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ITS



TAUPAC



TGTE



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WTO

March 15, 2022

Ms. Kristalina Georgieva
Managing Director
International Monetary Fund
700 19th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20431

Dear Ms. Georgieva,

SUB: REQUEST TO TIE AID TO SRI LANKA WITH COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAWS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Greetings from the Tamil Diaspora entities namely World Tamil Organization (WTO), Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA), Tamil American United PAC (TAUPAC), Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE), United States Tamil Action Group (USTAG), Ilankai Tamil Sangam (ITS).

We learn from the media and other reliable sources that the Sri Lankan government will be seeking aid from the International Monetary Fund to salvage its deteriorating economic situation.

We are cognizant of the hardship caused to the people in Sri Lanka due to the current economic situation and we empathize with them. However, we believe unconditional aid to Sri Lanka will not alleviate the suffering of the people in Sri Lanka nor address its longstanding problems of racist policies towards Tamils and Muslims.

In particular, there is considerable evidence of a systematic denial of rights of the Tamil People in Sri Lanka by successive governments, leading to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by the country’s armed forces in the armed conflict that ended in 2009. The UN Secretary General’s Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka stated that “[a] number of credible sources have estimated that there could have been as many as 40,000 civilian deaths during the final stages of the war.”

The 2012 UN internal review report headed by Charles Petrie stated that there are credible reports that “over 70,000 civilians are unaccounted for” during the final stages of the war. The reports also stated that there is credible evidence that crimes against humanity and war crimes have been committed.

The Berlin Peoples’ Tribunal held that a genocide was committed against the Tamil People. The UN Human Rights Council passed resolution 30/1 in 2015 calling for an investigation and prosecution with the participation of international experts.

However, the Sri Lankan government has not only not complied with the resolution, but the present President has blatantly repudiated the resolution. Thus far, not a single person has been prosecuted let alone arrested in connection with the atrocity crimes committed during the final stages of the war. The main reason for it is the institutional impunity which is the resultant of the Sinhala Buddhist religious fundamentalism. Thus, we request you to urge the Sri Lankan government to ratify the Rome Statute retroactively and avail itself to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, subject to any economic recourse from the IMF.

Presently, the Sri Lankan government has intensified its efforts to change demographically the Tamil lands in the North-Eastern part of the island of Sri Lanka to reduce Tamils to a minority group. As published by the San Francisco based Oakland Institute in March 2021, “Endless War,” there have been forced establishments of Sinhalese settlements, victory monuments, archeological reservations, wildlife sanctuaries, forest reserves, and special economic zones – all meant to deprive the local Tamil population of their land and wipe out their cultural identity. Thus, we request you to condition the aid to putting an immediate end to evictions and usurpation of land belonging to ethnic Tamil populations.

Further, according to the 2021 International Religious Freedom Report published by the U.S. State Department:

“During the year, there were no prosecutions for the May 2019 anti-Muslim violence that led to the death of one Muslim and attacks on mosques and Muslim-owned homes and businesses. By year’s end, the government had not fully compensated owners for property damage they sustained during the violence across Northwestern Province”.

Thus, we request you to condition the aid in order for the Sri Lankan government to take accountability for the crimes committed against its Muslim citizens.

Even in the aftermath of the horrific Easter Sunday bombings in 2019 in three churches and three hotels where 269 people including 45 foreigners were killed and over 500 wounded, Sri Lanka has back-peddled in the investigations due to credible allegations by the Catholic church in Sri Lanka and the Vatican that military intelligence officials were complicit in the attacks. It is only if institutions such as the IMF exert conditions on aid and loans to Sri Lanka that there can be some movement towards accountability.

We would also like to bring to your attention the notorious Prevention of Terrorist Act (PTA) which was characterized by the International Commission of Jurists as an “ugly blot in the statues of civilized nations,” under which detainees are subjected to torture and prolonged detention. The UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Ben Emerson, observed that the impact of the PTA fell disproportionately on the Tamils. The European Parliament adopted a resolution in June 2021 calling for the withdrawal of Sri Lanka’s trading privileges under the GSP if it continued to fail to meet its human rights commitments, particularly in relation to the PTA. The present regime has proposed some amendments, however as the Human Rights Watch stated in a detail report dated February 7, 2022, that those proposed resolutions “if enacted, will do little to bring the PTA into compliance with Sri Lanka’s international human rights obligations.” Thus, we request you to condition the IMF aid to the repeal of the PTA.

Also, we would like to bring to your attention that the mothers and families of the disappeared have been staging protests in the form of a continuous vigil and fast for the last five years (1,837 days as of March 1, 2022, to be exact) pleading (calling) for information about their loved ones. Also, we (I) would like to point out that over 100 (some) of these people (the mothers) have died without

knowing the fate (truth) about their loved ones. (children). Thus far, the Sri Lankan state has not provided any information pertaining to the disappeared.

Finally, we would like to quote a paragraph from the International Monetary Fund Newsletter dated December 2001, Volume 38, Number 4:

“In his book *Development as Freedom*, Amartya Sen, Nobel laureate in economics, encourages us to look into the expansion of freedoms as both the definition of development and the means to achieve it. He notes, for example, that there is no record of a democratic country with a free press that has suffered from famine. He argues that economic indicators, such as GDP per capita and income distribution, fail to capture what is important to people: the freedoms associated with human rights. In May 2001, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights echoed this view in a forceful statement arguing for a better integration of human rights in development strategies.”

We believe this is an opportune time to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in the island of Sri Lanka.

In this connection we would like to meet with you in person or via webinar. Please send your response to – V. Rudrakumaran, 875 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 906, New York, NY 10001

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Visuvanathan Rudrakumaran
Prime Minister – Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE)

On behalf of the following US based Tamil Diaspora Organizations:

1. Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA); contact@fetna.org
2. Ilankai Tamil Sangam; president@sangam.org
3. Tamil Americans United PAC; info@tamilamericansunited.com
4. Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE); pmo@tgte.org
5. United States Tamil Action Group(USTAG); info@theustag.org
6. World Tamil Organization; wtogroup@gmail.com

CC: Ms. Gita Gopinath
First Deputy Managing Director
International Monetary Fund
700 19th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20431