

26 May 2012
London, United Kingdom

PETITION TO 10 DOWNING STREET
Responsible Department: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Eelam Tamils disturbed by invitation of the war criminal president of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa, to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations

Sri Lanka's current president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, has orchestrated several acts of war crimes and crimes against humanity against Eelam Tamils on the island of Sri Lanka, as part of the Sinhala state's protracted campaign of genocide. The invitation of such an individual to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations raises questions about the UK's commitment to human rights and the preservation of international law.

Eelam Tamils and human rights activists are deeply disturbed by the decision of the British Monarchy to extend Diamond Jubilee celebrations invitation to the war criminal president of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa.

The Royal Household, however, have confirmed that the UK government vetted each invitee on their suitability.

Given that the UK is privy to several reports by reputable human rights groups on the nature and scale of international crimes committed by the Sri Lankan armed forces, of which Mr Rajapaksa is the Commander in Chief, Eelam Tamils are puzzled by apparent lapse in the vetting procedure.

That Sri Lankan troops under the direct command of Mr Rajapaksa, his brother the Defense Secretary, Gothabaya Rajapaksa, and the Army Chief, Sarath Fonseka, murdered more than 40,000 Eelam Tamil civilians and made disappear more than 147,000 is widely acknowledged in international circles, including the March 2011 report of a United Nations Experts Panel.

Had international law been assisted in its course, Mr Rajapaksa would have spent June 2012 in the dock at the International Criminal Court (ICC) rather than on the docks of the Thames; according to some UK officials, Chinese and Russian indifference to human rights around the world had been the stumbling block in bringing Mr Rajapaksa and his regime to justice.

In this backdrop, the decision of the UK government to allow such an individual to join the celebrations raises fresh questions on the UK's commitment to human rights.

Mr Rajapaksa is only the latest of several Sinhala-Buddhist leaders who have been directing a protracted campaign of genocide against Eelam Tamils. This long process had been set in motion by the decision of the last British colonial rulers to hand over complete control of the island, including the Tamil homeland to the north and east, to the Sinhalese.

Given its unique contribution to the protracted campaign of genocide, the UK, Eelam Tamils believe, should take a lead role in prosecuting perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide on the island. Further, given its colonial history on the island, the UK, more than any other international power, is aware that the Eelam Tamils are a nation of people with their traditional homeland in the north and east of the island; Eelam Tamils expect the UK government to recognise this truth which can go a long way in helping halt the genocide.

British Tamils and their friends gathered outside 10 Downing Street on Saturday, 26 May 2012, urge the UK government to immediately withdraw the Jubilee celebrations invitation to Mr Rajapaksa; take steps to permanently bar international criminals, including other senior members of the Sri Lankan regime, from entering the UK; and fulfill its duty as a global power by taking all possible measures, including assisting Eelam Tamils exercise sovereignty over their traditional homeland, to halt the genocide.

Singed

Tamil Coordinating Committee United Kingdom
(Event Coordinators)

info@tcc-uk.com | www.tcc-uk.com