars, restaurants, hotels and tourist services.

The military occupation of the Tamil homeland is coupled with a deliberate program of state sponsored settlements in the NorthEast with the aim of changing the demographic make up of the Tamil homeland. The Sri Lankan government is now waging a colonization war against the Tamil nation by establishing Sinhalese settlements in traditional Tamil areas. For example, a Sinhalese settlement at Kokkulaay will—along with previously established settlements—sever the Tamil areas in the east of the island from those in the north and therefore dismantling the territorial integrity of the Tamil homeland. Other settlements and military bases aim to cut off the Jaffna peninsula from the Tamil areas on the mainland.

The military perpetuates the continued displacement of tens of thousands of Tamils by seizing large amounts of public and private Tamil lands to build military bases. The growing involvement of the military and the unequal treatment of Tamils in agricultural and commercial activities have placed further obstacles on the difficult road to economic recovery for Tamils

The deliberate program of military occupation and colonization is a tried and tested method for the Sri Lankan state. In the 1970’s when Tamils constituted the majority inhabiting the eastern parts of the island, the government changed the demographic facts of the east through a deliberate program of militarization and settlements. Similarly, today vast tracts of the Tamil speaking north are now being changed with Sinhala signboards, streets renamed in Sinhala, and monuments erected to honor Sinhala war criminals. Religious



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institutions like Temples, Mosques and Churches are under threat of destruction or forced relocation to make room for Buddhist shrines for the new Sinhala settlers.

All of these developments in the post-war scenario are part of a well-established strategy carried out by successive Sri Lankan governments to make the Tamil nation's claim to self-determination in their traditional homeland untenable. However, only a return to normalcy through an end to the military occupation, state sponsored settlements will foster the permanent conditions of peace in the war torn island.

Moreover, the Tamils have consistently demanded a political solution to the conflict through peaceful and democratic means based on the principles of Tamil homeland, nation and self-determination. The violent repression of peaceful Tamils politics opened the door to an armed uprising by disgruntled Tamil youth who saw peaceful politics as futile in the face of uncompromising and violent Sri Lankan governments. To avoid a bloody repeat of history the United Nations can fulfill its obligations to promoting global peace by facilitating a referendum in the NorthEast to secure a political solution to the ongoing conflict.

The National Council of Canadian Tamils (NCCT) is a grassroots organization, composed of elected representatives from across Canada that serves to organize Tamil-Canadians on a democratic and cooperative basis, and to peacefully support the Tamil nation's struggle in the NorthEast of Sri Lanka for self-determination.

Krisna Saravanamuttu- National Director/Spokesperson

krisna@ncctcanada.ca

Tel: 1.647.448.0576