

Tamil Genocide: Evidence and Next Steps



National Council of Canadian Tamils (NCCT) is a not-for-profit organization built by delegates elected from across Canada. The NCCT focuses on providing a unified democratic voice for Tamil Canadians in Canada and advocates for the voiceless Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka.

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Introduction

A) About the National Council of Canadian Tamils (NCCT)

The NCCT is registered as a Not-For-Profit-Organization with both the Federal and Provincial governments of Canada. Canadian-Tamils took a historic stride on June 20, 2010, by pioneering and electing a nationwide organization, the National Council of Canadian Tamils (NCCT). The NCCT is dedicated to raising awareness of important issues facing Tamils domestically and internationally.

The elections, conducted by Tamil Elections Canada, allowed tens of thousands of Tamils from across the country the ability to vote for representatives at the regional, provincial, and national level. The elections resulted in 43 individuals being sworn in as the first assembly called Council Directors of the NCCT.

The NCCT is a legal entity, with its board of directors as governing committee being responsible for the organization. The NCCT has thus built a working system, in order to tackle the various issues that affect the Tamil community in Canada, while constantly raising awareness of the issues plaguing the Tamil people back home.

The NCCT's Mandate

Over 80 Tamil community organizations from across Canada came together in an initiative called "Tamil Community General Assembly" to create a consensus document outlining their collective position and guiding principles for engagement with all interested parties. This Assembly was unanimous in their adoption of 34 points for consensus. The points are divided into sections: historical context, the responsibility of the international community, Canadian Government responsibility, the role of the Tamil diaspora, and the effects of proscribing Tamil community activism.

B) Historical Context and Summary

According to archaeological evidence, the Tamil people have the most extended history on the island of Sri Lanka. They are indigenous to the island with a long history, having a culturally and linguistically distinct identity, and thus by UN definition, they constitute a nation. When the British arrived on the island in 1795, Tamil people lived in the North and East of the island while the Sinhalese people occupied the south of the island ruled as separate Kingdoms. The British captured the entire island, joined these two nations in 1833, and ruled the island called Ceylon for their administrative convenience.

Ever since the British left the island in 1948, successive Sri Lankan governments systematically destroyed the Tamil Nation. Tamil people have been continuously and intentionally targeted for annihilation for over seven decades, which constitutes genocide. Successive Sri Lankan Governments were mainly elected based on Sinhala Buddhist supremacist propaganda, which led to periodic pogroms against Tamil people, including rape, sexual humiliation, enforced disappearances, mass murder, torture, and destruction of Tamil-owned property and business on the island. Successive Sinhalese-led governments instigated these major pogroms in 1956, 1958, 1961, 1977, 1983, and more frequently after that. From 1983, the Tamil genocide continued with aerial bombardments of Tamil villages and towns, which rose to a crescendo resulting in a genocidal onslaught leading up to May 18, 2009. The Government of Sri Lanka urged the Tamil People fleeing the Sri Lanka army's shelling to go into designated "No Fire Zones." After herding the tens of thousands of innocent Tamil children, women, and men into the "No Fire Zone," the Sri Lanka troops, mainly composed of Sinhalese, used internationally banned chemical weapons and multi-barrel rocket launchers to attack them. Until today, there has been no accountability or justice for the massacre of innocent Tamil people, numbering over 70,000 by U.N. accounts. Trophy video footage taken by the Sri Lanka army personal show murder and mayhem unleashed upon unarmed Tamil civilians by the Sri Lanka army.

Furthermore, Tamil people continue to suffer structural genocide even today, resulting in Tamil people fleeing Sri Lanka seeking refuge elsewhere. Many of them are languishing in detention centers in India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and many other countries for over three decades. Over 1.5 million Tamil people (25% of the original population) have fled the island as refugees.

Despite the overwhelming weight of evidence, successive Sri Lankan governments adamantly denied killing anyone! They have also used all diplomatic channels to continue to deny their culpability in the genocide using their embassies and expatriate community members loyal to them. While those denials compound the grief of the remaining survivors of the genocide, the Sri Lanka Governments continue to prevent the remembrance of the victims' memories and cause continuing trauma and pain not only within the island but also overseas as well, including Canada. While Tamil people commemorate May 18th as “Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day” worldwide, the Sri Lanka government continues to celebrate May 18th as “Victory Day,” continuing to inflict psychological war on the survivors. The occupying army also prevents Tamil people on the island from remembering their loved ones killed by Sri Lanka government armed forces.

The new Prime Minister and President of Sri Lanka claimed that there would not be any foreign judges or international involvement in the investigation of War crimes, contrary to the promises made in the UNHRC resolution that their previous governments pledged and co-sponsored. While Land grabs, Militarization, Colonization, Sexual violence continues at an accelerated pace, there is no reasonable improvement in the Release of Political prisoners. It is also important to note that the current President was the Defense Secretary, serving near the top of the chain of command at the height of the Tamil Genocide in 2009. His brother, Mahinda Rajapaksa, is the current Prime Minister and served as the President and Commander of all the forces during the height of genocide against the Tamil people in 2009. Both individuals are credibly accused of serious allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide through command

responsibility.

The UNHRC gave 18 months for implementing the HRC Resolution 30/1 and then HRC Resolution 34/1, and then 40/1 gave further extensions of two years to implement the resolution. After foot-dragging for five years with extensions, none of the four transitional justice mechanisms that the Sri Lankan Government pledged has been implemented. Continuous reports detailing severe ongoing human rights violations, including widespread torture, suggest that Sri Lanka's culture of impunity has not been addressed. This inaction bears testimony to the fact that the Sri Lankan State is unwilling to deal with the past crimes or on-going violations and restore genuine justice to the Tamil victims. UNHRC passed a new resolution 46/1 indicating the continuous failure of domestic mechanism and strengthened the High Commissioner's office to further collect, consolidate, analyze and preserve information and evidence and to develop possible strategies for future accountability processes for gross violations of human rights or serious violations of international humanitarian law in Sri Lanka, to advocate for victims and survivors, and to support relevant judicial and other proceedings including in Member States with competent jurisdiction.

This report provides factual details from credible sources that clearly proves the genocide committed against Tamil people in the island of Sri Lanka. In order for the victims and families to heal from the trauma and to bring about justice, it is of great importance that all Ontarians learn about the Tamil Genocide through Bill 104, Tamil Genocide Education Week. This will foster a sense of understanding and opportunity for Tamil Canadians living in Canada to heal and prosper.

C) Tamil Genocide Timeline

Tamil Genocide Timeline

1948

The British grant independence to Ceylon leaving a Secular government with English, Sinhalese, and Tamil as "Official Languages" of business with the government.

1949

Over 850,000 Tamils of Indian origin (3rd and 4th generation) are stripped of their citizenship barring them from voting allowing 10% more Sinhalese to get elected from central hills of Ceylon.

1952

The first election after independence the Sinhala Buddhist party proclaiming "Ceylon as a Buddhist country" gets elected with majority vote from the Sinhalese.

1956

The "Sinhala Only Act" was passed in the parliament outlawing the use of English and Tamil in Official business. When the Tamil parliamentarians staged a Gandhi-style non-violent protest in front of the parliament building, they were man-handled by Sinhalese thugs. Continuing protests in the North and East led to another anti-Tamil pogrom in 1958 April in which hundreds of Tamils were killed.

1969

"Standardization of marks for university entrance" is enacted to prevent thousands of Tamils from gaining admission to the universities, which were all controlled by the government.

1972

Ceylon becomes a Republic "Sri Lanka" (Sinhalese name) severing all ties to the British Crown against the wishes of all the Tamils. Tamils lose legal protection against discriminatory legislation passed by the majority Sinhalese parliament.

Tamil Genocide Timeline

1977

In early August Sinhalese mobs were orchestrated to attack Tamils identified using the Voters' lists. This was in retaliation for the 82% Tamils voting in favour of independence in the 1977 General Election.

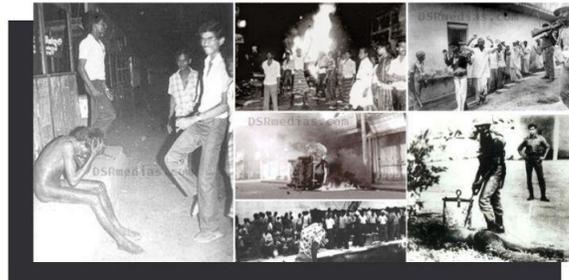
1981

On June 1st, 1981, an organized mob of Sinhalese thugs under the command of two Government Ministers went on a rampage and burned the Jaffna Public library. The burning of this library destroyed over 97,000 Tamil books and ancient manuscripts, all containing the history of the Tamils.



1983

In July 1983, an anti-Tamil pogrom was unleashed in which the Sinhala mobsters used Voters' Lists to identify Tamil residences, and burned them to the ground. Thousands of Tamils were displaced and killed, and numerous Tamil-owned businesses were burned to the ground.



Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said at Indian parliament said "We have condemned and we do condemn genocide and where and we realise the, harassment of and injustice to the Tamils of Sri Lanka. However, I am sure Hon. Members will understand that however strong our feelings the Government has to show greater restraint, not because we are hesitant or reluctant, but because at every steps we have to consider whether our words and actions will help or harm the Sri Lankan Tamils"

Tamil Genocide Timeline

1983-2002

Sri Lanka army, navy, and air force continue to indiscriminately attack Tamil areas killing and maiming thousands of Tamil civilians.

2002-2008

Peace accord signed clearly demarcating Tamil areas separately ruled from Sri Lanka with International Peace Monitors at the border.

2008
January

Sri Lanka withdraws from the Peace Accord and starts aerial bombing of homes, schools, and hospitals in Tamil areas in the North and East.

2009

Hundreds of thousands of innocent Tamil civilians were targeted and killed by Sri Lankan state military. Hospitals and no-fire zones were targeted using GPS coordinates given to them by the International Red Cross.



Post 2009

Militarization, colonization, land grabs, sexual violence, rape and forced disappearances continue in Tamil areas. All aspects of Tamil life controlled by the military.

Tamil Genocide Timeline

2015

President Maithripala Sirisena signed a UN Human Rights Council resolution that ensured that Sri Lanka uphold human rights.

November
2019

Defense Secretary, at the time of the final onslaught on Tamils in 2009, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, is elected President. Many army personnel who have been connected war crimes and crimes against humanity were appointed to defense secretary and other senior rankings. The Defense Ministry now controls the police and civilian agencies. Military officers has control of the Civilian intelligence agency.

February
2020

Sri Lanka Prime Minister, Mahinda Rajapaksa (President at the time of the final onslaught on Tamils in 2009), announces that Sri Lanka will be withdrawing its co-sponsorship of the UN resolution of 2015. This resolution involved investigating human rights violations by Sri Lankan authorities.

January
2021

Tamil war memorial at Jaffna University is destroyed by Sri Lankan police forces in the night. The memorial was constructed in 2019 to mark the 10 year anniversary of the Mullivaikal massacre.



February
2021

Sri Lankan government officials are urging the rejection of the upcoming UNHRC resolution. The new resolution focuses on accountability and collecting and preserving evidence collected supporting human rights violations.

Significance of Educating Canadians about the Tamil Genocide

Canada is home to the largest population of Tamil people outside south-east Asia. Many Tamil Canadians have been directly impacted by the genocide committed against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka. Many have fled Sri Lanka to seek refuge in Canada and build a new life here. As a result of the horrifying experiences, many Tamil Canadians continue to experience mental trauma, which is continuing to impact the victims and future generations.

Educating Canadians about the Tamil Genocide is an initiative that will have many benefits, as outlined below.

1. This will acknowledge the heinous crimes committed against Tamil people as Genocide and support the healing of the community. Furthermore, the Tamil Genocide Education Week provides an opportunity for Tamil Canadians to honour and remember those impacted by the Genocidal Massacre in Mullivaikaal, Sri Lanka.
2. It will support the younger generations born in Canada to understand their history and the trauma experienced by their relatives, promoting cultural identity, and reducing the impact of intergenerational trauma.
3. This education will allow all Canadians to remember, commit, and ensure such a tragedy is never repeated and support justice, accountability, reconciliation, and long-term peace in Sri Lanka.
4. It is also an opportunity for all Canadians to learn about how the Tamil genocide in Sri Lanka led to a mass exodus, which resulted in the Tamil community finding themselves in Canada. In Canada, home to people from around the world, an opportunity to learn about each other's histories strengthens our commitment to diversity.
5. Canadians will learn to recognize the events that lead to genocide in their role as peacekeepers of the world.

The Case of Tamil Genocide in Sri Lanka

In the Convention on the Prevention and Punishments of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention), Article II states that:

Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:

- killing members of the group;
- causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life, calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

There are two parts to the definition of the crime of Genocide: Mental element and Physical element.

The *physical element* includes the acts outlined above.

The *mental element* is outlined in the definition as the “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.”

The Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia held by The International Criminal Tribunal (ICTY) stated that “intent” could be proven without explicit evidence. Intent can be established based on

“... facts and circumstances, such as the general context, the perpetration of other culpable acts systematically directed against the same group, the scale of atrocities committed, the systematic targeting of victims on account of their membership of a particular group, or the repetition of destructive and discriminatory acts.”

This will be discussed in the Mental Element section on page 19.

The Systematic Discrimination and Violence Constitutes Genocide

We will be exploring the physical and mental elements of genocide as laid out in the definition outlined in the Genocide Convention. The five pillars of genocide are applied below to Tamil Genocide.

A) Physical Element

i) Killing members of the group

During the 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom, also referred to as Black July, Tamil people were targeted using voter lists and other methods. Survivor stories bring to light the many ways in which the mobs were identifying Tamil people. In fear of being killed, many Tamil people who were fluent in Sinhala attempted to hide their Tamil identity. However, some words were specifically more difficult for Tamil people to pronounce and were used to identify them.

The Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka Report from March 2011 provides many examples in which the acts committed by the Sri Lankan government forces violate international humanitarian law and human rights laws.

In contrast to the government's propaganda of a "humanitarian rescue operation with zero civilian casualties," the conflict's final stage was anything but that. Below we outline a few examples outlined in the report.

- From September 2008 to May 2009, the Sri Lanka Army advanced into Vanni with heavy shelling, resulting in many civilians' deaths. There were 330,000 civilians trapped in the thin stretch of land.

- Intimidation of media outlets and media personnel who criticized the government continued in the form of “white van abductions” that resulted in the deaths and disappearances of reporters.
- After notifying civilians to move to “Safe Zones,” identified by the government, these locations were shelled using heavy weaponry.
- UN hub, food distribution lines located close to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) ships were shelled.
- These bombings took place even when the government forces knew the locations because the UN and ICRC notified them with GPS coordinates.
- Although government officials were notified of hospitals’ locations, all hospitals in the Vanni region were bombed, in which some were attacked multiple times.
- Underestimating (intentionally) the number of civilians trapped in the Vanni region further added to the suffering as it prevented the civilians from receiving the necessary food, medicine needed to survive.

ii) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group

Human Rights Watch found credible evidence of rape, torture and enforced disappearances in the camps to which civilians fled. According to a report released by human rights lawyer Yasmin Sooka in March 2014, “Abduction, arbitrary detention, torture, rape and sexual violence have increased in the post-war period (Sooka, 2014, p6).” Based on medical and psychiatric records, 40 victims have reported being subjected to rape and sexual violence by Sri Lankan security forces. All events took place between 2009 and 2014.

The continuing intimidation, threats, abductions, torture, sexual violence and rape creates an environment of fear for Tamil people living in the North and East. Rape and sexual violence are forms of physical and psychological destruction of Tamil men and women. Although sexual

assaults continue to be reported to authorities, justice and accountability are often minimal and/or absent. Victims and witnesses continue to be intimidated, regardless of the introduction of the Witness Protection Act. This Act is not entrusted to a different division, but the witnesses are expected to be protected by the same perpetrators of the abuse.

Government forces continue to defy the Rule of Law and act with impunity and perpetrate violence against innocent Tamil people, including former cadres and their families. According to the STOP report released by the International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) in 2016, following the election in 2015, many torture camps continue to operate throughout the country. Some are located close to army camps, police stations and other secret locations. Many sexual violence cases are linked to “white van abductions,” in which specific individuals are targeted because of their past affiliations and kept in solitary confinement, tortured, and raped. The release of these victims is also conducted secretly for a large ransom payment. Families are threatened and harassed if they report the abductions or try to seek justice. The Human Rights Watch has documented several cases of sexual violence against Tamil men and women by the Sri Lankan Security Forces between 2006 and 2013. Their 2013 report recorded 75 cases of rape, sexual violence, and other forms of torture. The report further states that sexual violence was used severely by the Sri Lankan Security Forces during interrogations of LTTE cadres.

Based on an investigation carried out by The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CD), UNICEF and Sri Lanka’s Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition, many displaced residents of the Jaffna District showed more extensive cases of PTSD, anxiety, and depression (Husain et al., 2011, p. 522). These findings can be compared with those of post-war victims in Kosovo and Afghanistan (Husain et al., 2011, p. 522).

iii) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part

Intentionally under-reporting the number of civilians trapped in the war zone by government officials, including the President, caused great suffering to the Tamil people. The denial of adequate food and medical supplies enough for the civilians trapped in the Vanni region is evidence of inflicting conditions on the Tamil people that will bring physical destruction.

According to the International Criminal Tribunal, strategies to destroy a group include methods that do not cause immediate death, such as those mentioned above. Furthermore, “withholding sufficient living accommodations” is also a strategy used for the physical destruction of the Tamil people in whole or in part. Many Tamil civilians fleeing the conflict ended up in camps. Many remained in these camps for 2-3 years. Menik farm, a camp located in Vavuniya, had up to 250,000 civilians living under poor conditions and lack of access to food and medical supplies.

According to statistics provided by the Northern Provincial Council (NPC) on 09/10/14, 68,546 acres of land in the North have been occupied by the military. Many Tamil civilians returning to their homes after the war were told that their private lands now belong to the Sri Lankan government. The occupying Sri Lanka Army has built new resorts and businesses on lands previously home to local Tamil people displaced by the war. A report released by the Oakland Institute states, “The army officially runs luxury resorts and golf courses that have been built on land illegally seized from now-internally displaced Tamils (Mittal, 2015, p. 1-3).” Those who are opposed to military land grabs are being threatened. Recently a Batticaloa land reform director was shot and injured. Those who are protesting for their land to be returned are under security surveillance and continuous harassment.

The increasing Sri Lankan military presence in Tamil-speaking areas in the north and east further destroys Tamil livelihoods and culture. The militarization of these areas has increased Sinhalese settlers in Tamil areas. As a result, the destruction of Tamil religious places of worship being replaced by Buddhist temples. The names of villages and street signs are being changed from Tamil to Sinhala in these areas. The Social Architect, a civil society organization from the North-East, identified 89 Tamil villages that the Sri Lankan state had renamed with Sinhala names. This constitutes the ongoing cultural genocide of the Tamil people. Also, this militarization has fostered fear and intimidation of the Tamil people in the North and East.

Every Sri Lanka Government Department, including the military, the Archaeological Department, and the Forest Department, is working to coordinate colonization, militarization, military interference in civilian affairs, land grabs and removing cultural heritage and erasing religious identity.

iv) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group

A 2007 leaked report from the US Embassy in Colombo stated evidence of pro-government paramilitary organization's doctors enforcing abortions on Tamil women who assumed they were getting their regular check-ups (Blake, 2007). Furthermore, the Health Department in the Northern Province noticed a higher rate, 30 times, of birth control implants in Mullaitivu compared to Jaffna. Coercive population control measures were also taken in 2013 in Veravil, Keanchi and Valaipaddu in Kilinochchi in the Northern Province. Women were threatened of being denied future treatments in the hospitals if they refused contraception (The Social Architects, 2013).

There have also been reports of Tamil women working in central Sri Lanka's plantation field being offered payment for surgical sterilization. In contrast, Sri Lankan police and Army officers (majority Sinhalese ethnicity) were provided with 100,000 rupees in incentive to have a third child. This further proves the intention of the government of Sri Lanka to destroy the Tamil people.

v) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The surviving Tamils who escaped the “No Fire Zone” in May 2009, were herded into heavily guarded detention centers for a few years. During this time, thousands of Tamil children were taken away from the camps and transferred to the Sinhala areas in the South of the island, never to be seen by the parents again. Parents of these children have been holding continuous road-side vigils for the past four years demanding to know the fate of their children taken away.



The Systematic Discrimination and Violence Constitutes Genocide

B) Mental Element

As previously mentioned, proving intent can be done based on evidence that depicts the systematic targeting of atrocities against members of a particular group.

The examples mentioned above depicting the physical element of genocide constitutes a deliberate intent to destroy the Tamil people in whole or in part.

In addition to those mentioned, many senior officials of the Sri Lankan government have often addressed the Sinhala population with speeches and theories to suppress the Tamil people. One such example is evident in the speech from former President J.R. Jayewardene, following the 1983 riots.

"I am not worried about the opinion of the Tamil people... now we cannot think of them, not about their lives or their opinion... the more you put pressure in the north, the happier the Sinhala people will be here... Really if I starve the Tamils out, the Sinhala people will be happy."

- President J.R. Jayewardene (1977 – 1988), cited in Daily Telegraph, July 1983.

The genocide of the Tamil people has many similarities compared to other genocides, which proves the intent to destroy the Tamil people in whole or in part.

Similar to Srebrenica, the Vanni region was a significant location to the Tamil nation. The Vanni region provided the Northern and Eastern Provinces' connection to designate the area of the Tamil homeland. During the peace process, the North and Eastern Provinces operated as a de facto state, with Vanni as the LTTE's (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) administrative center.

This region housed an independent police service, political wing, courts, and banks, which were unaffiliated with the Sri Lankan state.

Regaining control of Vanni by Sri Lankan government forces, indiscriminately massacring tens of thousands of Tamil people, was intended to dismantle the de facto State of Tamil Nation and deny the Tamil people's right to self-determination.

With over 250,000 people being cornered in a small strip of land, many areas were designated as "No-fire Zones" or "Safe-zones." Pamphlets were dropped, directing civilians to move to these areas. In 1995, after being designated as a "safe area" by the UN Security council, Srebrenica was attacked, killing over 8 000 Bosniak Muslim men and boys. In 2009, after being designated as "Safe-zones," thousands of Tamil men, women and children were massacred as bombs dropped in these areas. United Nations' satellite images clearly show the bombings in these designated areas.

Intentionally under-reporting the number of civilians trapped in the conflict region, preventing food, and desperately needed medical supplies, further destroying the Tamil people.

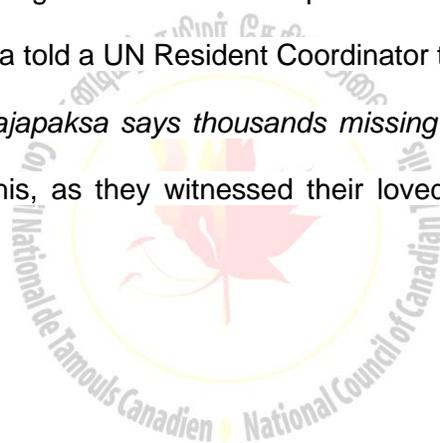
Many Tamil people that fled the conflict zone into government-controlled camps remained there for up to three years. This prevented the Tamil people of Vanni from reconstructing their town and re-establish their lives. Upon return, many families were informed the government had acquired their land under the Land Acquisition Act.

In 2003, the Darfur genocide in Sudan saw government forces attempting to conceal their crimes. This continues to be the case in Sri Lanka. Those who criticize the government, journalists, witnesses, and family members continue to be intimidated, and many become victims of the "white van" abductions. Furthermore, witnesses have reported that following the conflict, government forces are destroying civilian mass graves in the Vanni region. In an interview to

Channel 4 news, a former Sri Lankan soldier provided information of Sri Lankan forces using heavy machinery to destroy mass graves.

The UN has estimated the civilian casualty of the conflict to be around 70,000. However, a recent report released by the International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) puts the number of civilian casualties and disappearances (in 2009) at 169,796 (International Truth and Justice Project, 2021).

From February 20, 2017, relatives of the disappeared have been protesting, demanding answers to the whereabouts of their husbands, children, and siblings. The protest continues today, with women-led marching happening under increased police scrutiny. On January 20, 2020, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa told a UN Resident Coordinator that all the missing persons are dead (*Sri Lanka civil War: Rajapaksa says thousands missing are dead*, 2020). Many family members refuse to believe this, as they witnessed their loved ones surrendering to the Sri Lankan armed forces.



Ten Stages of Genocide as applied to the Tamil Genocide.

Understanding the genocidal process is one of the most important steps in preventing future Genocides. The analysis below is adapted from “The Ten Stages of Genocide” By Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, President, Genocide Watch (*Genocide Watch- Ten Stages of Genocide*, 1996)

The genocide we are exploring is the Tamil Genocide that is ongoing in Sri Lanka	
Stages of Genocide	This stage of genocide relates to this example because ...
<p>Classification</p> <p>Groups of people are put into “us and them” categories based on ethnicity, race, religion or nationality by another group.</p>	<p>Sinhala Only Act (1956) passed by the government of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), making Sinhalese the country’s official language.</p> <p>Sri Lankan Constitution, Article 9 of the constitution states: "The Republic of Sri Lanka shall give Buddhism the foremost place, and accordingly it shall be the duty of the State to protect and foster the Buddha Sasana while assuring to all religions the rights granted by Articles 10 and 14(1)(e)."</p> <p>The policy of standardization was a policy implemented by the Sri Lankan government in 1971 to curtail Tamil students’ number selected for certain universities’ faculties. ... Now, students from districts with inadequate educational facilities are given an allocated quota irrespective of their race.</p> <p><i>“I am not worried about the opinion of the Jaffna people... now we cannot think of them, not about their lives or their opinion... the more you put</i></p>

	<p><i>pressure in the north, the happier the Sinhala people will be here... Really if I starve the Tamils out, the Sinhala people will be happy.” -</i></p> <p>President J.R. Jayewardene, Daily Telegraph (London), July 1983 in response to the pogrom against Tamils.</p>
<p>Symbolism</p> <p>Symbols are applied to groups to make them evident in public.</p>	<p>Propaganda by the Sri Lankan government that “Tamils are tigers” and “Tigers are terrorists” creates fear among the Sinhalese against Tamil people. By demonizing the Tamil people, it was easier to “dehumanize” and kill them.</p>
<p>Discrimination</p> <p>A dominant group uses law, custom, and political power to deny the rights of other groups. The Powerless group may not be accorded full civil rights, voting rights, or even citizenship.</p>	<p>Sinhala Only Act in 1956 and Buddhism given the prominent place in the constitution implements the discrimination at the highest level of the government against Tamil people.</p> <p>The policy of Standardization severely limited the admission to university education for Tamil students. All universities and admissions to them are under the control of the government in Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Discrimination in work opportunities in government jobs and denial of access to public service in their own language are some of the discriminatory practices followed even today.</p>
<p>Dehumanization</p> <p>One group rejects the “humanness” of another group.</p>	<p>Mahavamsa, considered the holy book of the Buddhists, calls Tamil people of Sri Lanka as “demons”. Mahavamsa justifies and glorifies the murder of Tamil King Ellalan by Dutugemunu, and calls Tamil people as “invaders”, by equating them with “sinners, and wild beasts”.</p>

	<p>Influential Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalists in the early 19th century such as Anagarika Dharmapala referred to Tamils as exploiters and aliens.</p> <p>Prominent members in the government, including Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, military commanders, and Sri Lankan media continue to portray Tamil people as second-class citizens of Sri Lanka.</p>
<p>Organization</p> <p>A structure is in place (usually military) to conduct genocide.</p>	<p>Since 1983, the Sri Lankan government has increased their fire power and the number of armed forces. Now the Sri Lankan armed forces have around 346,700 active personnel.</p> <p>Anti-Tamil pogrom in 1983 was well planned and organized. Sri Lankan government Ministers, armed forces and the thugs organized themselves to kill Tamil innocent civilians and to destroy their property.</p> <p>During the last stages of the war in 2009, the Sri Lankan armed forces used cluster bombs and white phosphorus, both were comprehensively banned by International Treaties, on Tamil civilians to cause maximum damage (Pagnamenta, 2013).</p> <p>A very conservative estimate of the Sri Lankan Army's presence in Mullaitivu District, a Tamil district, is 60,000 personnel—1 soldier for every 2 civilians—making it one of the most heavily militarized regions in the world. This presence is grossly disproportionate to the country as a</p>

	<p>whole – 25% of the Sri Lankan Army is deployed in a District comprising 0.6% of the Sri Lankan population ("<i>Why can't we GO HOME?</i>", 2021).</p>
<p>Polarization</p> <p>Propaganda and other methods are used to divide people.</p>	<p>Media is used by the Sri Lankan government and Sinhala extremist groups as a tool to disseminate polarizing propaganda.</p> <p>Statements made by prominent Sinhala leaders provide a strong basis for inferring genocidal intent, one such statement by President Mahinda Rajapaksa during the ceremonial opening on May 19, 2009 of the Sri Lankan Parliament as cited in <i>The Sunday Leader</i>, 24 May 2009 as follows "We have removed the word minorities from our vocabulary three years ago. No longer are the Tamils, Muslims, Burghers, Malays and any other minorities. There are only two people in this country. One is the people that love this country. The other comprises the small groups that have no love for the land of their birth. Those who do not love the country are now a lesser group."</p>
<p>Preparation</p> <p>People are identified and separated as different by race, ethnicity, religion, or nationality.</p>	<p>Tamil people are identified and separated by their ethnic identity before being targeted for execution. During 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom, the voters lists were used to separate the Tamils to target and kill them and destroy their houses and their belongings.</p> <p>Just after the height of Genocide in 2009, Thousands of Tamil people were forced into concentration camps, separated to undergo further abuses including summary execution and rape.</p>

<p>Persecution</p> <p>Expropriation, forced displacement, ghettos, concentration camps.</p>	<p>Jaffna Library was burnt in 1981 along with its 97,000 volumes of books, numerous culturally important and irreplaceable manuscripts were destroyed in order to erase the Tamil people's collective memory pertaining to their culture and heritage.</p> <p>During the 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom, Tamil people were forced to flee their homes and became refugees in their own land. This is when many people started fleeing the country and sought asylum elsewhere.</p>
<p>Extermination</p> <p>The mass killing of people who are seen as less than human occurs.</p>	<p>Tamil people, in thousands, were killed at two different period of Tamil Genocide. Both events stand testimony to heinous crime of Genocide committed against Tamil people in the Island of Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Black July Pogrom 1983:</p> <p>The estimated innocent Tamil civilians killed were between 400 and 3,000 Tamil people. Tamil People were burned alive in their cars, stripped naked. Women were raped. In Colombo and provincial towns, soldiers stood by and even supplied petrol. In two pogroms in the biggest prison, Sinhalese inmates killed 53 of their Tamil counterparts. Almost certainly government complicity - a Sri Lankan human rights group says gangs operated at the behest of hardline ministers. On July 27 1983, President JR Jayewardene made his first speech on the events, offering no sympathy to the minority instead of emphasizing Sinhala grievances (<i>Remembering Sri Lanka's black july, 2013</i>).</p>

	<p>Mullivaaikaal Genocide 2009:</p> <p>UNHRC estimated more than 70,000 civilian deaths. Civilians fleeing the war in 2009 were directed by government officials to move to “safe zones.” Hospitals were marked, and coordinates were provided to the UN. These safe zones and hospitals in the safe zones were deliberately targeted and bombed by the Sri Lanka armed forces (<i>Report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) 2015</i>).</p>
<p>Denial</p> <p>The people responsible for the genocide deny it occurred by intimidating witnesses and destroying evidence.</p>	<p>The last of the stages of Genocide is "Denial," which is happening now in Sri Lanka while the structural genocide is ongoing.</p> <p>The Sri Lankan government is denying the killing of any Tamil civilians during the war. They repeatedly talked about zero casualties while the UNHRC's independent investigation, report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka, revealed in 2011 that just in the last stages of the war, there was a minimum of 40,000 civilian casualties.</p> <p>Not just that, the Sri Lankan government deny all charges, including unlawful killings, violations related to the deprivation of liberty, enforced disappearance, torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, Sexual and gender-based violence, Denial of humanitarian assistance, and Screening and deprivation of liberty of internally</p>

	<p>displaced persons which are reported in the Report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (<i>Report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) 2015</i>).</p>
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Denial of Genocide

There are many ways a Genocidaire will continue to deny the crime of Genocide committed by them (Ed & Charny, 1999). Since Sri Lanka is currently in the phase of complete denial, we would like to explore this section in more detail. Following are some of the examples as applied to the Tamil Genocide.

Question and minimize the statistics:

- Minimizing the number of civilians in the war zone, thus restricting the amount of food and medical supplies that were sent.
- Minimizing casualty numbers

Attack the motivations of the truth-tellers:

- Call the truth-tellers Terrorist sympathizers.

Claim that the deaths were inadvertent:

- “There are no independent observers, only LTTE sympathizers. Radio announcements were made, and movement of civilians started a month and a half ago.”
Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa (2005 – present) in an interview to IBN on February 3, 2009.
- The Defense Secretary, not President, is stating that those who remained in the LTTE controlled areas were LTTE sympathizers and thus not civilians.

Claim that the victims are receiving good treatment:

- Claim that Tamil people are now living peacefully in the country.
- Tens of thousands of Tamil people are still missing.
- Many have lost their livelihoods as their land has been confiscated from them

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, details and evidence presented here, it is clearly proven that the Sri Lankan government had the intent to commit Genocide on the Tamil people. The intent and pattern still exist and if not investigated by an International mechanism, Sri Lanka has a potential to escalate into further violence against Tamil people.

Elected government officials of Australia, Canada, the European Union, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, India, and Sri Lanka have made statements such that the atrocities committed against Tamil people in Sri Lanka constitute a Genocide.

The Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka, and the state of Tamil Nadu in India have passed resolutions in their respective assemblies calling for justice for the Tamil Genocide. In Canada, the City of Toronto and the City of Brampton have proclaimed May 18th as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day. In addition, the Toronto District School Board, York Regional District School Board, and Peel District School Board have recognized May 18th as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day.

Similarly, Canadian government and many other elected members of parliament from different countries, human rights experts, human rights organizations, and prominent activists across the world are calling for investigation of the Genocide committed against Tamil people.

The diaspora Tamil community is a very resilient and hopeful community. Many of whom were forced to leave their homeland to find refuge here in Canada, are working tirelessly to provide safety and stability for their kith and kin here in Canada and in the homeland.

The Tamil Genocide is one of the most recent events in the 21st century. Coping with trauma, loss and war is not an easy task for them and will take time to heal.

Many Tamil Canadians continue to experience PTSD and recent events have contributed to the amplification of PTSD symptoms. Re-experiencing the trauma, having negative thoughts and increased reactivity to stimuli that trigger traumatic memories are prevalent in many survivors. Moreover, this is resulting in the intergenerational trauma, with children experiencing secondary trauma from their parents' experience of genocide.

According to Psychologist, Carol Fredrek, there are 3 stages to recovering from trauma and PTSD: Establishing safety and stability, remembrance and mourning and reconnection (Fredrek, 2018). Tamil Canadians have worked hard to establish their lives. With the support of the community and governments, Tamil Canadians have been able to bring in some stability to their lives. Remembering and grieving the loss experienced is an essential part to the recovery of the community. With the continued propaganda by the Sri Lanka government, denying the genocide and denying justice further impedes the grieving process.

Educating others about the Tamil Genocide, will allow for Tamil Canadians living in Canada to remember their loved ones and move forward in the healing process. By acknowledging the genocide that took place and by educating others about it, Tamil Canadians will be able to share their experiences with others and prevent further occurrence elsewhere.

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