



Tamil civil society disappointed with UNHRC resolution, New Delhi's stand

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While expressing appreciation for those countries that voted for the resolution and expressing their disappointment on the conduct of India at the UNHRC, Mannaar Bishop Rt Rev Rayappu Joseph and Jaffna University law academic Kumaravadivel Guruparan, in a statement issued on behalf of the Tamil Civil Society Forum (TCSF) on Thursday, expressed their deep regret that the resolution does not provide for the establishment of a robust mechanism of international investigations in the form of an International Commission of Inquiry.

Full text of the TCSF follows:

The Tamil Civil Society Forum (TCSF) takes note of the resolution passed by the UN Human Rights Council on promoting accountability, reconciliation and human rights in Sri Lanka on 27 March 2014.

TCSF expresses appreciation for those countries that sponsored and voted for the resolution. We are extremely disappointed that India chose to abstain during the vote on the full text of the resolution and to vote for the motion that sought to delete the paragraph (Operative Paragraph 10) in the resolution authorising the OHCHR to undertake investigations.

We deeply regret that this resolution does not provide for the establishment of a robust mechanism of international investigations in the form of an International Commission of Inquiry. We are also concerned that the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner's mandate for investigations has been limited to the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission's time framework. The resolution does not explicitly provide her office the authority to investigate on going violations.

With regard to Operative Paragraph 6 of the resolution we reiterate that the 13th amendment provides no basis for a political solution of the Tamil question. The narrative of the preambular paragraphs, we note with regret, does not take into consideration the specificity of the problems faced by the Tamils.

We are concerned that despite the resolution and the debate leading up to it, the plight of the Tamils continue and continue to escalate. We wish to stress upon the International Community, the need to take bold, firm and decisive steps that will be necessary to address the ongoing suffering of the Tamils.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph (Bishop of Mannar) & Kumaravadivel Guruparan (University of Jaffna) on behalf of the Tamil Civil Society Forum

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Meanwhile, New Delhi's envoy to UN, Mr. Dilip Sinha told NDTV on Friday that the introduction of the concept of international investigation in the resolution was the reason for India abstaining from the voting.

Mr. Sinha's statement means that Pakistan and India are together in denying international investigative justice to Eezham Tamils.

During the voting, Pakistan asked the UNHRC to remove the clause on OHCHR investigation from the resolution.

When asked by the NDTV whether India would have voted yes, had the clause been removed, Sinha said that there were other concerns too and he wouldn't speculate on what would have happened then.

"We encourage Sri Lanka to fulfill its own commitments and conduct its own investigations in such a way that they are credible and are looked upon by others as acceptable investigations," Sinha said.

In the same spirit, people of India, especially the people of Tamil Nadu, should see that the coming elections should pave way for conducting an investigation in India itself on the role of the Congress regime and its officials in the genocide of Eezham Tamils, commented Tamil activists for alternative politics in the island.

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