

PEOPLE'S DECLARATION

ENSURE A NON-WITHDRAWABLE FEDERAL MODEL POWER SHARING WITHIN UNITED SRILANKA FOR MERGED NORTH EASTERN PROVINCE

We, the Tamil speaking people of Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri-Lanka, today, 08 November 2022, the 100th day of our continuous hundred days of activism for power sharing, present the People's Declaration for a sustainable political solution for North East Tamil speaking people.

We have taken into consideration all the past power sharing proposals which were presented by the rulers as a solution for ethnic issue, analyzed the content of the 13th Amendment, particularly explored the "federal model power sharing within united SriLanka" which was agreed by the Sri-Lanka delegation headed by Mr. G.L. Peiris under the guidance of the then Prime Minister Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe in the Oslo Declaration 2002, with the mediation of Norway, and we present our declaration as the voice of the people.

The Tamil people have been living in Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri-Lanka since pre-historic period with their distinct identity. Along with the numerically majority Tamil people numerically minority Muslim people are also living in these areas. The successive majoritarian Sinhala rulers who came to power based on racism and systematically oppressed the Tamil people politically, linguistically, economically, and socially and perpetrated violence against the Tamil people. As because of these reasons it was assured by the 13th Amendment that the people of North and East must be given a provincial level solution within a merged North Eastern Province and also to Constitutionally ensure Tamil also be an official language. However, in 2006, the merged North Eastern Province unit was demerged and North and East have been created as two separate provinces.

35 years have passed that the 13th Amendment was created by the Indo-Lanka Pact in 1987. During this time period Tamil people were subjected to genocide by the SriLankan state and war crimes were committed against them.

They suffered with continuous displacements and lived in refugee camps for years. Their habitats, properties, livelihoods including trees completely were destroyed in war. Thousands of Tamils were arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and subjected to torture. Thousands of the Tamils were subjected to enforced disappearance. Until to date Tamil people are facing severe threat by the militarization, systematic land grabbing and human rights violations.

Therefore, we emphasis for a sustainable political solution to end the 70years long political oppressions endured by the Tamil people and to live a dignified and righteous life:

1. Northern and Eastern provinces must be re merged and North and East must become a single provincial unit
2. Central government must ensure a non-withdrawable federal model power sharing for merged North Eastern province
3. The merged North Eastern province must be governed by a people's representative council which would be democratically elected by the people. It should be ensured that women's representation would be 50%
4. The Chief Minister shall be the head of the people's representative council
5. The Governor shall not control the people's representative council of the province and He/She shall represent the central government as an honourable representative
6. The lands situated within the North Eastern province must come under the control of the governance of the province
7. The provincial governance must have authority to engage in international agreements for the advancement of the people of the province. This must

- include international trade, industrial development, urbanization and infra structure development
8. The provincial governance must be given authority to create and implement laws relating to land and all other related affairs that come within its power
 9. The police and intelligence services of the province must come under the control of the provincial governance
 10. Sectors such as judiciary, public administration, education, health services, public transport, telecommunication, electricity, energy and all other areas must be taken into consideration and the powers of the provincial governance must be guaranteed
 11. Totally demilitarize the North East areas and place the military for national security where they were stationed prior to 1983
 12. The central government must establish floating naval bases in needful sea areas to prevent the ongoing illegal activities. By this people's lands could be released from the control of the navy and able to get back the normal life
 13. The central government of SriLanka must provide necessary financial assistance to the Nort Eastern provincial unit for certain period until it is economically empowered
 14. SriLankan state is accountable for war crimes, enforced disappearances and for all sorts of human rights violations committed against Tamil people. Therefore, according to the international standards and with the guidance of the United Nations, the Sri-Lankan government must develop justice mechanisms jointly with international countries and should provide justice to the affected people.

15. The North Eastern provincial governance must enact and enforce laws that promote sustainable policies such as co-existence, ethnic-religious reconciliation, solidarity and amity among all ethnic and religious communities living within the province

16. The central government must implement programmes that promote the values of humanity such as democratic life of all Sri-Lankans, ethnic reconciliation, co-existence, solidarity and amity

We appeal the friendly neighbouring country India, the core group countries the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Canada, Malawi, North Macedonia and Montenegro, the European Union and the United Nations to provide needful assistance to SriLankan government to confirm an un withdrawable federal model power sharing to North East areas.

North East Coordinating Committee (NECC)

SriLanka

08 November 2022