

Guardian UK, May 15, 2008

By Bishop Desmond Tutu

With a terrible record of torture and disappearances, Sri Lanka doesn't deserve a seat on the UN Human Rights Council. It should be voted out. The systematic abuses by Sri Lankan government Forces are among the most serious imaginable.

Reporters without Borders for Press Freedom , May 29th , 2008

Reporters without Borders is outraged by the murder of P. Devakumar, a television Reporter of Tamil origin, who was hacked to death as he was returning to his home outside the northern city of Jaffna. A friend who was with him was also killed in the attack. Stressing that the murder was just the latest in a series of killings of journalists in the troubled Jaffna Region, the Free Media Movement said condemnations and promises of investigations had no meaning "without the political will" to complete the investigation. "The repugnant impunity that aids and abets violence against journalists and media personnel must come to an end," the FMM said.

Daily Mirror , Dec 3 , 2008

The UN humanitarian Coordinator (HC) in Sri Lanka Neil Buhne has condemned the murder of a humanitarian worker in Batticaloa last week. A. Vigneswaran is the the third employee of the Norwegian Refugee Council to have been murdered.

Telegraph UK , Dec 4, 2008

Behind the muzzled voices from a troubled Sri Lanka:

The article reports as all information that comes out of the Sri Lanka conflict is inherently untrustworthy since it is provided only by the combatants both of whom have a long record of telling lies in the name of propaganda. The effects of this dirty war is taking a terrible toll on Sri Lanka as a whole. There is the case of Tamil Journalist J. S. Tissainayagam who has been in jail since March under Sri Lanka's Sweeping anti-terror laws, for writing articles critical of the government in his magazine North Eastern Monthly which has now been shut down. It also says that in the name of "National Interest" and "War Sprit" Sri Lankan Govt has effectively crushed all opposition even from those who would ordinarily be considered patriots of the Sinhala Cause.

Lakbima News, Dec 6, 2008

Sri Lanka has contravened its obligations under several UN conventions in issuing new restriction VISA Regulations to the staff of the United Nations. In a strong note addressed to Sri Lanka's permanent representative to the UN in New York Patricia O'Brien reveals serious concerns the UN has over Sri Lanka's treatment of its staff.

Sunday Leader, Dec 7, 2008

East: Anything but liberated. The government says that the “liberated” east is an example of democracy in action and a model for areas recaptured from the LTTE. The reality is anything but killings and abductions are rife and there is total impunity for horrific abuses. The eastern province is under siege from all sides. While Government is showcasing the region as one that is returning to normal, the people are still caught in a vicious cycle of violence.

Economic Times, Dec 8, 2008 NEW DELHI:

In a statement that could anger the Manmohan Singh Government’s Southern allies, The Sri Lankan army Chief has said that New Delhi would not listen to “Political Jokers” in Tamil Nadu and insist on a ceasefire with the Tamil Tiger rebels.

Canwest News Service, Dec 8, 2008

United Nations- Genocide and other mass atrocities are underway or risk breaking out in at least 33 Countries says a New Comprehensive Watch list – the 60th anniversary of the United Nations prevention of Genocide Convention. Since the world pledged “NEVER AGAIN” in the wake of Holocaust , Cambodia , Rwanda and Bosnia are but three examples of places where mass slaughter has occurred.

The list by the New York based Genocide Prevention Project for the FIRST TIME combines the findings of five Leading independent watch list to create a “Watch list of Watch lists”. Sri Lanka made the lists top Eight and appears in each of the five expert indexes.

Daily Mirror, Dec 9, 2008

A Tamil Parliamentarian says he was prevented leaving Sri Lanka by the police at Colombo International Airport. TNA MP, P. Ariyaratnam told BBC Sandeshya that he went to the airport Sunday morning to travel To India for medical treatment. At the airport immigration officials told him that he was officially informed by the CID that he should not be allowed to leave the country.

BBC , Dec 9th, 2008

Sri Lanka’s Somalia Conditions. A UN official in a rebel-held areof northern Sri Lanka has said that Conditions for displaced people there are “as basic as in Somalia”. John Campbell from World Food Programme , told BBC Sinhala Service that conditions “as basic as can be” are “much less than ideal”. The UN estimates that there are about 230,000 displaced people throughout rebel-held areas Of the North.

NESoHR , Dec 9th, 2008

Report on extrajudicial killings. North East Secretariat on Human Reports the statistics to understandThe enormity of the problem. Based on the august report 2008, by NESoHR on civilian casualties, there are 1585 cases of such extrajudicial

killings since 2002. There is a further 1147 cases of Disappearances. The report suggests that since 2002, two thirds of conflict related civilian deaths are due to extrajudicial killings and only one third is due to other type of incidents such as bombings and claymore Attacks.

Tamil Net Dec 9 2008

Sri Lanka army imposes rigid pass system on civilian access to JAFFNA HOSPITAL

Sri Lanka army directed the Jaffna teaching hospital administration to introduce a "PASS" system under which Even patients in need of treatment will have to prove their ailment to the police and army personnel manning the check post in front of the hospital. This system is being imposed to ensure the safety of the Sinhalese Medical Officers of Jaffna Teaching Hospital by restricting the number of patients and visitors seeking entry to the Hospital.

Tamil Canadian Dec 10, 2008

The Canadian Peace Alliance (CPA) Convention unanimously passed the emergency resolution to take action On the Tamil IDP Crisis. The resolution called on all CPA member Organisation to urge the Govt. of Canada to Condemn the Govt. of Sri Lanka for its attacks on the Tamils and to immediately allow International and Local NGO's to provide assistance to the internally displaced people.

Daily Mirror Dec 10, 2008

Foreign Affairs Minister Stephen Smith said he was deeply concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka and called for the warring sides to respect the rights of civilians "They should allow Civilians, including aid workers, to move freely in areas under their Control" he told reporters.

Morning Leader Dec 10, 2008

Poets in Tamil Nadu held a protest in Chennai calling for immediate Ceasefire in Sri Lanka and agitated Against the killing of Tamil Civilians and the war . Dramatist and Poet Veli Ranjarajan had reportedly said that artists had every right to be in the forefront of any protest against "the Mass Killing of their brotheren".

Morning Leader Dec 10, 2008

Call for Central Govt. Intervention:

The Indian Human Rights Movement has demanded that the Central Govt should intervene in the Situation In Sri Lanka as many "INNOCENT TAMILS" were getting killed in the military action against the Liberation Tigers of Eelam, the Hindu Newspaper has reported.

Morning Leader Dec10, 2008

Where is the world today?. In the HRC , the powerful states use their political influence and support to avoid the examination of human Rights violations in their countries and also to protect the countries which have bilateral links with them. Some States even insist that they are exempt from UN scrutiny because what takes place in their countries is an “internal affair.” Countries like Algeria, India, Pakistan, Russia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and a few other states are objecting to the Right to self-determination of the people living within their domain but support the same in other countries.

Tamilnet Dec 10th , 2008

Secretary of State Ms. Rice reported in her speech “Sri Lanka’s 25 years conflict has escalated over the last two years, triggering a sharp increase in human rights violations by the warring parties – the Govt. , LTTE, and Paramilitary organizations.

Tamil Guardian Dec 10, 2008

Growing Compulsions

Sri Lanka’s protracted ethnic strife, now in its seventh decade has entered an important phase. We refer not to the claims by the Sinhala leaders – once we have heard time and again for thirty Years – that they will soon destroy the LTTE and pacify the rebellious Tamils but to the profound realignment of racial lines in the island. Never before has the gap between Tamils and Sinhalese been so clear and so deep. And never before has Sinhala Chauvinism been so naked and rampant.

We refer here not to the undisguised contempt of Mahinda Rajapakse regime exhibits for the Tamils but to the tangible racism of ordinary Sinhalese. It is in this context the Tamil question ie “Sinhala Oppression” has forced itself onto the agenda of the regional superpower India.

Reporter’s without Borders for Press Freedom Dec 12, 2008

BBC World Service and Sunday Leader newspaper Censored: Reporters without Borders deplors the latest cases of government censorship of international and local news media. The BBC World Service has been jammed by the state-owned Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation and one the country’s most outspoken Newspapers the Sunday Leader has been forbidden to refer to the president’s brother. “We are worried by the increase in direct and indirect censorship in Sri Lanka,” Reporters without Borders said. “Coming after a broadcast media bill reintroducing news censorship, the selective blocking of BBC and Sunday Leader reports is disturbing. The authorities must accept the free flow of news even when it contradicts what officials are saying and irritates certain politicians.”

On Dec 5th, a judge ordered Leader Publications , the publisher of the Sunday Leader, not to print during two Weeks any report whatsoever about the president’s brother, defense secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, who Personally went to the court to accuse the press group of publishing “Slanderous” reports about him. He is demanding 1 billion rupees in damages.

GroundViews Dec12, 2008

Ground views is a Sri Lankan citizen journalism initiative:

Human Rights - What Human Rights?

We violated the rights of the Tamil people from 1956 onwards. Abductions, Kidnappings and Extra-judicial killings- the so-called white van syndrome has engulfed us. Terrorist suspects have no Human rights. The militarily organized practice of torture, the sexual abuse, and all other abuses of Men and women, clandestine incarcerations and forced disappearances, are perhaps new in our History. When are the people and their representatives going to wake up and realize that the country is governed by war criminals who are hell bent on ushering in a police state? Sometimes you look around and wonder how things could have gone so wrong so quickly. Sri Lanka is said to be eighth in the order of merit for genocide. The state of our nation is in the Grip of anomie meaning “a lack of the usual social or ethical standards”. It is obligatory that we ask ourselves how and why we have arrived at such a state. We are fast descending into a Dark Age, that has engulfed many a civilization not only in the distant past but also in more recent times.

Reporters San Frontieres Dec 12, 2008

RSF condemns Colombo's censorship of BBC, Sunday Leader. Paris based Media watchdog, Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) in a press release issue, condemned Sri Lanka's jamming of BBC World Service and blocking Sunday Leader from referring to Sri Lanka's Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse “We are worried by the increase in direct and indirect Censorship in Sri Lanka”. Reporters without Borders said.

Sunday Leader Dec 14th 2008

Stifling “truth” in the name of war:

The people of Sri Lanka have plenty on their minds these days. With military clashes between the government and the Tamil tigers proceeding apace and major floods destroying thousands of homes and displacing tens of thousands of people, many of whose lives already had been disrupted by the ongoing fighting, Sri Lanka can hardly focus on an economic catastrophe the likes of which we have not seen in the last hundred years. The suppression of “truth” has led to the deterioration of political culture and the criminalization of the state. In a time of war, more than at any other time, the government should be under greater scrutiny, both through government appointed bodies as well as a vibrant and free media. Precisely, when the state lacks the commitment towards minorities and its citizens at large, civil society needs to act; the clergy, academics, trade unions, professional organizations, the NGOs and the business community should take on the formidable responsibility of defending the truth.

Tamil Net Dec 14th 2008

Bruce Fein, a former U.S. deputy associate attorney general and currently counsel for a U.S. Tamil Group said In an interview this week that a 400+ page model indictment charging Sri Lanka officials for Genocide against Tamils will be ready to be submitted to the US Justice department first week of January. He added that the Document describes the motivational context, catalogues crimes and constructs legal arguments establishing culpability of a US citizen and a US green card holder for the crime of Genocide against Tamils in Sri Lanka under the US Genocide accountability act.

Sunday Times Dec 14 2008

With the election of five strongly pro-US countries as non-permanent members of the counsel for 2009- namely Austria, Japan, Mexico, Uganda and Turkey- some of the European union countries which have been critical of human rights abuse in Sri Lanka are likely push for a more aggressive UN role in the country. The Foreign ministry fears there may be an attempt to place Sri Lanka on the Security Council agenda next year making Sri Lanka vulnerable to UN Censure. A hidden agenda during President Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to Ankara recently was to solicit Turkist Support to stall any moves against Sri Lanka.

Daily Mirror Dec 17 2008

Time to rise above Conflict and Hatred. The need for recognizing the rights and privileges of the minorities And the importance for religious leaders to be actively involved in fostering inter-community relationships Was stressed at a seminar on the theme "Moving beyond Conflict". The seminar was organized by the Mahabodhi Society, Council of Hindu priests, Sri Lanka Methodist Church, Congress of Religions and Muslim Aid Sri Lanka. Former Mizoram State Governor Dr.A.R.Kokoli said minorities should be treated in a dignified manner as otherwise they might end up on the path of Violence.