

Tamil Civil Society Groups Reject “Himalaya Declaration” for Not Addressing Tamil Grievances.

Tamil civil society groups consisting of, Tamil University Students, Victim groups including families of the disappeared, Religious groups, labour unions, academics and others today jointly rejected the “Himalaya Declaration” by Sanga for better Sri Lanka (SBSL) and Global Tamil Forum (GTF).

We carefully read with interest the Himalaya Declaration (“Declaration”) but were disappointed for totally ignoring Tamil grievances and the pain and suffering Tamils have undergone since independence.

Obviously, the Buddhist clergy is unaware of Tamil grievances, since they live outside Tamil areas among Sinhalese and have no clue what we have gone through and continue to go through.

Since the war ended fourteen years ago, we have expressed our grievances directly through mass rallies like P2P (Pothuvil to Polikandy). P2P led a five-day march across Tamil areas with around half a million Tamils joining despite security forces' intimidation and attacks. Tamil University Students and victim groups like Families of the disappeared and others also held numerous protests, hunger strikes and marches to express Tamil grievances. None of their grievances were addressed in this “Declaration.” We like to bring to your attention the following Tamil grievances articulated by Tamils since the war ended, fourteen years ago:

1. Reduce armed forces presence in Tamil areas to the pre-war 1983 levels. It has been over fourteen years since the war ended, but the security forces' presence, including the notorious Military Intelligence, is being maintained as it was at the peak of the war in May 2009. Their presence during Peace Time among the civilian population is creating numerous security and social issues for Tamils, who have faced severe atrocity crimes including mass killing of Tamils amounting to Genocide and large-scale rape of Tamil women by the Security forces.
2. Refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court (ICC): Fourteen years have passed since the war ended, but not a single security force official or political leader faced justice for - according to the UN Internal Review Report, around seventy thousand Tamils were killed in the final six months of the war in 2009. Also, thousands of Tamils, including babies and children, Disappeared. We call upon to Refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court (ICC) as requested by several UN officials, including a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
3. Stop the Destruction of Hindu temples, including ancient Hindu sites and stop Building Buddhist Temples in Tamil areas, where no Buddhists live.
4. Stop Government-sponsored Sinhalese settlements in Tamil areas and stop land grabs of Tamil lands.
5. Hold an internationally conducted Referendum to solve the protracted Tamil conflict: The root cause for the protracted Tamil conflict since independence is the lack of a meaningful political solution. The conflict resulted in the recurrence of the mass killing

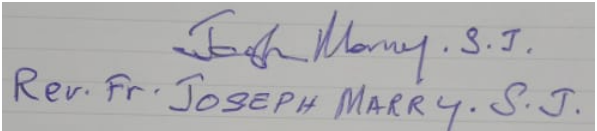
of Tamils in 1958, 1977, 1983 and 2009. Several agreements between Tamil leaders and the Sinhala-dominated governments were unilaterally abrogated by the successive Governments and even international mediation by India and Norway failed. Tamils have repeatedly called for an internationally conducted referendum to democratically find a political solution, as in several countries around the world.

Signed,



சென்னை
சென்னை ஆதீனம்,
பி.36, சிவன்மலை,
பீலியடி, கன்னியா,
திருக்கோணமலை.

Thavathiru Akathiyar Adikal
Thenkailai Aatheenam – Trincomalee



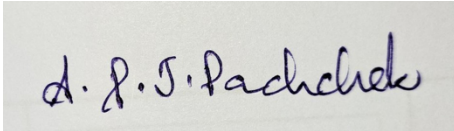
Rev. Fr. JOSEPH MARRY. S.J.

Rev. Fr. Joseph Marry (S J)
Batticaloa



சுவாமி

Thavathiru Velan Swamigal
Sivaguru Aatheenam – Jaffna
Co-ordinator Pothuvil to Polikandy Rally



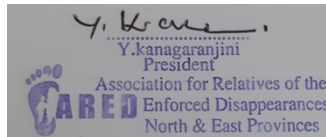
J. J. Pachchek

Rev. Fr. Jayanthan Pachchek OMI
Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Jaffna



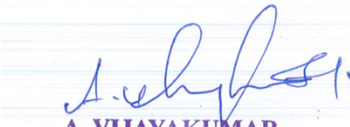
K. Jegathas

Rev. Fr. Kandaiya Jegathas
Batticaloa
Co-ordinator Pothuvil to Polikandy Rally



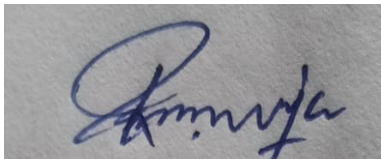
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President
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Enforced Disappearances
North & East Provinces

Mrs Y. Kanagaranjini
President – Association for
relatives of the enforced Disappearances
– North and East Provinces



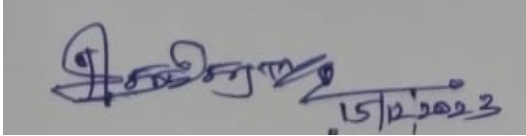
A. VIJAYAKUMAR
President
University Students' Union
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Mr. A. Vijayakumar
President – Student Union - University of Jaffna

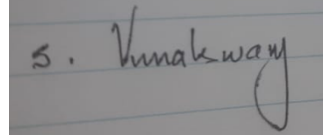


Vigneswaren Gajaruban

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