



**CONSULATE GENERAL OF SRI LANKA
TORONTO, CANADA**

1, Eglinton Avenue East, # 501, Toronto, Ontario M4P 3A1

Tel : 001-416-323-9133/416-323-0729 Fax : 001-416-323-3205 E-mail : srilanka@bellnet.ca

03.05.2024

His Worship Patrick Brown
Mayor of Brampton

Dear Sir,

I take this opportunity to recall my first meeting with you in your office in the City Council of Brampton and the details we discussed about the Sri Lankan conflict protracted for thirty years.

Kindly note that several Sri Lankan Canadian Community Associations have brought to my attention that a certain group of Sri Lankan Canadians intends to construct a so-called Tamil Genocide Monument in a location within your city limit and the City Council of Brampton has granted approval for the proposed construction. Opposing the proposed construction, this group of Sri Lankan Canadians highlighted that all Sri Lankans, irrespective of their ethnicities were affected by the conflict and the proposed construction will severely disturb the unity and reconciliation efforts among all affected Sri Lankans. Also, it will have a negative impact on the multi-ethnic social coherence and harmony of the Sri Lankan Canadian Community, as well as among communities in Sri Lanka.

I would like to reiterate that no authority including the United Nations has made any finding on genocide allegedly committed by Sri Lanka during the three decades long conflict. It is well documented that during the conflict, the Government of Sri Lanka provided necessary funds to continue the operation of public institutions and provision of all essential material which included food and medicines to the people of the conflict-affected areas. Services available to all Sri Lankans such as free education, free health facilities as well as public and private sector employment are equally enjoyed by Tamils at all times.

As I previously mentioned in our first meeting, the conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), an organization which was internationally banned (including in Canada as well) ended in 2009.

Even though Sri Lanka experienced a series of difficulties triggered by the COVID pandemic, natural disasters etc the Government of Sri Lanka has given the priority to strengthen the post-conflict ethnic reconciliation, addressing the root causes of the conflict through a set of broader measures.

The Government has taken measures to heal the physiological wounds of the conflict affected people through strengthening of required democratic institutional mechanisms. The Government has established the Truth, Unity and Reconciliation Commission; the Office of the Missing Persons; the Office for Reparations; the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation; the Office for Overseas Sri Lankan Affairs; and a Special unit established under the Presidential Secretariat to promote reconciliation and economic development in Northern and Eastern provinces (conflict affected areas) are fully operational. Further, the Government of Sri Lanka has opened the platform for the civil society to constructively engage through these institutional mechanisms to promote the reconciliation efforts.


Also, the Government has released LTTE combatants and handed over the lands in the conflict areas which were previously held by the security forces to the original owners. These recipients are Tamils. The Sri Lankan Internally Displaced Persons in India had been issued "All Country" Sri Lankan passports, ensuring their freedom of mobility. Also, the "Religions to Reconcile" national inter-religious symposium was organized by the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka, which was attended by the civil society, including the 'Representatives of Plural Action for Conflict Transformation' project.

As you may be aware, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC), one of the leading Tamil Organization in Canada, commenced their humanitarian activities in Sri Lanka with the participation of the Canadian High Commission in Colombo. Also, the CTC has made important engagements with Buddhist monks under the framework of Himalaya Declaration to support the reconciliation efforts.

I am pleased to share with you the outcome of the progressive approach of the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Toronto towards the constructive engagements with the Tamil community members, Tamil business community and business chambers, facilitating their increasing demand for business opportunities and investments in Sri Lanka. Also, the Consulate General processes an increasing number of dual citizenship applications from Tamils in Canada on a daily basis and the majority of them are from the business community, who intend to initiate their economic engagement with Sri Lanka. I observe that there is a tremendous increase of Canadian Tamils visiting Sri Lanka as tourists for long holidays to renew their ancestral heritage and family reunion.

In the above context, I urge you to draw your kind attention towards these developments on the reconciliation efforts in Sri Lanka which can benefit the people of Sri Lanka who represent the multi-ethnic communities including Tamils, as well as the overseas Sri Lankans in Canada, who can exploit this opportunity to further strengthen Canada-Sri Lanka relations.

In view of the above, I urge you to extend your valued support for the ongoing reconciliation efforts of Sri Lanka through a constructive approach to secure and promote the best interests of the Tamils with Sri Lankan origins, rather than divisive and unhelpful initiatives such as the construction of the proposed so-called Genocide Monument in Brampton which would severely disrupt communal harmony and social coherence in the multi-ethnic Sri Lankan Canadian community, as well as reverse the reconciliation efforts of Sri Lanka. It also communicates a false version of recent history of Sri Lanka and conveys a deeply distorted and false message of violence to present and future generations of Canadians of Sri Lankan origin, as well as to Sri Lankans.



Thushara Rodrigo
Consul General of Sri Lanka
Toronto