**Human Rights Council**

**46th regular session of the Human Rights Council**

**Item 2: Interactive dialogue on the OHCHR report on Sri Lanka (as per Res. 30/1 and 40/1), 24 February 2021**

Oral statement delivered by Sahithyan Thilipkumar on behalf of Society for Threatened Peoples via video message

Thank you Madam President.

We welcome the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and echo the High Commissioner's warning, that Sri Lanka is on an alarming path towards recurrence of grave human rights violations.

We have to remember why the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is on the agenda today: 12 years ago, tens of thousands of Tamils were killed, predominantly by government shelling. Virtually all massacres against Tamils by Sri Lankan security forces remain unpunished, while some of the alleged perpetrators are leading the Sri Lankan state.
The government of Sri Lanka has repeatedly demonstrated its utter lack of political will to serve justice for atrocity crimes against Tamils, who make up the largest group of victims from the conflict and who continue to be affected by ongoing human rights violations. Tamils have consistently rejected any form of domestic justice mechanism. In line with the High Commissioner’s report, we urge member states to make use of the number of options to advance accountability and justice, including referring Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court, as well as practicing extraterritorial and universal jurisdiction. Member states must ensure that any evidence gathering mechanism established has a clearly mandated purpose of aiming to prepare case dossiers for the international prosecution of the most serious international crimes and human rights violations. Decisive international interventions on mass atrocities committed by Sri Lanka`s security forces are necessary, to protect and promote international human rights and humanitarian law. Tamil lives depend on it, too.

Thank you

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