

A Letter written to Phoenix – The Next Generation

Switzerland's stance on Sri Lanka exposed



In a response to Phoenix – The Next Generation's letter to the Swiss government, their stance regarding Sri Lanka has become apparent. Their response addressed Switzerland's interests, relations and future initiatives that exist and were to be established with Sri Lanka. Amidst the recent controversy surrounding Switzerland's organisation of a conference for diaspora Tamils, the country's authoritative stance is further established through this letter.

Phoenix had conducted their annual symbolic hunger strike in memory of Lt. Col. Thileepan on 26.09.19 where 10 demands were put forth to various stakeholders. As a part of this initiative, a letter was also written and sent to Switzerland's foreign affairs ministry on that very day. A response for this letter was received almost a month later on the 22.10.19 following the completion of the conference that they had held.

The letter that Phoenix had penned outlined details regarding; Lt. Col. Thileepan, the 3 demands directed at the Swiss government, Switzerland's stance regarding Sri Lanka and the current plight of Eelam Tamils – especially regarding Switzerland's involvement in reconciliation efforts and their effect upon the continuing structural Tamil genocide. The letter further questioned how such constitutional amendments could contribute to reconciliation without the active removal of core issues which stimulate Tamil genocide such as the institutionalised Mahavamsa ideology to which no response was found.

They had further expressed that Sri Lanka was a global partner and that Switzerland would not contain any of their future actions.

Silence from the many Tamil parties who had participated in Switzerland's conference is disappointing. As representatives of the Tamil people a lack of transparency with the wider community questions the legitimacy of such groups in advocating the rights of the Tamils and further raises concerns as to whether such parties are working within the interests of global conspiratorial players such as Switzerland.

The English translation of the response, that Phoenix TNG received from the Swiss government

To Mr. Thirumalmarukan,

We would like to thank you for the letter that you had addressed to the federal minister Ignazio Cassis regarding Lt. Col. Thileepan and the Tamils. The Human Security Division (HSD) is a division of Switzerland's Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). We have been instructed to reply to your letter as it is the HSD that is responsible for Switzerland's peace, human rights and migration-related foreign policies and political initiatives.

Switzerland will maintain relations with global partners upon the basis of her foreign policies. Sri Lanka is one such partner where it is through such extensive connections that our relations with this global partner can be fostered.

Switzerland's main areas of interest regarding Sri Lanka include; human rights and reconciliation amongst ethnic groups and it is upon such basis that Switzerland's role within the region emerges. One such example is the establishment of a "Human Security" related political office which assists Sri Lanka in matters regarding; constitutional governance, constitutional amendment and historic reformation. It is noteworthy that Switzerland is the only Western country that operates within the Northern Province.

Switzerland will not limit its actions – especially with its implementation of peace and human rights-related political initiatives in Sri Lanka.



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Eidgenössisches Departement für auswärtige Angelegenheiten EDA

Politische Direktion PD
Abteilung Menschliche Sicherheit:
Frieden, Menschenrechte, Humanitäre Politik, Migration

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Bern, 22. Oktober 2019

Ihr Schreiben vom 26. September 2019

Sehr geehrter Herr Thirumalmarukan

Besten Dank für Ihr Schreiben an Bundesrat Ignazio Cassis vom 26. September 2019 und die Ausführungen zur Situation von Lt. Col. Thileepan und der Tamilischen Bevölkerung. Die Abteilung Menschliche Sicherheit (AMS) des Eidgenössischen Departements für auswärtige Angelegenheiten (EDA) ist unter anderem zuständig für die Umsetzung der Friedens-, Menschenrechts- und Migrationsaussenpolitik der Schweiz und wurde daher beauftragt, Ihnen zu antworten.

Die Schweiz verfolgt den aussenpolitischen Grundsatz, zu allen globalen Partnern gute Beziehungen anzustreben. Dies trifft auch auf das Verhältnis zu Sri Lanka zu. Nur durch regelmässigen Austausch kann die Schweiz ihre Interessen und Anliegen gegenüber Sri Lanka wirksam vertreten.

Zentrales Interesse der Schweiz gegenüber Sri Lanka ist die Förderung der Menschenrechte und die Aussöhnung zwischen den Bevölkerungsgruppen. Dafür engagiert sich die Schweiz auch vor Ort. Sie unterhält ein auf menschliche Sicherheit spezialisiertes Büro in Jaffna und ist somit als einziger westlicher Staat in der Nordprovinz präsent. Ihre Unterstützung für Sri Lanka umfasst unter anderem konkrete Projekte in den Bereichen Rechtsstaat, Verfassungsreform und Vergangenheitsbewältigung.

Dieses friedens- und menschenrechtspolitische Engagement in Sri Lanka wird die Schweiz auch in Zukunft unvermindert weiterführen.

Mit freundlichen Grüssen

Politische Direktion PD

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Monthly Update

04.10.19: **Elections** – The chairman of Sri Lanka's Electoral Commission has estimated the costs of Sri Lanka's Presidential Elections to be of around LKR 450 million.

04.10.19: **Economy** - SL minister of Economic Reforms and Public Distribution encouraged India to remove any trade barriers between the 2 countries to foster economic cooperation amongst South Asian countries. Statement was made at the India Economic Summit

07.10.19: **Arrest** - 4 Sri Lankans were arrested at Luton Airport in London for alleged ties to terrorist organisations.

09.10.19: **Europe** - Sri Lankan secretary to the treasury signs agreement for the "Strengthening Transformation, Reconciliation and Inclusive Democratic Engagement" (STRIDE) project which is co-financed by the EU with a contribution of EUR 40 million.

10.10.19: **Elections** - Facebook has announced how it will be assisting the Sri Lankan government during the upcoming SL presidential elections. This includes training

workshops for Sri Lanka's Electoral Commission and the provision of translation technology from Tamil and Sinhala. FaceBook has also expressed that they will use measures to identify and remove accounts which spread false news or hate speech regarding the elections.

10.10.19: **Treatment** - Gotabaya visits Singapore for medical treatment.

10.10.19: **Elections** – Sajith vows to hand over the responsibilities of SL's national security to Sarath Fonseka.

10.10.19: **Arrest** - Many individuals including a member of Malaysian parliament were arrested in Malaysia for the alleged reformation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

11.10.19: **Release** – Sri Lanka's Court of Appeal releases 4 SL military officials who were charged in 2015 for gang-raping a girl in Visvadamu in 2010.

12.10.19: **Arrest** - With the arrest of an ex-cadre, his sister and wife, it has been reported that weapons were also retrieved by SL authorities from the ex-

cadre's home in Kilinochchi.

12.10.19: **Elections** – Pillaiyaan expresses his support for Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

12.10.19: **Remembrance day** - The Kokuvil Massacre was commemorated across Tamil Eelam.

12.10.19: **Germany** - German Vice Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure Steffen Bilger who was in Sri Lanka, emphasises the importance of the expansion of port and airport services in Sri Lanka. He further characterised Sri Lanka as a vital international logistical hub with a potential for further expansion.

13.10.19: **Elections** - Thondaman expresses his support for Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

13.10.19: **Elections** – Basil Rajapaksa mentions that regardless of who wins the elections, it will be Mahindha Rajapaksa who will assume the duties of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.

13.10.19: **Italy** - Italian government pledges assistance to the Sri Lankan government to build a solid waste power plant as a renewable energy resource during official discussions held at the Sri Lankan ministry.

13.10.19: **Book Release** - 'Nanthikadal Speaks' was released in Jaffna.

14.10.19: **Saudi** - The Saudi Export Development Authority (SEDA), has assured to provide assistance for business networking programs to be arranged in Sri Lanka and Saudi Arabia to expand to export of raw materials to Sri Lankan manufacturers.

14.10.19: **Elections** - Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga has expressed that 95% of SLFP's party members are against merging with the SLPP.

14.10.19: **Elections** - 5 Tamil Political Parties united to put forth 13 demands if they were to participate in the upcoming Sri Lankan Presidential Elections. TNPF will boycott the election.

14.10.19: **Tourism** - A Memorandum of Understanding was signed for the first cable car project in Sri Lanka to be built in Nuwara Eliya by the Sri

Lankan government to boost the island's tourism sector.

15.10.19: **Elections** - Gotabaya mentions that of those who surrendered during the final stages of the war, all are accounted for and none can be considered to be disappeared.

15.10.19: **Competition** - A special force of Sri Lanka's occupational forces participated in a military competition in Britain.

16.10.19: **Elections** - Sajith Premadasa expresses that terrorists and drug smugglers must face the death penalty.

17.10.19: **Contradiction** - Whilst Gotabaya had announced that 13,784 had surrendered during the final stages of war, Sri Lanka's department of rehabilitation announced that 10,790 had surrendered and been released. 2,994 remain unaccounted for.

17.10.19: **Jaffna** - International airport was opened in Jaffna.

17.10.19: **Arrest** - The leader of 'Avant Garde' was arrested.

17.10.19: **Protest** - The people of Eravoorpattu within the Batticaloa

district protested against the approval of sand theft within the region. Approval was provided by authorities to members from the South of the island.

18.10.19: **Elections** - The SLPP and Sri Lanka's army commander have notified Sri Lanka's Electoral Commission that they were not aware of Gotabaya's involvement of Shavendra Silva in his presidential campaign material.

19.10.19: **Rememberance Day** - Murdered senior journalist, Nimalarajan remembered.

20.10.19: **Rememberance Day** - Jaffna university students commemorate shooting of 2 of their fellow classmates 3 years ago, by occupational police officers in Jaffna.

21.10.19: **Colombo** - The Sri Lankan parliament has approved Sirisena to continue to inhabit his current abode with estimated projections of costs around LKR 360 million for the next 20 years.

21.10.19: **Remembrance Day** - The Jaffna hospital massacre was commemorated throughout Tamil Eelam.

22.10.19: **Release** – Gotabaya released from all charges in the Lasantha murder case.

23.10.19: **Easter Sunday attacks** – The parliamentary committee formed regarding the Easter Sunday attacks released their report with findings claiming that the executives including the President did not fulfil their duties. The reports further mentioned that Arabisation was being conducted throughout the island.

23.10.19: **Remembrance day** – Kalavanchchikudi massacre commemorated in Tamil Eelam.

23.10.19: **Protest** – Fishermen in Jaffna protest against the Indian Navy demanding the release of 18 Tamil fishermen.

24.10.19: **Military Relation** - Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) engaged in short term training program in Trincomalee to assist the Sri Lankan Air Force Regiment (SLAF).

25.10.19: **Britain** – The All Party Parliamentary Group for Tamils (APPGT) has called for Tamil genocide recognition.

26.10.19: **Arrest** – Former member of 'Karuna', Iniyabharathy was caught and arrested whilst

smuggling 180 kgs of drugs.

27.10.19: **Colombo**- a case has been filed against the former Anti – Corruption Intelligence Division Coordinator's family for alleged scams.

27.10.19: **Compensation** – Almost LKR 10 million was provided by the Chinese High Commissioner as compensation for those who lost their lives in the Easter Sunday Attacks.

28.10.19: **Arrest** – Pillaiyaan and 5 others were ordered in a court ruling to have an extended sentencing in detention however, Mahindha had met with Pillaiyaan a day earlier to promise him that they would release him once Gotabaya had won the upcoming SL Presidential elections.

28.10.19: **Jaffna** – Gotabaya mentions that he would release 274 ex-cadres and provide them with reconciliation opportunities during a campaign meeting.

28.10.19: **Protest** – a protest was held in Jaffna to oppose Gotabaya Rajapaksa's Jaffna visit.

29.10.19: **Colombo** - Peppermint Cafe bans staff from conversing in Tamil.

29.10.19: **Military Relation** - 6 member Nigerian delegation arrive for a 5-day training operation under the guidance of Sri Lankan special forces in Madura Oya.

30.10.19: **Grave** – Human skeletal remains were found within a grave in Suthanthirapuram.

30.10.19: **Mannar** - Madu Church officially announced as holy ground.

30.10.19: **Protest** – The relatives of forcibly disappeared persons continue their protests for over 983 days.

31.10.10: **Militarisation** – Jaffna's occupational forces have organised a obstacles competition for selected students.

Signs of Structural Genocide

Vedukkunaari - SL Archaeology department and occupational Nedunkerni police continue to prevent Tamils' worship at Vedukkunaari despite the court approval provided to the locals to conduct prayers.

Muttur East - Registration of title deeds for inherited lands denied to locals of Muttur East by Division Secretariat due to gazette issued by SL President Sirisena. Areas affected include: "Champoo, Koonitheevu, Choodaikkudaa, Paaddaalipuram and Kadatkadaichenai"

Ampaarai - Sinhala monks accelerate intensity of land disputes in Poththvuil in Ampaarai through pressuring SL Archaeology department to reverse a recent court ruling in favour of establishing protection against coastal landslides.

Batticaloa - Former Sri Lankan paramilitary shoots 1500 cows in Paduvaankarai in Batticaloa thus depraving the district's dairy economy. The Sri Lankan Home – Guards also

commence cultivation activities there
Batticaloa North - 30 resettled Tamil families in Batticaloa North as the occupational police dismantle their centre for marketing and produce exchange. Cultural disharmony due to events held by the police for those visiting from the South have further increased tensions.

Tamil Eelam - Occupying Sri Lankan military attempts mass-scale land grabs. They aim to appropriate lands in 60 different places. In Chuzhipuram and Neduntheevu the Navy tries to appropriate lands too.

Vaakarai - 3 Sinhala sand mining traders threatened Divisional Secretariat in the Vaakarai division to continue their illegal trade within the Koaralaippattu North region.

Manalaaru - SL Army establishes a makeshift archaeology museum at Neeraviyadi Pillaiyar Temple displaying artefacts claimed to have been collected from the premises belonging to the Buddhist Vihara which

was forcibly established in the area.

Jaffna - Locals express concern after becoming aware of SL officials' attempt to establish a Buddhist Vihara within Jaffna Fort.

Mullivaikkal West - The people of Mullivaikkal resist and prevent Sri Lankan authorities from capturing and utilising parts of Mullivaikkal West for military purposes.

Vavuniya - An ex-cadre – Perinpanathan - was suddenly found deceased in Vavuniya under mysterious circumstances.



An ex-cadre – Perinpanathan - deceased under mysterious circumstances

STRUCTURES OF
TAMIL EELAM
A HANDBOOK

6 PM - 8 PM
Thursday 21. NOVEMBER 2019



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