



# Tamil Americans United

## Political Action Committee

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### *Mission*

The mission of the Tamil PAC is to promote the American core values of equality, freedom, and democracy throughout the world, and to work towards safeguarding the Eelam Tamil people and ensure they are offered justice for the Genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity committed against them by Sri Lanka, and to work with the US Government to facilitate an Independence Referendum for the Eelam Tamils to exercise their legal rights to self-determination as per the international laws.

### *Eelam Tamil Issue: Background*

The Eelam Tamil people, and the Sinhalese people have been living on the island, presently known as Sri Lanka, for more than two thousand years and had their own separate kingdoms until European colonization. The British united the whole island under a single administration in 1833. When the British gave independence to the island in 1948, the power was transferred to the Sinhalese, but the Tamils were not given any opportunity to exercise their rights to self-determination. It was an improper and unfinished decolonization. For the Tamils, the colonization turned into oppression under Sinhalese hegemony.

Immediately after the independence, the Sinhalese institutionalized anti-Tamil activities, and began to weaken the Tamils politically, economically, and educationally. Tamils' non-violent struggle to resolve the issue did not yield any results, and the Tamils resorted to arms with the goal of achieving their independence. In 1987, India sent about 100,000 troops to Sri Lanka under the bilateral Indo-Lanka Accord which recognized the North-East region as the traditional homeland of the Tamils. As a result of the Accord, Sri Lanka introduced the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution and offered some limited powers. The Tamils expressed their disappointment with India as well as Sri Lanka and rejected the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment as grossly inadequate as not meeting their aspirations. Sri Lanka, later refused to fully implement the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment saying it's against the wishes of the Sinhalese people. The war continued till its brutal end in 2009, with an estimated 300,000 - 400,000 people dead.

Sri Lanka has committed Genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity against the Tamil people. The UN has setup internal investigative panels and found widespread crimes were committed during the war. The US has been spearheading accountability at the UNHRC without success. Having co-sponsored UNHRC Resolutions, but emboldened by the support from China and Russia, Sri Lanka has withdrawn from the UNHRC process in 2020, rejecting any investigation.

Even after 13 years, the UNHRC has not made any significant progress towards justice or to ensure non-recurrence. It has failed to move the case forward to the UN Security Council for the referral to the International Criminal Court. The UN system

has failed the Tamils and has set a bad precedent. Sri Lanka has reneged on its commitments and promises to the Tamils, and the International Community including the UN. Having won the war, Sri Lanka is currently engaged in taking over the Tamils' lands for Sinhalese settlements and replacing Hindu temples with Buddhist temples with the intent to transform the whole island into a mono Sinhalese Buddhist fundamentalist country. The Tamils are fast losing their traditional homeland.

### *Tamil Issue is Not a Domestic Issue*

The Tamil Nation lost its sovereignty due to the European invasions. It further lost it to the Sinhalese, due to the failure of the British to return the sovereignty to the Tamils. The Tamil issue brought several countries to the island. India sent troops to the island in 1987, and then the international monitors came from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Sweden during the Norway-led ceasefire agreement during 2002-2008. The US considered sending its troops during the height of the war in 2009. In 1981, the Massachusetts House of Representatives adopted a resolution urging the US government to recognize the self-determination of the Tamils and support the restoration of the sovereign state of Tamil Eelam. In May 2022, the Canadian Parliament unanimously adopted a motion recognizing the Tamil Genocide. Today, a part of the issue is at the UN, but the core of the issue is Tamils' sovereignty, and it is not Sri Lanka's internal affair, but an international issue requiring international solution. The proper decolonization procedure must now be executed using the existing UN process and by conducting an Independence Referendum. The urgency is necessitated due to the atrocity crimes committed by Sri Lanka, its continuing aggression against the Tamil Nation, and the absence of guarantees of non-recurrence.

### *Location*

The island presently known as Sri Lanka is strategically located in the Indian Ocean in an enviable location between Suez Canal and the Malacca Strait by the busy East-West shipping lane that plies two-thirds of the world's oil and half of all container shipments. The Tamils consider Trincomalee as their political capital which has one of the deepest natural harbors in the world. Trincomalee was the home port of the Eastern Fleet of the British Royal Navy and Royal Air Force during World War II.

### *Urgent Need of Tamils & The US National Interest*

The Eelam Tamils need to be offered justice for the atrocity crimes and guarantees of non-recurrence. The colonization and the oppression of Tamils must end. They need to be given their legal rights to self-determination. Our urgent goal is to work with the US Government towards permanent political solution through an Independence Referendum that is conducted and monitored by the international community, and ensure peace and stability return to this strategically vital part of the world.

*Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness ... Independence Referendum for Eelam Tamils!*