



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA

11th March 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to share my concerns about the draft resolution on Sri Lanka that the FCDO has tabled for approval by the UN Human Rights Council on 24th March.

Time and again, the UK has played a vital role in leading collective action on international accountability in Sri Lanka. At the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, which is currently underway, the UK has a real opportunity to continue in this proud tradition.

But unfortunately, the draft resolution completely fails to rise to this challenge. As it stands, the draft resolution is too vague and lacks robust commitment to international accountability mechanisms.

It also fails to incorporate the recommendations laid out in the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' report on Sri Lanka that was published earlier this year. The High Commissioner portrayed a damning picture of the situation in Sri Lanka, making it clear that domestic mechanisms for reconciliation, accountability and human rights have drastically eroded in the past few years.

Many Tamil groups across the UK have been calling on your Government to take urgent action to ensure that the UN Human Rights Council resolution is robust enough to ensure that those responsible are held accountable for crimes and human rights abuses committed against the Tamils.

I am aware that the Sri Lanka Core Group will be meeting imminently, to discuss the draft resolution. As such, I am urging you to personally ensure that the draft resolution is immediately rewritten to:

- Include a recommendation to refer the Sri Lankan situation to the International Criminal Court to investigate and prosecute serious international crimes committed in Sri Lanka against the Tamils;

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- Establish a proper International Independent Investigative Mechanism relating to Sri Lanka to collect evidence and prepare files for prosecution;
- Incorporate the High Commissioner's recommendations from her January 2021 report, particularly her view that the principles of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction must apply to the actions of the Sri Lankan government and military; and
- Take a strong stance on prevention, including tangible measures to support and protect civil society groups and human rights defenders who are working on the ground in Sri Lanka.

It has never been more important for the UK to lead strong collective action on accountability and reconciliation in Sri Lanka — and a comprehensive, robust Human Rights Council resolution is an important first step. I implore you to do everything in your power to make this happen.

Thank you, and I hope to receive a positive reply from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed Davey'.

Ed Davey MP
Leader of the Liberal Democrats

CC Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs