

The Rt. Hon. Dominic Raab
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

2 September 2020

Sri Lanka's Defence Attaché to the United Kingdom Brigadier DBSN Bothota

Dear Mr Raab

We are writing to you relating to Sri Lanka's Defence Attaché to the United Kingdom, Brigadier Dappula Bandara Swarna Bothota. Please find attached a detailed legal representation letter along with supporting material. Below is a summary of our case against the Defence Attache' and our request to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

Sri Lanka's military stands accused of committing grave atrocity crimes and genocide during the decades long civil war. According to UN figures released almost 6,500 ethnic Tamil civilians have been killed and 14,000 more injured in the fighting between the government and rebel forces since late January 2009. Respected human rights organisations estimate that at least 40,000 civilians were killed during the final stages of the war in 2009.

During the war, in February 2008, Brigadier Bothota was elevated to a Lieutenant Colonel and appointed as the commander of the senior most regiment of the Sri Lankan Army, namely 1st Reconnaissance Regiment Sri Lanka Armoured Corps. He served in this position until February 2009, playing a significant role in the Sri Lankan military during the final stages of the war.

In accrediting Brigadier BDSN Bothota, the FCO has not done the necessary due diligence to ensure that potential human rights violators are prevented from entering the UK and being allowed to hold office in the UK. Sadly, this would be the third time in succession, the FCO has accredited a war criminal as Sri Lanka's Defence Attaché.

The first was Major General Prasanna Silva, named in three UN reports as a war criminal. Silva was asked to leave because of the threat of a judicial review. The second was Brigadier Priyanka Fernando, who threatened to decapitate peaceful protestors in front of the Sri Lankan High Commission in London. After he was asked to leave following the intervention of the APPG for Tamils among others and the threat of a judicial review, the FCO accredited Brigadier DBSN Bothota.

We call upon your office to set out in clear detailed terms, supported by evidence of the actions taken by Her Majesty's Government, exactly how it has met and continues to meet all of its obligations imposed by international and domestic law arising from the acceptance of Brigadier Bothota as a Defence Attaché. Additionally, we seek an immediate declaration from the FCO that in accordance with its international and domestic obligations the UK will declare Brigadier Bothota a 'persona non grata', curtail his diplomatic visa in order to allow the Met Police to arrest him and investigate him for the offences he has committed.

Yours Sincerely,

Joint Letter Coordinator



British Tamil Conservatives



International Centre for Prevention & Prosecution of Genocide



PEARL



TAMIL COORDINATING COMMITTEE UK
தமிழர் ஒருங்கிணைப்புக் குழு
பிரித்தானியா

Tamil Coordinating Committee



Tamils for Labour



Tamil Information Centre



Tamil Youth Organisation



Together Against Genocide



Political Affairs Ministry
Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam
அரசியல் விவகாரங்களுக்கான அமைச்சு
நாடுகடந்த தமிழீழ அரசாங்கம்

Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam



World Tamil Historical Society

Copies To:

Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, FCO Minister for South Asia