

22.07.2020

Hon' Mahinda Deshapriya
Chairman of Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Prof. Rathnajeewan Hoole
Member of Election Commission of Sri Lanka

R.M.A.L. Rathnayake Esqr
Member of Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Dear Honourable Election Commissioners!

I am writing this letter as a matter of urgency to urge you to order Sri Lankan Security Forces and Special Task Force of the Police (STF) to their Camps, especially in Tamil areas, until the election results are announced at the 2020 Parliamentary Election to be held on 5th August 2020.

We have particular concerns in Tamil areas about Sri Lankan Security Forces and Special Task Force of the Police (STF) guarding ballot boxes and getting involved in other election related activities, including their presence on the election day.

The presence of Security Forces and Special Task Force of the Police (STF) on the Election Day could selectively suppress Tamil voter turnout and favour some candidates or parties.

As you are aware, Sri Lankan Security Forces and Special Task Force of the Police (STF) were involved in mass killings of Tamils and sexually abusing and raping Tamil women. Thousands of Tamils disappeared and UN ranked Sri Lanka as having the second highest number of "disappearances" in the world.

The UN Secretary General's Panel of Experts concluded that around 40 thousand Tamils were killed in the final six months of the war that ended in May 2009. UN Secretary General's Internal Review Report concluded that around 70 thousand Tamils were unaccounted for during the final months of the war.

Both UN reports and reports by several International organizations have concluded that what happened during the final months of the war amount to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity. Some international experts believe that some elements of these abuses could amount to Genocide.

Dear Commissioners! how can you expect Tamils to trust an election when Sri Lankan Security Forces and Special Task Force of the Police (STF) are involved in the elections, including guarding the ballot boxes and their presence on the election day in public?

These Forces should be ordered back to their Camps until the election results are announced. Already, Sri Lankan Security Forces have erected several new check points in Tamil areas. Harassment of Tamil travellers have been reported.

I respectfully urge you to order Sri Lankan Security Forces and Special Task Force of the Police (STF) to their Camps until the results are announced.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Justice C.V.Wigneswaran

Leader of Thamizh Makkal Thesiya Kootani
Secretary General, Thamizh Makkal Kootani
Former Chief Minister
Northern Province

Copies:

1. His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka
2. Hon' Prime Minister of Sri Lanka