



PEARL welcomes the united Tamil call for action at the UNHRC

Washington D.C.; January 15, 2021 – Today, elected representatives of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, members of the Tamil victim communities, and Tamil civil society organizations have published a [joint call for action](#) targeting the 46th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

In their letter to the member states of the UNHRC, the signatories highlight the continued rejection of the Sri Lankan government and all major Sinhala political parties to investigate allegations of mass atrocity crimes committed during the ethnic armed conflict; including genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. They call on the member states to recognize that there is no prospect for accountability through any domestic or hybrid mechanism in Sri Lanka and that any effective accountability mechanism must be fully internationalized.

The Tamil people have demonstrated considerable patience since the release of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) report. The UNHRC's adoption of multiple resolutions that were co-sponsored by Sri Lanka, provided Sri Lanka a generous time-frame to implement commitments for truth, justice, accountability, and reconciliation.

PEARL welcomes the unprecedented unity shown in the joint letter. The Tamil people have consistently rejected any form of domestic mechanism due to the lack of political will by Sri Lanka to meaningfully address the root causes of the conflict and this move is long overdue. The Tamil people in the North-East of Sri Lanka were and remain the most conflict-affected; together with Muslims across the island, Tamils remain most at risk of human rights violations.

As long as the international community shies away from taking a strong stance against the Sri Lankan government, particularly by making bilateral ties contingent on substantial improvements and progress on human rights and accountability, the situation for the Tamils and Muslims will only deteriorate, deepening divisions amongst all peoples on the island. Furthermore, the majoritarian politics of the current government will continue to further entrench the Sinhala-Buddhist ethnocracy and its impunity.

PEARL calls on the international community to heed the demands of this broad Tamil coalition on behalf of the Tamil people in the North-East.

In particular, we urge the UNHRC to establish a fully independent, international evidence-gathering mechanism as well as a special procedure that is mandated to monitor, report on, and advise on the increasing repression and militarization and impunity in Sri Lanka.