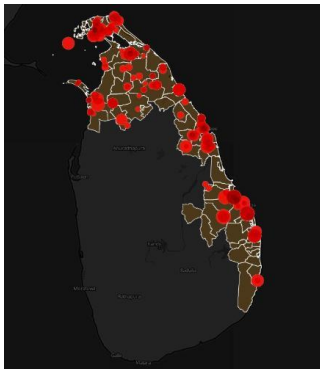


USTPAC Launches a *#getthepicture* Campaign

Interactive maps highlight pattern of massacres of Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka

WASHINGTON, DC – September 23, 2014: The US Tamil Political Action Council (USTPAC) today launched a **#getthepicture** campaign to highlight the frequency and severity of massacres and other serious violence against the Tamil civilian population in Sri Lanka. The campaign follows on the heels of a [joint letter](#) to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in August by Sri Lanka's Northern and Eastern Provincial Council members asking the UN investigation team to look into the deliberate killing of Tamils over the decades.



Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka littered with massacre sites and massgraves

"The Tamils have suffered massacres and violence at the hands of the mono-ethnic Sinhala military since 1958 with increasing frequency and barbarity," said Dr. Karunyan Arulanantham, President of USTPAC. "The letter to the UN Human Rights Council by the lawmakers from the Tamil homeland calling upon the investigative panel to determine whether Genocide was perpetrated, gave the impetus to us to map out the pattern of massacres."

USTPAC has so far released two [interactive maps](#). Both maps can be seen at www.ustpac.org/getthepicture. One interactive map shows the massacres of Tamils since 1958 until the early part of 2008 by the Sinhala military and armed groups. The second map shows how the same military has entrenched itself in the Tamils' lands since the end of the war in 2009.

"These maps are not yet complete. We are releasing them, however, to demonstrate the decades-long pattern of intentional violence against Tamils. We will be continuing to update the maps with additional data over the coming months," said Dr. Arulanantham. "That this unchecked and systematic decades-long violence culminated in a genocidal onslaught in 2009 in which 146,000 Tamils are unaccounted for, and the continuing military occupation of Tamils in the NorthEast and forced land grabs all point to the intention and designs of Sri Lankan state to marginalize the Tamils and reduce them into a submissive minority."

USTPAC [welcomed the OISL investigation](#) set up in March 2014 by the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to look into the charges of war crimes by both sides at the end of the war. "We are waiting for the interim oral report this week from the OISL's team at the UNHRC's meetings in Geneva laying out progress on the investigation and we hope the team notes the historical as well as the structural nature of this state violence against the Tamils. This context is important to understand to lay the foundation for genuine reconciliation, equitable political solution and a permanent peace in the island," observed Dr. Arulanantham.

*For further information visit: www.ustpac.org/getthepicture
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