



July 28, 2022

Dear Friend,

The world has now discovered what we have known all along - the Rajapaksa regime in Sri Lanka has been driving the country, its potential, and its remarkable people into chaos and disarray.

We have long advocated for reconciliation following the calamitous genocide of the Tamil people. We have called for the release of political prisoners, and for Sri Lankan leaders to respect the wishes of ordinary Sri Lankans to abolish the power-grab of the so-called “Executive Presidency.”

For over a decade, we have demanded reparations for war widows and the immediate demilitarization of Sri Lanka’s northeast. You don’t need a soldier every five meters on the streets of Toronto - and yet the peaceful Sri Lankan northeast now constitutes one of the most militarized non-conflict regions in the world. It is designed to intimidate Tamils and other minorities, to occupy private property and to project the power of authoritarian rule.

Canada once led the world – at the Commonwealth and across the UN – to challenge the authoritarian ambitions of the Rajapaksas, hold accountable the war criminals that flank them, and advance the freedom and dignity of all Sri Lankans, especially persecuted Tamils.

The legacy of Sri Lanka’s gatekeepers is devastating: A bad compact with Beijing, atrocious economic management, and outrageous corruption. In its wake today, a new generation of Sri Lankans are proving remarkable resilience and determination by peacefully deposing the Rajapaksas, calling for full accountability, and surviving brutal abuses at the hands of a heavy-handed military.

From Jaffna to Colombo, they are lifting themselves from under the yoke of oppression for the freedoms that are their inheritance.

And in this, they have a steadfast ally in me.

The war criminals must be held to account. Just as Canada had done before by providing aid to Sri Lanka’s vibrant civil society, I would restore Canadian leadership by standing with human rights advocates, supporting the war crimes investigations they demand, and imposing Magnitsky sanctions.

With former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa now in Singapore, I join with Sri Lankan human rights advocates in their demands for his arrest, and would bring the full weight of the Government of Canada to bear toward justice before an international court or tribunal.

Women and minorities in the northeast were already brutally impacted by war and military occupation, even before the pandemic and the return of the Rajapaksas. I will work hand in glove with our allies to

provide an economic partnership – prioritizing those most impacted by these difficult times, and by opening permanent consulate services in Jaffna.

I will not bow before the accommodationists, and with the privilege to serve as your Prime Minister, I will rely on our friend, Canada’s former foreign minister John Baird, for his clear-eyed and principled expertise. With Sri Lankan shores spanning the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean - I will task him to work with our Indo-Pacific allies toward a region reflecting the democratic and economic aspirations of a new generation of Sri Lankans.

And finally, here at home, so many members of our Tamil communities feel the heartbreak and anxiety of their friends and relatives most closely. In addition to the noble task of confronting the regime that sponsored such persecution and chaos, you are dealing with twin pressures of credentialing your skills and runaway inflation.

I will remove the gatekeepers that stand in the way of your family’s prosperity, and celebrate the literature, culture and heritage that so deeply enriches our national life.

Together, we will stand for the dignity and freedom of Canadians and Sri Lankans alike, by making Canada the freest country on earth, and a beacon of hope for all.

Yours sincerely,



Pierre Poilievre

