



British Tamils Forum United Kingdom

March 03, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TARGETED SANCTIONS AGAINST CREDIBLY ALLEGED PERPETRATORS OF GRAVE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES

We, the British Tamils Forum (BTF), are pleased with the recommendations made in the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights report A/HRC/49/9 (advance version) on Promoting, Reconciliation, Accountability and Human Rights in Sri Lanka. Item 61 of the report refers to “the targeted sanctions against credibly alleged perpetrators of grave human rights violations and abuses” is a significant step to ensuring non-recurrence of such abuses by those who are in power and/or uniforms under the protection of State impunity.

Referring to our continuous solicitations for more than a decade to impose economic sanctions against Sri Lanka, based on the atrocity crimes committed by the Sri Lankan forces during the last stage of the civil war in 2009, the international community has been so far reluctant to impose economic sanctions fearing such actions would be affecting the innocent civilians.

We are pleased that the western governments are now swiftly imposing sanctions against the individuals and Russian entities for the crimes that are being committed against the Ukrainian people. As we had been the hapless victims of the state sponsored genocidal oriented mass atrocity crimes while the whole world was watching helplessly, we sympathetically feel the pain that the Ukrainian civilians are now undergoing by the war of Russian invasion. We plead to the warring parties, the United Nations and the members states to act proactively to take care of the innocent Ukrainian civilians to save their lives.

The horrendous memory of the last phase of the war in Sri Lanka is still haunting us. The deployment of thermobaric weapons, cluster bombs, phosphorous bombs, multi barrel rockets, heavy artilleries, ariel bombardments, naval bombardments, blockade of food and medical supplies, torture, sexual violence, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, targeting hospitals, and killing more than 70,000 innocent Tamil people recorded by UN Review panel, and another 146,679 people unaccounted for reported by Bishop of Mannar, within a short duration, has caused enduring scars on every surviving Tamil people irrespective of whether they are in Sri Lanka or in other parts of the world.

Had the international community taken righteous steps in a timely manner to impose calibrated economic sanctions, at least to the extent of what they are imposing now on Russian individuals and its entities by setting its actions on Sri Lanka as a base-case, and by denying impunities enjoyed by the perpetrators, the continuation of the war crimes and the death of innocent civilians around the world could have minimised. This is what we, the BTF have been emphasising since the end of the war in 2009.



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We would appreciate and extend our sincere support to minimise the suffering of the Ukrainian people on humanitarian grounds. In the meantime, we urge the authorities to take necessary steps to impose calibrated sanctions as listed below against the individuals and the entities of Sri Lanka by using a mechanism so as not to affect the civilians of the island. Such actions are, but not limited to, by stopping unethical trade with Sri Lanka and applying sanctions as an effective leverage. Applying phased out **calibrated sanctions** and developing a **time bound implementation plan**, while carefully ensuring that such steps minimise affects to the civilian population, preferably excluding the food, medical and other essential supplies to the civilian population.

We urge the international community on the following emphases on Sri Lanka.

Sanctions against Genocide perpetrators

- a. Stop Sri Lankan defence forces involving UN peacekeeping operations
- b. Stop supplying services for the security forces
- c. Stop supplying spare parts, ammunitions, weapons, vehicles, aircrafts, ships, etc.
- d. Stop supplying or using technology for defence purposes
- e. Stop supplying or using other advanced technology for other purposes
- f. Targeted sanctions against individuals (E.g.: Military or Civilian perpetrated atrocity crimes)
- g. Targeted sanctions against institutions (E.g.: Military, Government, Religious, or other institutions)

Unethical trade & Tourism

- h. Stop Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) (Unethical trade, unstable investment environment)
- i. Stop promoting tourism to Sri Lanka
- j. Start divestments

Diplomatic sanction

- k. Reduce or remove Diplomatic staff
- l. Suspend Sri Lanka from international or regional institutions (E.g.: UN, Commonwealth)

Sports & Cultural sanction

- m. Stop Sri Lanka's participation of international sports

These are crucial steps forward for not only stopping Sri Lanka continuing its genocidal process under the pretense of complying with the international norm but will also act as deterrence for the state to continue its heinous crimes against Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

While the protection and the welfare of the civilians are crucial, we emphasise that providing justice to the victims and the survivors of the atrocity crimes by establishing the international prosecutorial mechanism and apply Magnitsky like acts, travel ban and asset freeze in line with the universal jurisdiction Principles.

We are confident and appreciate the UN is marching in a right path and are earnestly waiting for the outcome on Sri Lanka.



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Notes to Editors:

British Tamils Forum exists to harness the skills and the knowledge of the members of the forum, well-wishers and significant others including mainstream decision makers in the UK with the aim of alleviating the sufferings of the Tamils community in the Island of Sri Lanka and to further their right to self-determination within a democratic frame work under pinned by international law, its covenants and conventions. For more information info@britishtamilsforum.org and/or visit: www.britishtamilsforum.org