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From

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To

Thiru. **Narendra Modi,**  
Honourable Prime Minister of India,  
South Block, Raisina Hill,  
New Delhi - 110011.

Your Excellency,

**SUBJECT : Urging review of the Foreign Policy of India on Sri Lanka  
so as to recognize the rights of Tamils in Sri Lanka.**

I am the President of **Thamizh Thesiya Periyakkam** (Thamizh National Movement). Our Organization is a nonprofit and non electoral political organization espousing the cause of Thamizhs (Tamils) of Tamilnadu and Puducherry and extending support for the rights of the Thamizhs in Sri Lanka and in other countries. We are functioning for the last 35 years insisting the rights of Thamizh People in peaceful and democratic ways.

On behalf of our organization I am writing this letter, seeking the intervention of Your Excellency to review the Foreign Policy on Sri Lanka to protect the rights of Thamizhs in Sri Lanka.

Thamizhs living in North and East parts of Sri Lankan island constitute a distinct nationality having its own language, history, culture and historical homeland. Thamizhs live in the island of Sri Lanka from the time immemorial which was called Eezham (Eelam) in ancient Thamizh texts. Even the Mahayana version of Buddhism recognizes this truth.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which was ratified by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 recognize the Right to Self determination for all PEOPLE. Thamizhs in North and East of Sri Lanka are a DISTINCT PEOPLE having their own language, history, culture and homeland.

By virtue of this character they are entitled for their right to self determination as per the UN Covenant 1966.

Right from the inception of the State of Sri Lanka as an independent country, the Thamizhs were subjected to systematic discriminations and genocidal onslaughts.

Sri Lanka (Ceylon) attained its independence from Britishers in 1948. Shortly after independence the Government of Sri Lanka enacted “Ceylon Citizenship Act – 1948” which converted nearly about 8 lakh plantation workers who were Thamizhs - as non citizens. These people were brought to Sri Lankan island from the State of Tamilnadu in 1830’s to work in coffee, tea and rubber plantations. By

the time Sri Lanka attained independence they were third or fourth generation people which made Sri Lanka their home country.

The Ceylon Citizenship Act was a prelude to the systematic discrimination against the Eezham Thamizhs.

The Traditional homeland of Thamizhs were subjected to planned colonization by the Sinhalese with the aid of consecutive governments.

Before independence of Sri Lanka, both the Sinhala and Thamizh were official languages. But, after independence the Government led by Mr. SWRD Bandaranayake passed “Sinhala Only Act” in 1956 which was passed inspite of the opposition from all the members belonging to Thamizh speaking constituencies. This Sinhala Only Act made the Thamizhs second class citizens of Sri Lanka.

The Thamizh people felt that the perpetuation of Sinhala domination was made possible by the unitary form of government. So ‘Ilangai Thamizharasu Katchi” which was the voice of Thamizhs in Sri Lanka through its resolution in the Annual convention in Triconamalae on 19.08.1956 declared that the discriminatory legislative and administrative measures of the successive governments of Sri Lanka proved the Unitary system of Parliamentary government failed to ensure democracy and freedom but has become a constitutional instrument for the liquidation of Thamizhs as a People i.e. a nationality.

This historic Triconamalae resolution demanded a Federal Constitution for Sri Lanka by incorporating all geographically contiguous areas of Thamizhs as federating units. It also demanded those federating units should enjoy widest autonomy and with all residuary powers.

The Ilangai Thamizharasu Katchi resolution demanded restoration of Thamizh as official language of the country enjoying absolute parity of status with Sinhalese language and cession of colonizing the traditional homeland of Thamizhs with the Sinhalese people.

The consecutive governments of Sri Lanka instead of considering these demands travelled in adverse direction.

The Republican constitution of 1972 made the Sinhala only Act as a part of constitution. It also declared that the Buddhism had the foremost place. Accordingly it shall be the duty of the State to protect and foster the Buddha Sasana.

The so called Republican constitution was enacted by the parliament which itself was a symbol of perverted democracy with the 80% representatives from the Sinhalese population which formed itself as a constituent assembly. All the amendments to the Basic Resolutions put forward on behalf of Thamizhs were rejected in toto by the Sinhalese majority. A Federal scheme with autonomous Thamizh States, autonomous Muslim state with three Sinhalese states which was put forward by the Federal Party of Thamizhs were turned down even without examination. The Sinhalese side neither discussed the schemes put forward by Thamizhs or ready to offer any alternative scheme.

The Resolution to enact the new constitution was passed in spite of the total rejection by Thamizh members of the Parliament.

Even the piece meal agreements entered into between the Government of Sri Lanka and Thamizh Leaders like Bandaranayake – Selvanayagam Pact and Dudley – Selvanayagam Pact were not implemented by the Government of Sri Lanka.

The Government of Sri Lanka brought in the Standardization Act which decisively deprived Thamizhs their educational and occupational rights. It discriminated the section of people against their birth right only because they were born as Thamizhs.

Not only Thamizh students but the entire Thamizh Nationality protested against this draconian act.

All the Peaceful protests of Thamizh people were met with ruthless repression. Not only the Sinhala police, but hooligans with the aid of the government were let loose against Thamizhs.

All these legislations and actions of the government of Sri Lanka proved that the Thamizh people have no future under the Sinhalese government. Realizing this objective situation, Thamizh United Liberation Front (TULF) under the leadership of SJV Selvanayagam by its historical resolution in Panagam near Vaddukoddai on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1976 demanded a separate Thamizh Eezham State.

The TULF contested the General Election in 1977 seeking the endorsement to the Vaddukoddai Resolution from the Thamizh People. It was almost a referendum by the Thamizh People. Thamizh voters elected all the candidates of TULF. It proved that the entire Thamizh People living in the historic homeland of Eezham (North and East provinces of Sri Lanka) demanded a sovereign Thamizh Eezham.

If the Government of Sri Lanka recognized the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights proclaimed by United Nations or sensitive to the Wilsonian concept of Right to Self determination of Nationalities it should have initiated dialogues with the Thamizh representatives. But, it let loose inhuman genocidal repression.

That is why the Thamizhs in Sri Lanka were cornered to take to arms.

The Sri Lankan Army acted as an occupation army against the Thamizhs and unleashed a continuous war against Thamizhs for about 30 years. The Genocidal repression went to its peak in 2008 – 2009. During the last phase of the Genocidal War. Nearly about 1.5 lakh Thamizh people including women and children were killed by the continuous aerial bombardments. Many thousands of Thamizh youths were subjected to forced disappearances.

Even after 13 years from the end of the direct war on Thamizh People, no reparation or accountability to the genocidal crimes are in place. Even the High Commissioner of UNHRC concluded, “Sri Lanka remains in a state of denial about the past, with truth - seeking efforts aborted and State officials at the highest levels refusing to acknowledge past crimes. This has a direct impact on the present and the future. Failure to implement any vetting or comprehensive reforms in the security sector means that the State apparatus and some of its members credibly implicated in alleged grave crimes and human rights violations remain in place. The 2015 reforms that offered more checks and balances on executive power have been rolled back, further eroding the independence of the judiciary and other key institutions. The beginnings of a more inclusive national discourse that promised greater recognition and respect of and reconciliation with minority communities have been reversed. Far from achieving the guarantees of non-recurrence set out in Human Rights Council resolution 30/1, the current trajectory of Sri Lanka sets the scene for a return to the policies and practices that gave rise to grave human rights violations”. (*Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

*and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary – General dated 27 January 2021).*

It also said that the space for civil society, including independent media, which had widened in recent years, is rapidly shrinking.

During the last phase of Genocidal war, the Hindu saivite temples like Nallur Kandaswamy Temple, Mannar Thirukandeeswaran Temple, Nayinaar Naga poosani Amman Temple were uprooted by the aerial bombardments.

Even after the end of the direct war with the connivance of Sri Lankan Government, number of statues of deities of Hindu saivite temples are removed and in that places Buddha statues are erected. Streets which bear Thamizh names are systematically renamed by Sinhala Buddhist names.

All these facts demands that the Foreign Policy of the Government of India should be reviewed and made to fit to this reality.

Even from the Foreign Policy and Indian security perspective, supporting the cause of Thamizhs in Sri Lanka will be helpful to India.

**Throughout the recent history, Thamizhs in Sri Lanka are friendlier to India than the Sinhalese Governments. Thamizh Parents christened their children with the name of Indian leaders like Tilak, Gandhi, Subbash, Sarojini, Nehru. It shows the affinity and respect towards India.**

On the contrary, consecutive Sinhalese Governments even after getting support from the Government of India are more inclined towards China or Pakistan in crucial moments. During India – China war – 1961, India – Pakistan conflict during 1971 or taking part in ASEAN against India in all those crucial junctures, the Government of Sri Lanka was against the interest of India.

After ceding of Katcha Theevu to Sri Lanka, a systematic killing of Tamilnadu fishermen in territorial waters by the Sri Lankan navy is going on unabated. No single day passes without the Sri Lankan navy's harassments against Tamizh fisherman.

Even now, the Government of Sri Lanka is engaging more with China in isolating India not only in the global arena but also in the Indian Ocean.

Taking all those things into account, we request Your Excellency and the Government of India as follows :

- 1. Recognize the Thamizhs living in Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lankan island as indigenous people of the land and recognize those contiguous areas as the traditional homeland of Thamizhs.**
- 2. Recognize the Eezham Thamizhs issue as an Oppressed Nationality issue instead of a issue of minority communities.**
- 3. Recognize that Thamizh people were subjected to Genocidal onslaught and ethnic cleansing from their homeland.**

4. **Recognize that even after the end of direct genocidal war, the Structural Genocide like Sinhalaization of Thamizh homeland and militarization are continuing.**
5. **Demand independent international Investigation like one in Syria to bring the culprits before the International Criminal Court of Justice.**
6. **Recognize the Right to Self determination for the Eezham Thamizhs.**
7. **Not to insist on 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment which will perpetuate the Unitary character of Sri Lanka.**
8. **Persuade the Government of Sri Lanka to stop Buddhist religious aggression on Thamizh Hindu saivite temples.**
9. **Retrive Katcha Theevu back to the Territory of India so as to find a permanent solution against the attack on Tamilnadu fishermen.**

To sum up, I, on behalf of our Thamizh Thesiya Periyakkam (Thamizh National Movement) urge upon Your Excellency and the Government of India to thoroughly review the Foreign Policy on Sri Lanka recognizing the Rights of Thamizh people.

Thanking you!

Yours truly,



**(P. MANIARASAN)**

*President,*

*Thamizh Thesiya Periyakkam  
(Thamizh National Movement).*

**Place :** *Chennai – 78.*

**Date :** *15.02.2022*