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Federation of Global Tamil Organizations

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FGTO Congratulates Navi Pillay on Nobel Peace Prize and Invites Partnership to Advance Justice for Tamil Genocide

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The Federation of Global Tamil Organizations (**FGTO**) warmly congratulates Judge Navanethem “Navi” Pillay on being awarded the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her contribution to peace and international law. The Tamil diaspora hopes that her recognition will strengthen the pursuit of justice for the victims of Sri Lanka’s genocide against Tamils. [Nobel Committee announcement](#). FGTO regards these atrocities against the Tamil people as genocide and seeks an independent judicial determination.

A South African jurist of Tamil heritage and former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008 to 2014, Judge Pillay has helped advance international justice through her service at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court. Her achievements hold special significance for Tamil communities worldwide.

FGTO remembers with gratitude her public warnings about the danger facing Tamils in Sri Lanka during the final months of the genocidal war in 2009. In March that year, her office reported credible accounts of thousands of civilians killed and injured, including within designated “no-fire zones,” and warned that actions by the Sri Lankan military could constitute international crimes. [UN briefing](#). She repeatedly pressed for an international, independent inquiry at a time when much of the UN system remained silent. The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) failed to establish an international investigation in 2009. The Council subsequently mandated an investigation in 2014, following determined advocacy by the Tamil diaspora and human rights defenders. FGTO considers the resulting accountability efforts insufficient.

FGTO calls for an independent investigation into the designation and shelling of the ‘No Fire Zones,’ including whether these actions demonstrate deliberate targeting of Tamil people or genocidal intent.

In 2012, an internal United Nations review acknowledged serious failures in the organization’s response to the crisis. Later investigations and accountability initiatives have provided an important foundation on which further efforts toward justice can build. FGTO believes that honouring those who suffered requires turning documentation and international commitments into effective legal action. [UN review statement](#).

The internal UN report (the Petrie Review) concluded:

“Events in Sri Lanka mark a grave failure of the UN to adequately respond to early warnings and to the evolving situation during the final stages of the conflict and its aftermath, to the detriment of hundreds of thousands of civilians and in contradiction with the principles and responsibilities of the UN.”

The Petrie Review found that the UN withheld internally compiled casualty figures, did not publicly state that most recorded deaths came from government shelling, and avoided confronting attacks on civilians

and hospitals amid concerns about preserving humanitarian access. No dedicated UN investigation specifically into allegations of genocide against Tamils during the final phase of the war has been established.

A continuing commitment to Tamil rights and justice

Judge Pillay's engagement with Tamil concerns continued after her tenure at the United Nations. In a 2015 interview with Thanthi TV, reported by Tamil Guardian, she opposed impunity for serious international crimes and discussed the evidence relevant to determining genocide, including reported systematic sexual violence against Tamil women and girls. She explained that the required intent concerns destruction of a protected group in whole or in part, while emphasizing that a court must assess the evidence and reach a determination. [Tamil Guardian, September 2015](#).

On 18 May 2020, the Tamil diaspora commemorated Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day worldwide. In her message marking the occasion, she honoured Tamil victims and urged collective international action to secure Tamil rights, justice and reparations. She also drew attention to continuing discrimination, land issues and detention, and condemned the presidential pardon of the soldier convicted of the Mirusuvil massacre. FGTO welcomes this expression of solidarity with affected families and their pursuit of redress. [Tamil Guardian, May 2020](#).

At the March 2021 “Loss of the Tamil Homeland” conference, Judge Pillay expressed hope that evidence concerning Sri Lanka would be examined in criminal proceedings. FGTO sees this emphasis on judicial examination as a constructive basis for cooperation toward a full and independent assessment of Tamil genocide allegations. [TamilNet, March 2021](#).

An invitation to work with Tamil survivors

Building on this record, FGTO respectfully invites Judge Pillay to meet with Tamil survivors, families of the disappeared, civil society representatives and independent legal experts to identify practical ways to advance accountability.

FGTO would welcome her willingness to assist, in ways consistent with her professional responsibilities, by:

- **Supporting access to justice:** offering a legal opinion on the Tamil diaspora-supported booklet [Justice for Sri Lanka's Genocide Against Tamils](#), released in 2024, or helping connect survivors and their representatives with qualified lawyers and organizations able to provide legal assistance, including pro bono support.
- **Supporting rigorous examination of genocide:** encouraging independent assessment of the evidence, including evidence relevant to intent and patterns of violence, alongside war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- **Keeping survivors at the centre:** supporting meaningful participation by affected families, with informed consent, protection from reprisals and respect for their dignity.

Building on existing work

The Council has mandated the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to collect, consolidate, analyse and preserve evidence concerning serious violations in Sri Lanka and to support proceedings before authorities with competent jurisdiction. FGTO calls on the OHCHR Sri Lanka Accountability Project (OSLAP) to prioritize analysis of systematic group-targeting of

Tamils during the final phase of the conflict (2008–May 2009) and states to provide the resources and cooperation needed to translate this work into meaningful accountability. [UN description of the mandate](#).

FGTO also renews its call for a dedicated, independent examination of genocide against Tamils. Such an examination should build on existing documentation, rigorously assess the applicable legal requirements and support proceedings before competent courts.

FGTO also respectfully requests Judge Pillay's assistance in identifying relevant evidence and facilitating its lawful availability to survivors' legal representatives and competent authorities, subject to authorization, confidentiality and witness protection.

Justice, truth, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence can help create the conditions for lasting peace. They should be pursued with fairness, independence and respect for the rights of all affected communities.

FGTO urges the United Nations Human Rights Council to immediately institute an independent fact-finding mandate on genocide and related international crimes against the Tamil people, and calls on Nobel laureate Navi Pillay to leverage the global platform of her Peace Prize to speak again to the facts that the Council refused to address in 2009.

Media contact: <https://fgto.org/>

Further background: [FGTO's position on justice for Tamils](#)

- There can never be immunity for serious crimes (Sept 2015), <https://www.tamilguardian.com/node/33739>
- Navi Pillay explains 'human rights' limitations in Geneva on Tamil genocide (Mar 2021), <https://tamilnet.com/art.html?artid=39975&catid=79>
- A far cry from justice (May 2020), <https://www.tamilguardian.com/node/943671>
- Nobel Peace Prize for 2026, to Navanethem "Navi" Pillay for her efforts to promote peace and international law, <https://www.nobelpeaceprize.org/press/press-releases/nobel-peace-prize-for-2026>