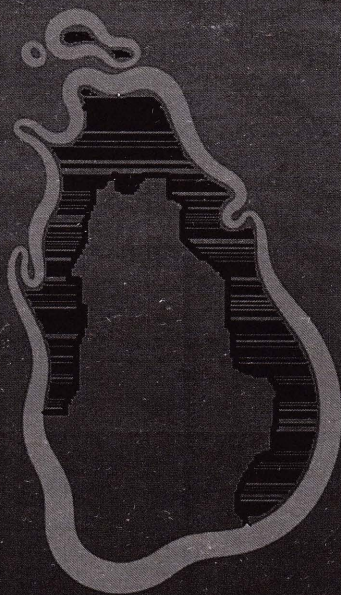


LE PEUPLE
TAMOUL



AU SRI LANKA



LA SITUATION



TYO FRANCE

SUMMARY

- 1) Who are the Tamil people ?**
- 2) What is happening to the Tamil people in Sri Lanka?**
- 3) Why and how do the Tamil people resist ?**
- 4) What are the demands of this people ?**
- 5) What actions are needed to achieve justice?**
- 6) Conclusion**
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1) Who are the Tamil People?

The Tamil people are part of one of the last surviving classical civilizations.

What characterizes this people is their ethnicity. Its identity is its language: the Tamil language is one of the oldest written languages in the world. Its identity is also a whole culture of its own: clothing, food, traditional festivals, music, dance and literature...

The Tamil people are now present in several different spaces around the world. There are more than 100 million Tamils in the world.

In the island now called Sri Lanka, the Tamil people have lived there for more than three thousand years, and for several centuries mainly in the North, East and West. The south of the island is inhabited by the Sinhalese people (since the 3rd century BC), who have their own culture.

For centuries, and even before the arrival of the first European settlers in 1505, the North, East and west is the traditional homeland of the Tamil people: Tamil Eelam.



2) What is happening to the Tamil people in Sri Lanka?

Under British colonization which lasted till 1948, the Tamil region (which had its own sovereignty) was unified with the Sinhalese region. Through this, the Tamil people had their sovereignty and territorial integrity taken away from them. This timeline shows events as it unfolded after the end of the British colonial rule.

Oppression between 1948 and 2009

In 1948, Ceylon (a name given by the British today Sri Lanka) gets its independence. From there, the majority Sinhalese in the government begins its policy of oppression against the Tamil people.

a) This oppression is conducted through a number of discriminatory laws. Here are some of them with their consequences:

November 15, 1948 - CEYLON CITIZENSHIP ACT: more than 900,000 Tamils lose their citizenship (These were Tamils brought from India to work in tea fields located in the highlands and settled on the island for more than 150 years), this drastically lowers Tamil representation in Parliament.

1956: - SINHALA ONLY ACT: Sinhala becomes the only official language and Buddhism the only official religion; this means that for thousands of Tamils, because they do not speak Sinhala, many jobs are no longer accessible.

1970:- Law of STANDARDIZATION: education on quota basis, Sinhalese students are favored and this disadvantages Tamil students in access to higher education.

The evolution of the SRI LANKAN REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION:

-1948: In 1948, the Constitution provided some protection for the Tamil people. It was written without consulting the Tamil people who were also part of the island.

-1972: Ceylon is renamed Sri Lanka; in this new Constitution (again written and validated without any consultation with the Tamil people), the very

existence of the Tamil people is ignored. This helps to legitimize disregard for the rights of the Tamil people.

-1978: The executive power is raised in relation to the legislative power. The Sinhala head of state now has full powers while parliamentarian's especially Tamil parliamentarians have almost no power.

b) On the other hand, the oppression of the Sinhala-majority Sri Lankan state takes the form of destructive physical attacks. Here are a few:

1956, 1958, 1974, and 1977- ANTI TAMIL POGROMS: These dates are marked by massacres against Tamils by Sinhala extremists and / or the police at the level of the cities but also in the villages.

1981:- BURNING OF THE JAFFNA LIBRARY: it is a planned attack on one of the largest libraries of Asia with the participation of Sinhalese ministers; The library contained more than 96,000 Tamil historical and literary works including unique, ancient works that were written on palmyra leaves. There were reduced to ashes. Huge parts of the Tamils historical identity were consumed in the flames.

1983:- BLACK JULY: in just 10 days, in the streets of Colombo, more than one hundred shops were burned, Tamil students were burned alive, more than 750 women were raped, and more than 3,000 Tamils were massacred. Fifty two political prisoners were murdered inside the prisons.

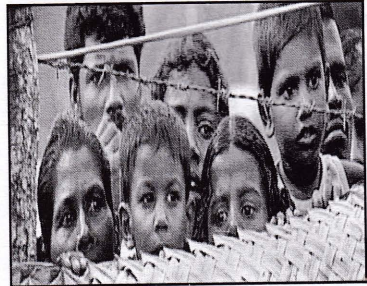


Attacks took place all parts where the Tamils were living on the island.

2009 - MASSACRE OF MULLIVAİKAL:

Government forces asked Tamil civilians to go into war

safe zones called "high security zones". These zones were systematically bombed (especially at public places such as schools and hospitals) with heavy artillery, prohibited by the Geneva Convention.



According to official UN figures, 70,000 Tamils have been massacred, and 146,679 Tamils are missing.

Since 2009...

Justice has not been done for what has been committed so far. Despite appearances of good governance the oppression continues.

Here are some aspects:

SINHALIZATION, BUDDHISZATION: On Tamil territory, the names of Tamil streets are transformed into Sinhalese, and Buddhist temples are built in areas not inhabited by Sinhalese.

EXPROPRIATION, OCCUPANCY: The Sri Lankan State expropriates Tamil lands through the army; the expropriation allows the State to increase the precariousness of the Tamils and to favor the settlement of the Sinhalese families. This occupation policy is planned with the aim of generating a demographic change; this policy began in 1948 (for example, in 1952, through the "economic development of Tamil fertile regions" program at the level of the Kaloya and Mahaveli rivers, the Sri Lankan state had installed thousands of Sinhalese families. by expropriating of Tamil lands) and is accelerating today.

MILITARIZATION: The war has been over since 2009, yet Tamil territory is still heavily militarized. According to a report by People for equality and relief in Sri Lanka (PEARL), for example, the Jaffna region has one military man for every five civilians, in Mullaitivu one military man for every two civilians. With this militarization, it is the Sri Lankan army that controls the economy of the Tamil territory which is under occupation.

- **ARBITRARY ARRESTS, KIDNAPPING AND DISAPPEARANCES**
- **TORTURES, POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS**
- **CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS**
- **ECONOMIC PRECARIZATION AND, EXPLOITATION**
- **VIOLATIONS (INCLUDING OF CHILDREN) BY THE MILITARY**
- **POGROMS**

How can we explain the increase in organized crime and drug smuggling by sea, despite the presence of more than 150,000 soldiers in Tamil areas?



Ethnic cleansing of the Tamil people continues... With this oppression, persecution instigated by the Sri Lankan state, many Tamils seek refuge and protection in other countries.

3) Why and how do the Tamil people resist?

The Tamil people are deprived of their most basic rights and needs. Their culture and identity are being destroyed year after year. In order to defend their rights, survive and exist, the Tamil people began a struggle. This struggle took many forms.

a) Beginning in 1948, the Tamil people led by their then leader, S.J.V Chelvanayagam (Tandai Selva), undertook peaceful demonstrations on the principle of not responding to violence with violence. These demonstrations claimed democratically, equal rights for all citizens of the island. But this struggle only generated a strong crackdown by the police, and negotiations that led to false promises.

In the end, years of peaceful struggle only accentuated oppression and deepened the inequalities even further.

-In 1976, all the Tamil political parties united to draft a resolution called Vaddukoddai (after the place it was signed). In 1977, the Tamil people voted massively, more than eighty percent of the Vaddukoddai Resolution which advocates the creation of an independent state called Tamil Eelam, to protect the Tamil people from the oppression of the Sri Lankan state.

In the face of violence, with peaceful initiatives resulting in bloodshed, the Tamil people were forced to take up arms in order to survive and protect themselves. This is how the Tamil people's armed resistance developed.

(b) Tamil armed resistance, was based on the principle of no harm to the Sinhalese civilian population, Through the 1980s it was able to protect the Tamil people from the Sri Lanka army's attacks, through constructing a state for the Tamil people (Tamil Eelam).

As the Tamil regions were under the control of the resistance fighters, in 1987 the Sri Lankan state put in place an economic embargo to starve the Tamil population. This embargo was never removed. It is in this context of difficulty that pushed Tamil Eelam to develop even more (through developing economic sufficiency, courts, a police force and banks).

Also, despite the attacks of the Sri Lankan state, whenever the opportunity arose, the Tamil resistance agreed to lower arms and enter negotiation processes, to defend the rights of the Tamil people.

Faced with this resistance, the Sri Lankan state sought the support of external states, which it obtained. With that, in 2009, Tamil armed resistance fell. When the Mullivaikal massacre then happened, and the states were silent. The UN did not intervene.

From there, the struggle of the Tamil people, present in a multitude of spaces in the world, continues again to peacefully call for justice.



4) What are the demands of this people?

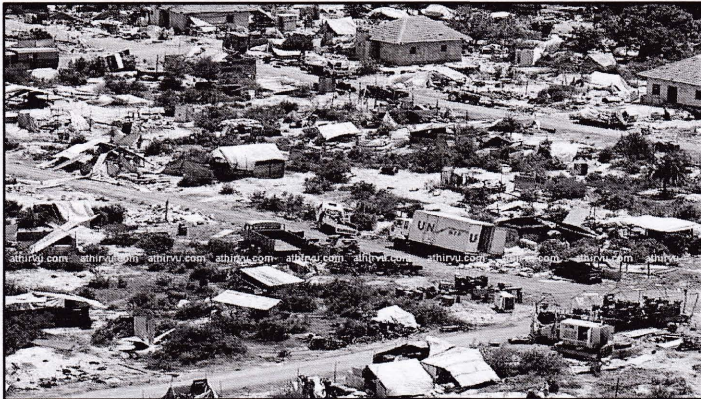
a) After the end of the armed conflict, the reparations that should have been made by the Sri Lankan state were not made. The more than 600,000 Tamils displaced in 2009 were not rehabilitated; Tamil territory has not been demilitarized, on the contrary; political prisoners have not been released; the internal investigation requested by the UN on the crimes committed in 2009 was never made; we still have no news about the 146,679 missing.

Sri Lanka is the country with the most missing persons in the world after Iraq.

b) We have more and more evidence regarding the crimes committed in 2009; the 2011 "No fire zone" television report from Channel 4; the 2011 UN Panel of Experts; the internal report of Charles Pétie of 2012 where the UN makes its mea culpa; the UN Office of the High Commissioner's Office on Human Rights Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) report of September 2015.

Following the publication of this latest report, here are the words spoken by the High Commissioner of the UN Commission on Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein:

"Our investigation has uncovered the horrendous level of violations and abuses that have been committed in Sri Lanka," "The report uncovers violations that are among the most serious crimes."



c) As previously reported, the oppression of the Tamil people by the Sri Lankan state continues today: the Tamils are surrounded by soldiers living in a climate of constant fear, particularly the women. With forced expropriation of their land, their living conditions are increasingly precarious. As the PTA anti-terrorism law is still enforced while the armed conflict is over, it allows for all forms of violence.

According to the British Freedom of Torture (FFT), the Sri Lankan state has been designated as the No. 1 state resorting to torture.

Given this situation, the struggle of the Tamil people continues. What we claim is justice and this is what we mean by justice:

a) Recognizing the genocide

Although the definition of genocide may vary according to specialists, the first legal definition was that of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948, and ratified by Sri Lanka. In this Convention, genocide is defined as an act committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.

Genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate and total destruction of a nation. A genocide can be made over time and constitute a coordinated plan of actions aimed at destroying the essential foundations of group life, with the aim of annihilating them. These essential foundations of the group can be political and social institutions, culture, language, sense of belonging, religion, economic existence, personal security or freedom.

In accordance with this, what the Tamil people suffer is a structural genocide.

b) Obtaining the right to self-determination

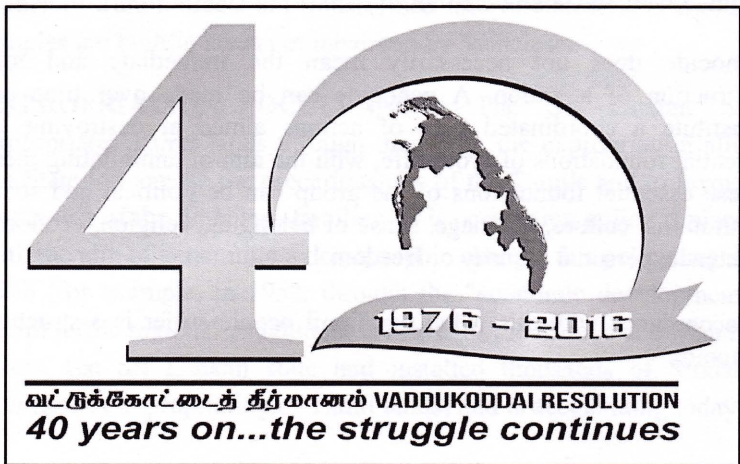
Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 16, 1966, states:

"All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of this right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development»

Over the decades until today, Sri Lankan state oppresses the Tamil people rather than protect it. The promises of internal self-determination never being respected, the Tamil people demand external self-determination which is legitimate for them.

Moreover, the 1976 (Vaddukoddai Resolution, voted on in the 1977 general elections) and the independently supervised referendum of 2009 organized at the level of the diaspora (vote favorable to 98%), show that the claim of the Tamil people is indeed Tamil Eelam.

History has shown us that this is the only way to end the policy of genocide.



5) What actions are needed to achieve justice?

In this present struggle, here are the steps that are targeted and necessary for the Tamil people to obtain their rights:

a) There is oppression that is happening right now. We must act urgently to reveal the face of Sri Lanka behind its façade as an island paradise, and stop the ongoing process.

(b) The Sri Lankan state, the perpetrator of the crimes, has not carried out and will not carry out an investigation into the crimes. For true justice, with the conviction of the true leaders, it is necessary to push for an independent international investigation into the genocide against the Tamil people.

(c) In this situation where, since independence, the Sri Lankan State has failed to respect the rights of the Tamil people, the Tamil people have been claiming for years their right to self-determination, that is, their rights to decide for themselves their political future. To obtain this right, the Tamil people must be legitimately recognized in their ethnicity and as a nation that has lost own sovereignty. There must also be recognition of the historical territorial integrity of the Tamil people. Also, to support and actualize its will of self-determination, the Tamil nation-people victim of genocide, calls for a referendum of self-determination on the international scale.

On this legitimate struggle for justice, the Tamil people need your support.



6) Conclusion

This booklet attempts to answer in a nutshell some questions that can be asked about the Tamil people, namely “Who are the Tamil people?” “What does this person suffer?” “Why and how do they resist?” “What are their claims?” And “What actions are needed to achieve justice?”.

We can see that the Tamil people have suffered for decades. Still today state oppression takes different forms; that is to say that it can be direct and visible, but also indirect and invisible. Tamils have lost their sovereignty, freedom and lives. It is this situation that has pushed this people to resist, as is the case for other peoples as well. The experience of the Tamil people throughout history leads them today to demand justice for what they have suffered in the past, for what they continue to suffer today, and not to suffer the same injustices in the future. This justice must take the route of recognizing the genocide and the implementing means that can put a lasting end to this genocide.

OHCHR resolution 30/1 of September 2015 was not respected by the Sri Lankan state. In the face of non-compliance with these obligations, the UN Human Rights Council with its member states should send Sri Lanka to the United Nations General Assembly with a recommendation to the UN Security Council to bring Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court (ICC) or to establish an ad hoc international criminal tribunal on Sri Lanka. Justice involves establishing responsibility and condemning perpetrators of crimes committed by putting an end to impunity.

Also, justice for the Tamil people means its recognition as a nation and the restoration of self-determination to stop their suffering from destructive domination and to be able to exist safely on their ancestral lands.

8) For more information

Here are some documents where you can find additional information about the situation of the Tamil people:

The Vaddukodai Resolution:

http://www.sangam.org/FB_HIST_DOCS/vaddukod.htm

Peoples' Tribunal on Sri Lanka :

<http://www.ptsrilanka.org/verdict/>

Official reports

From the United Nations :

http://www.un.org/News/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/POE_Report_Full.pdf (2011) ;

http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/The_Internal_Review_Panel_report_on_Sri_Lanka.pdf (2012) ;

<http://www.refworld.org/docid/55ffb1d04.html> (2015) ;

Other reports:

<https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/document/reports/8501> ;

<http://pearlaction.org/publication/> ;

<http://www.itjpsl.com/> ;

<http://www.iceelamtamils.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/English-Massacres-of-Tamils-1956-2008.pdf> ;

<http://www.iceelamtamils.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Sri-Lanka-An-Ethnocratic-State.pdf> ;

<http://www.iceelamtamils.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/TIC-Genocide-of-Tamil-People-1998-entire.pdf> ;

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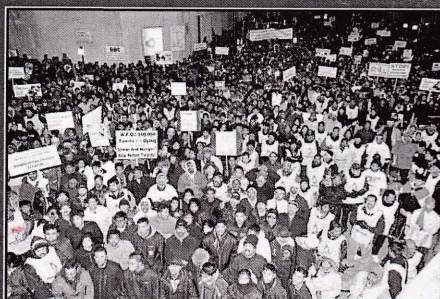
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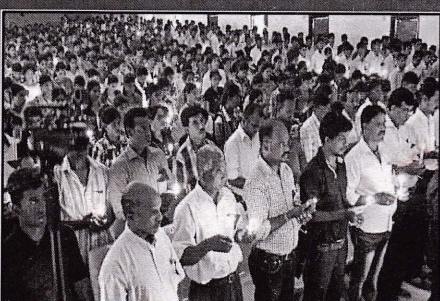
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