

The Charge is Genocide - the Struggle is for Freedom...

Nadesan Satyendra, 14 August 2007

[<http://www.tamilnation.org/saty/060902chargeisgenocide.htm>]



[One Year Ago on 14 August 2006: [Sri Lanka Air force kills 61 school children](#)]

".. to have suffered, worked, hoped together; that is worth more than common taxes and frontiers conforming to ideas of strategy... I have said 'having suffered together'; indeed, common suffering is greater than happiness. In fact, national sorrows are more significant than triumphs because they impose obligations and demand a common effort. .. A nation is a grand solidarity constituted by the [sentiment of sacrifices](#) which one has made and those that one is disposed to make again. " [Ernest Renan: Que'est-ce qu'une Nation? Paris 1882](#)

"..It is a vain dream to suppose that what other nations have won by struggle and battle, by suffering and tears of blood, we shall be allowed to accomplish easily, without terrible sacrifices, merely by spending the ink of the journalist and petition framer and the breath of the orator..." [Sri Aurobindo in Bande Mataram, 1907](#)

"....It is our duty to pay for our liberty with our own blood. The freedom that we shall win through our sacrifice and exertions, we shall be able to preserve with our own strength..." [Subhas Chandra Bose to the Indian National Army 1943. quoted in Mihir Bose's "The lost hero : a biography of Subhas Bose "](#)

Twenty four years ago, commencing on 23 July 1983, [thousands of Tamils were slaughtered](#) in the island of Sri Lanka by armed Sinhala gangs, led in many cases by Sinhala members of Parliament and their henchmen. It was a planned attack.

"Clearly this was not a spontaneous upsurge of communal hatred among the Sinhala people.. It was a series of deliberate acts, executed in accordance with a concerted plan, conceived and organised well in advance..." [Paul Sieghart:Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists and its British Section, Justice, March 1984](#)

It was genocide.

"..Under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, acts of murder committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such are considered as acts of genocide. The evidence points clearly to the conclusion that the violence of the

Sinhala rioters on the Tamils (in July/August 1983) amounted to acts of genocide." - *The International Commission of Jurists Review, December 1983*

Amongst the several acts of gruesome murder, one incident serves to illustrate the horror of the ordeal faced by Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka in July 1983:

"A tourist told yesterday how she watched in horror as a Sinhala mob deliberately burned alive a bus load of Tamils... Mrs. Eli Skarstein, back home in Stavangen, Norway, told how she and her 15 year old daughter, Kristin, witnessed one massacre. 'A mini bus full of Tamils were forced to stop in front of us in Colombo' she said. A Sinhalese mob poured petrol over the bus and set it on fire. They blocked the car door and prevented the Tamils from leaving the vehicle. 'Hundreds of spectators watched as about 20 Tamils were burned to death'. Mrs. Skarstein added: 'We can't believe the official casualty figures. Hundreds may be thousands must have been killed already.'" - *London Daily Express, 29th August 1983*

But [Genocide '83](#) was not the first occasion, when the Tamil people in the island of Sri Lanka were murdered by Sinhala armed gangs and security forces. Nor was it the last.

Twenty five years before [Genocide '83](#), [Tarzie Vittachi wrote in Emergency '58](#) -

"As panic spread, doors were closed in Sinhalese as well as Tamil homes. The Tamils closed their doors to escape murder, rape and pillage. The Sinhalese closed their doors to prevent Tamils running into their houses for shelter... Among the hundreds of acts of arson, rape, pillage, murder and plain barbarity some incidents may be recorded as examples of the kind of thuggery at work... At Wellawatte junction, near the plantain kiosk, a pregnant woman and her husband were set upon. They clubbed him and left him on the pavement, then they kicked the woman repeatedly as she hurried along at a grotesque sprint, carrying her swollen belly... What are we left with (in 1958)? A nation in ruins, some grim lessons which we cannot afford to forget and a momentous question: Have the Sinhalese and Tamils reached the parting of ways?.."

And in 1977, the Tamils were [attacked and killed again](#).

"A tragedy is taking place in Sri Lanka: the political conflict following upon the recent elections, is turning into a racial massacre. It is estimated by reliable sources that between 250 and 300 Tamil citizens have lost their lives and over 40,000 made homeless...(The Tamils) have now lost confidence in their treatment by the Sinhalese majority and are calling for a restoration of their separate national status... At a time when the West is wake to the evils of racialism, the racial persecution of the Tamils and denial of their human rights should not pass without protest. The British have a special obligation to protest, as these cultivated people were put at the mercy of their neighbours less than thirty years ago by the British Government. They need our attention and support." - *Sir John Foster, David Astor, Louis Blom-Cooper, Dingle*

Foot, Robert Birley, James Fawcett, Michael Scott, London Times 20 September 1977

It was all this and more that led Paul Sieghart to conclude, 23 years ago in March 1984

"Communal riots in which Tamils are killed, maimed, robbed and rendered homeless are no longer isolated episodes; they are beginning to become a pernicious habit." - *Paul Sieghart: Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists and its British Section, Justice, March 1984*

Two years later, [in March 1986, Senator A.L.Missen](#), Chairman, Australian Parliamentary Group of Amnesty International declared in the Australian Parliament -

"Some 6000 Tamils have been killed altogether in the last few years...These events are not accidental. It can be seen that they are the result of a deliberate policy on the part of the Sri Lankan government...Democracy in Sri Lanka does not exist in any real sense. - *Australian Senate Hansard, 13 March 1986*

Four years thereafter, on 19 September 1990, [Amnesty launched a three month international campaign](#) against Sri Lanka with a campaign poster which declared: "Licensed to Kill: State Terror in Sri Lanka". But, two years after Amnesty's campaign Sri Lanka continued to kill with impunity and [Margaret Trawick](#), Professor of Social Anthropology, Massey University Palmerston North, New Zealand was moved to declare in agony -

"I have been struggling in my mind against the conclusion that the Sri Lanka government is trying to kill or terrorise as many Tamil people as possible; that the government is trying to keep the conditions of the war unreported internationally, because if those conditions were reported, the actions of the military would be perceived as so deplorable that foreign nations would have no choice but to condemn them. And this would be embarrassing to everybody. But it seems now that no other conclusion is possible..." [Statement of 28 April 1996](#)

Today, twenty three years after Paul Sieghart, 21 years after Senator.A.L.Missen, 17 years after Amnesty, and 11 years after Professor Mararet Trawick, Tamils continue to be 'killed, maimed, robbed and rendered homeless' and the Sri Lanka government continues 'to kill or terrorise as many Tamil people as possible.' A fair examination of the [documented record](#) will prove (and prove beyond reasonable doubt) that the people of Tamil Eelam continue to be murdered and extra judicially executed in a systematic, deliberate and planned manner by the Sri Lanka authorities and their agents.

The massacres at [Chunnakam 1984](#), [Mannar 1985](#), [Kumithini 1985](#), [Tiriyai 1985](#), [Iruthayapuram 1986](#), [Akkaraipattu 1986](#), [Kokkadaicholai 1987](#), [Kannapuram 1990](#), [Saththurukondan 1990](#), [Kokaddicholai 1991](#), [Inspector Etram Milakudiyetra 1995](#), [Jeyanthipuram 1995](#), [Navali 1995](#), [Nagerkoil School 1995](#), [Kumarapuram 1996](#), [Puthukudiyiruppu 1997](#), [Amparai 1997](#), [Kalutara Prison 1997](#), [Tampalakamam 1998](#),

[Ayithiyamalai 2000](#), [Bindunuwewe 2000](#), [Trincomalee 2006](#), [Mandaithivu 2006](#), [Vankalai 2006](#), [Pesalai 2006](#), [Vallipunam 2006](#), [Muthur 2006](#), [Vaharai 2006](#), and [Padahathurai 2007](#) have now become a part of the history of the suffering of the Tamil people. And these massacres have gone hand in hand with [disappearances and individual extra judicial killings](#), [rape](#), [torture](#), [aerial bombardment and shelling](#).



The continued attack on the Tamil people is genocidal in intent and is taking place with [impunity](#) and under the cover of a [controlled and intimidated media](#). Successive Sri Lanka governments and their Sinhala Presidents have refused to admit to or publicly condemn the terrorist actions of those under their command. On the contrary, the pronouncements of successive Sri Lanka Presidents, Sinhala Cabinet Ministers and the holding of [obscene 'victory' ceremonies](#) have served to encourage the terrorist actions of those under their command. Sri Lanka President Jayawardene, famously remarked to Ian Ward of the London Daily Telegraph in July 1983 -

"I have tried to be effective for sometime but cannot. I am not worried about the opinion of the Jaffna (Tamil) people now... 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.."

[Deanna Hodgkin](#), Insight Magazine, wrote in 1990 -

"..I attended a press conference where [Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne](#) told the press that there had been no civilian casualties despite heavy bombing. When I volunteered that I had seen many bomb-blasted bodies, and many hundreds of people injured by helicopter strafing and more, the Defence Minister told me it was a pity I had not been shot. That's the mentality you are dealing with - human rights is not an idea with much currency for the Sri Lankan government.... Congressman, I'm writing to you because I am angry. You should be, too." [Letter dated 7 November 1990 to US Congressman Gus Yatron, Subcommittee on Human Rights, Washington](#)

Three years later, in 1993, Sri Lanka [President D.B.Wijetunga declared](#) with equanimity, 'when there is a war, there is no law, there is a race to kill'. And, eight years later, in 1998, the [army blockade of food stuffs and medical supplies continued](#) leading Professor Jordan J. Paust to conclude

"As demonstrated in this Essay, there are serious allegations and significant recognitions of human rights violations in Sri Lanka relating to the right to adequate food, the right to adequate medicine and medical supplies, and the

right to freedom from arbitrary and inhumane detention and controls. Such denials are sustained by [governmental censorship](#), denials of access to certain areas for investigative purposes, and [intimidation of non governmental organisations](#) (NGOs), which in turn involve violations of the human right to transnational freedom of speech. Moreover, these denials are sustained by the lack of adequate governmental investigations, arrests, and prosecutions of alleged perpetrators - patterns that facilitate an air of impunity... the intentional withholding of medicine and medical supplies from LTTE controlled areas is a clear violation of common Article 3 (of the 1949 Geneva Convention) and is a war crime." *[The Human Rights to Food, Medicine and Medical Supplies, and Freedom from Arbitrary and Inhuman Detention and Controls in Sri Lanka](#)*, *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, May '98

Today, 160,000 Tamils have been displaced from their homes and Sri Lanka President Rajapakse [blocks aid convoys](#) , the armed forces under his command [execute aid workers](#) and the [tragedy of Vaharai continues to unfold](#).



And here, it is both important and necessary to ask the question: Why did these genocidal attacks happen? Why do they continue to happen? The genocidal attacks on the Tamil people did not and do not just happen. Ethnic cleansing is about assimilating a people. It is about destroying the identity of a people, as a people. And it occurs in stages. The preferred route of a conqueror is to achieve his objective without resort to violence - peacefully and stealthily. But when that is resisted, albeit peacefully, the would be conqueror turns to murderous violence and genocide to progress his assimilative agenda.

In the island of Sri Lanka, the [record shows](#) that during the past fifty years and more, the intent and goal of all Sinhala governments ([without exception](#)) has been to secure the island as a [Sinhala Buddhist Deepa](#). Rule by a permanent ethnic majority within the confines of a single state is the [dark side of democracy](#). The Sinhala Buddhist [ethno nation](#) masquerading as [a multi ethnic 'civic' 'Sri Lankan' nation](#) set about its task of assimilation and 'cleansing' the island of the Tamils, as a people, by

- depriving a section of Eelam Tamils of [their citizenship](#),
- declaring the [Sinhala flag as the national flag](#),
- [colonising parts of the Tamil homeland](#) with Sinhala people,
- imposing [Sinhala as the official language](#),
- [discriminating against Tamils students](#) seeking University admission,
- [depriving Tamil language speakers of employment](#) in the public sector,
- [dishonouring agreements](#) entered into with the Tamil parliamentary political leadership,
- refusing to recognise [constitutional safeguards](#) against discrimination,
- later [removing these constitutional safeguards altogether](#),
- giving to themselves [an autochthonous Constitution](#) with a [foremost place for Buddhism](#),
- [changing the name of the island itself](#) to the Sinhala Buddhist name of Sri Lanka - appropriately enough, on the 'tenth day of the waxing moon in the month of Vesak in the year two thousand five hundred and fifteen of the Buddhist Era', and
- amending the Sri Lanka constitution to [render non violent struggle for an independent Tamil Eelam illegal and criminal](#)

The short point is that the deliberate genocidal attack on the Tamil people was directed to terrorise the Tamil people to submit to alien Sinhala rule. It was directed to quell Tamil resistance to assimilation and ethnic cleansing.

The issue is therefore, not simply about genocide. The issue is not simply about the [violations of the humanitarian law of armed conflict](#) or the violations of the [ceasefire agreement](#) - or for that matter [the systematic violations of human rights](#) of the Tamil people. The issue and the conflict in the island is about the refusal of the people of Tamil Eelam to submit to alien Sinhala rule. And it was this refusal which the manifesto of the parliamentary [Tamil United Liberation Front proclaimed in 1977](#) -

"What is the alternative now left to the Nation that has lost its [rights to its language](#), [rights to its citizenship](#), rights to its religions and [continues day by day to lose its traditional homeland to Sinhalese colonisation](#) ? What is the alternative now left to a Nation that has [lost its opportunities to higher education](#) through standardisation and its equality in opportunities in the sphere of employment ? What is the alternative to a Nation that lies helpless as it is being [assaulted, looted and killed](#) by hooligans instigated by the ruling race and by the security forces of the State? Where else is an alternative to the Tamil Nation that gropes in the dark for its identity and finds itself driven to the brink of devastation? There is only one alternative and that is to proclaim with the stamp of finality and fortitude that "we alone shall rule over our land that [our fore fathers ruled](#). Sinhalese imperialism shall quit our Homeland"

It was to this manifesto that the Tamil people gave their overwhelming approval at the 1977 General Election in the island of Sri Lanka. The national identity of the people of Tamil Eelam is rooted in [their language](#), in [their culture](#) and in [their heritage](#). It is a togetherness consolidated [by their suffering](#) and it is a togetherness that is given direction by their aspirations for a future where they, and their children and their children's children may live in [equality and in freedom](#). And today the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam, is not about whether alien Sinhala rule should be benevolent or that it should be 'fair and just'. After all, the British too offered to rule fairly and

justly (and even benevolently) but this did not prevent those on whom the British sought to impose their alien rule, struggling for freedom.

Neither is the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam about devolution. Devolution is about devolving from the higher to the lower. The Higher is the ruler and the lower is the ruled. Alien rulers are not slow to offer (from time to time) 'consultation' and 'devolution' as ways of perpetuating their rule, pacifying their subjects and progressing the 'peaceful' assimilation of a conquered people. [Aurobindo's](#) caustic comments on the British [Morley-Minto devolution proposals](#) for India in 1907 retain their relevance ninety nine years later:

"Mr.Morley has made his pronouncement and a long expectant world may now go about its ordinary business with the satisfactory conviction that the conditions of political life in India will be precisely the same as before... We find it impossible to discuss Mr.Morley's reforms seriously, they are so impossibly burlesque and farcical. Yet they have their serious aspect. They show that British despotism, like all despotisms in the same predicament, is making the time honoured, ineffectual effort to evade a settlement of the real question by throwing belated and now unacceptable sops to [Demogorgon](#)."

The struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam is not about 'sharing power' within the confines of a Sri Lankan state, with a Sinhala army in command. The words of John Stuart Mill in 1872 remain true more than a century later:

"Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. An altogether different set of leaders have the confidence of one part of the country and of another. ... Above all, the grand and only effectual security in the last resort against the despotism of the government is in that case wanting: the sympathy of the army with the people. Soldiers to whose feelings half or three fourths of the subjects of the same government are foreigners, will have no more scruple in mowing them down, and no more reason to ask the reason why, than they would have in doing the same thing against declared enemies. - [John Stuart Mill: Considerations on Representative Government](#), London 1872

The struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam is not about how best Sinhala rule may be perpetuated and legitimised. It is about freedom from alien Sinhala rule - and the removal of the alien Sinhala army from the Tamil homeland. And to those who would ask where is this Tamil homeland [let us reply with Sathasivam Krishnakumar](#) -

'Take a map of the island. Take a paint brush and paint all the areas where Sri Lanka has [bombed and launched artillery attacks during these past several years](#). When you have finished, the painted area that you see - that is Tamil Eelam.'

And to those who would deny that Sinhala rule is alien rule, let us say that it is alien rule because the Sinhala people speak a [different language](#) to [that of the Tamil people](#); because [they trace their history to origins](#) different from [that of the Tamil people](#); and because their cultural heritage is different to [that of the Tamil people](#).

Finally, to those who would deny that it is Sinhala rule, let us say that it is Sinhala rule because the undeniable political reality is that the political consciousness of the Sinhala people and the way they exercise their vote, is clearly determined by their separate language, by their separate history and by their separate cultural heritage - in short by their own separate Sinhala national identity. In the island of Sri Lanka, no Tamil has ever been elected to an electorate which had a majority of Sinhala voters and no Sinhalese has ever been elected to an electorate which had a majority of Tamil voters. The practise of democracy within the confines of a single state has resulted in rule by a permanent Sinhala majority. And nothing, perhaps, establishes this more directly than the answer to the simple question:

Q. Why is it that in Sri Lanka, for five long decades since 'independence', we have always had a Sinhala Buddhist as the executive head of government?

The answer is that a Sinhala Buddhist ethno nation masquerading as a civic ' multi ethnic Sri Lankan nation', will always have a Sinhala Buddhist as the executive head of government. The words of Tamil leader, Nadarajah Thangathurai uttered in February 1983 (a few months before he was murdered whilst in the custody of the Sri Lanka government) serve to underline this political reality:

"...Allegations are made that we are asking for separation, that we are trying to divide the country. When were we undivided after all? Our traditional land, captured by the European invaders has never been restored to us. We have not even mortgaged our land at any time to anyone in the name of one country. Our land has changed hands off and on under various regimes, and that is what has happened... What we ask for is not division but freedom. "

In the ultimate analysis, the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam is about democracy. If democracy means the rule of the people, by the people, for the people then it must follow, as night follows day, that no one people may rule another. The right of self determination provides the framework within which democracy may flower. Every people have the right to freely determine their political status and the terms on which they may associate with another people. Democracy and the right to self determination go hand in hand - one cannot exist without the other. The struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam is about their democratic right to rule themselves. Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, was right to point out in 2001 -

"...Let us accept the fact that states have lifecycles similar to those of human beings who created them. The lifecycle of a state might last for many generations, but hardly any Member State of the United Nations has existed within its present borders for longer than five generations. The attempt to freeze human evolution has in the past been a futile undertaking and has probably brought about more violence than if such a process had been controlled peacefully... Restrictions on self-determination threaten not only democracy itself but the state which seeks its legitimation in democracy.. " Self Determination & the Future of Democracy - Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, 2001

Professor Margaret Moore was also right to conclude in the same year -

"...The problem in nationally divided societies is that the different groups have different *political* identities, and, in cases where the identities are mutually exclusive (not nested), these groups see themselves as forming distinct political communities. In this situation, the options available to represent these distinct identities are very limited, because any solution at the state level is inclined to be biased in favour of one kind of identity over another. That is to say, if the minority group seeks to be self-governing, or to secede from the larger state, increased representation at the centre will not be satisfactory. The problem in this case is that the group does not identify with the centre, or want to be part of that political community...One conclusion that can be drawn is that, in some cases, secession/partition of the two communities, where that option is available, is the best outcome overall. .." [*Normative Justifications for Liberal Nationalism - Margaret Moore,2001*](#)

It is sometimes said that to accord international recognition to separate national formations will lead to instability in the world order. The reasoning is not dissimilar to that which was urged a hundred years ago against granting universal franchise. It was said that to empower every citizen with a vote was to threaten the stability of existing state structures and the ruling establishment. But the truth was that it was the refusal to grant universal franchise which threatened stability - and in the end the ruling establishment was 'persuaded' to mend its ways. As always, conscious evolution remains the only alternative to revolution.

And to those in the international community who continue to speak of their willingness to recognise the 'legitimate aspirations' of the Tamil people (but who refrain from spelling out what in their view is 'legitimate') the time has come to reiterate that which [Gandhian leader S.J.V.Chelvanayagam declared 32 years ago](#) and say that it is the legitimate aspiration of the Tamil people to be free from alien Sinhala rule.

"Throughout the ages the Sinhalese and Tamils in the country lived as distinct sovereign people till they were brought under foreign domination. It should be remembered that the Tamils were in the vanguard of the struggle for independence in the full confidence that they also will regain their freedom. [We have for the last 25 years made every effort to secure our political rights on the basis of equality with the Sinhalese in a united Ceylon.](#) It is a regrettable fact that successive Sinhalese governments have used the power that flows from independence [to deny us our fundamental rights and reduce us to the position of a subject people.](#) These governments have been able to do so only by using against the Tamils the sovereignty common to the Sinhalese and the Tamils. I wish to announce to my people and to the country that I consider the verdict at this election as a mandate that the [Tamil Eelam nation should exercise the sovereignty already vested in the Tamil people and become free.](#)"
Statement by S.J.V.Chelvanayagam Q.C. M.P. , leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front, 7 February 1975

Does the international community agree that the aspiration of the Tamil people to be free from alien Sinhala rule is a 'legitimate' aspiration? Or does it take the view that Gandhian leader S.J.V. Chelvanayagam was wrong and that the aspiration of the people of Tamil Eelam to be free from alien Sinhala rule is not a 'legitimate'

aspiration? If the latter be the case, has not the time come for the international community to explain to the people of Tamil Eelam its reasons for insisting that the Tamil people be ruled by a permanent Sinhala majority within the confines of a single state - with a Sinhala army occupying the Tamil homeland?

Perhaps, the time has also come for the Tamil people to engage in a dialogue with the international community and tell them that they may ban the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam but they cannot ban the [cry of a people for freedom from alien rule](#).

And here let us be clear. The struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam to be free from [alien Sinhala rule](#) is not about what the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam may have done or may not have done. The [record](#) shows that the [armed resistance](#) of the people of Tamil Eelam (warts and all) arose as the inevitable response to decades of efforts by successive Sinhala governments [to conquer, subjugate, pacify and assimilate the Tamil people](#) and the [enactment of the 6th Amendment to the Sri Lanka constitution](#) set the seal by criminalising all non violent means of struggle for an independent Tamil Eelam state – an amendment which also violated Sri Lanka's obligations under international law.

"The freedom to express political opinions, to seek to persuade others of their merits, to seek to have them represented in Parliament, and thereafter seek Parliament to give effect to them, are all fundamental to democracy itself. These are precisely the freedoms which Article 25 (of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights) recognises and guarantees - and in respect of advocacy for the establishment of an independent Tamil State in Sri Lanka, those which the 6th Amendment is designed to outlaw. It therefore appears to me plain that this enactment constitutes a clear violation by Sri Lanka of its obligations in international law under the Covenant ...*Paul Sieghart: Sri Lanka-A Mounting Tragedy of Errors - Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka in January 1984 on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists and its British Section, Justice, March 1984*

The time has come to engage the international community (and that means the trilaterals - [USA](#), [European Union](#) & [Japan](#) together with [India](#) and [China](#)) in an honest and open dialogue as to the strategic interests that each of these IC members themselves seek to secure in the island of Sri Lanka - and whether they seek [to prevent a resolution of the conflict](#) except on terms which secure [each of their own strategic interests](#). After all, it will be fair to say that there are two conflicts in the island - one the conflict between the Sinhala nation and a [Tamil Eelam nation seeking freedom from alien Sinhala rule](#), and the other the conflict between the international actors in the [Indian Ocean region](#) seeking, (amongst other matters) control of the Indian Ocean sea lanes - whether [through a string of pearls](#) or [by other means](#).



But all this is not to say that Tamil Eelam and Sri Lanka [may not sit together as equals and structure a polity](#) where the two peoples may associate with each other in equality and in freedom. An independent Tamil Eelam is not negotiable but an independent Tamil Eelam can and will negotiate. There may be a need to telescope two processes - one the recognition of an [independent Tamil Eelam](#) and the other the terms in which an independent Tamil Eelam may associate with an independent Sri Lanka, so that the national security of each may be protected and guaranteed.

Strange as it may seem to some, the struggle for an independent Tamil Eelam, is not in opposition to many of the underlying interests of the parties concerned with the conflict in the island - and that includes Sri Lanka, [India](#), the [European Union](#), the [United States](#) and [China](#). If Germany and France were able to put in place 'associate' structures despite the suspicions and confrontations of two world wars, it should not be beyond the capacity of an independent Tamil Eelam and an independent Sri Lanka to work out structures, within which each independent state may remain free and prosper, but at the same time pool sovereignty in certain agreed areas. Tamils who today live [in many lands and across distant seas](#) know only too well that sovereignty after all, is not virginity

And to say that is not to live in the fantasy world of the fanatic but to understand the unfolding political reality of the [fourth world](#) and the processes that resulted in the European Union. It is also to reject the fanaticism of those who insist on preserving the [artificial territorial boundaries imposed \(and later bequeathed\) by the erstwhile British ruler](#). It is to reject the colonial legacy and to reject the continuing attempt to replace British colonial rule with Sinhala colonial rule. The words of [Velupillai Pirabakaran](#), uttered some sixteen years ago, bear repetition, yet again:

"It is the Sri Lanka government which has failed to learn the lessons from the [emergence of the struggles for self determination in several parts of the globe](#) and the innovative structural changes that have taken place... We are not chauvinists. Neither are we lovers of violence enchanted with war. We do not

regard the Sinhala people as our opponents or as our enemies. We recognise the Sinhala nation. We accord a place of dignity for the culture and heritage of the Sinhala people. We have no desire to interfere in any way with the national life of the Sinhala people or with their freedom and independence. We, the Tamil people, desire to live in [our own historic homeland](#) as an independent nation, in peace, [in freedom](#) and with dignity.."

And so today, in the [shadow of a ceasefire](#), as the armed forces under Sinhala Sri Lanka President Rajapakse's command [rape Tamil women, assassinate Tamil Parliamentarians, murder Tamil journalists, execute Tamil students, arbitrarily arrest and detain Tamil civilians, abduct Tamil refugee workers, orchestrate attacks on Tamil civilians and Tamil shops, bomb Tamil civilian population centres, displace thousands of Tamils from their homes, kill Tamil school children, and murder Tamil aid workers](#), millions of Tamils [living in many lands](#) will remember and honour the memory of their brothers and sisters who were killed, raped and tortured in their thousands, for no crime other than that they were Tamils and because, as a people, they had [refused to submit to alien Sinhala rule](#).

Millions of Tamils will remember and honour - and will renew their own commitment to the cause for which their brothers and sisters gave their lives. **The charge is genocide, the struggle is for freedom**