

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE  
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office**

**as at:**

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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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## Traditional Leaders Welcome Reconciliation Efforts

**T**raditional rulers from 13 chiefdoms in Bombali District have embraced the reconciliation process championed by Fambul Tok International (FTI).

*By Abu Bakarr Munu*

The leaders say they welcome FTI because they are eager to consolidate lasting peace in the country at village level.

Fambul Tok International is implementing a peace process with the slogan, "We na wan fambul."

Paramount Chief, Alhaji Kandeh Wusu Sesay II of Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom openly declared his support for the reconciliation process geared towards addressing lapses and the unfinished work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

PC Kandeh Wusu Sesay said since they heard of the good things FTI is doing, they have been yearning for the programme.

PC Santigie Momoh Conteh of Sella Limba Chiefdom asked that the peace process be launched in each chiefdom headquarter town so that the message will get to the targeted groups.

He said since the TRC wrapped up its work in Sierra Leone, the perpetrators of some of the atrocities during the decade long civil conflict are yet to integrate or be accepted in their various communities. He

noted that as a result of this, the indifference among the people is impacting negatively and affecting development programmes across the board.

The Mammy Queen of Biriwa Chiefdom, Madam Regina Porseh Kalawa said the community is divided now more than before, and described the intervention of FTI in Bombali District as timely, especially as elections are just around the corner. Speaking on behalf of the youths, Philip A. Kamara from Makarie Gbanti Chiefdom emphasized the need for the process to be taken to village level.

Earlier, the Executive Director of FTI, John Caulker gave an overview of the concept of FTI and how it came about.

He said FTI believes that if Sierra Leone is to move forward, reconciliation must first take place, noting that it is a difficult and long process.

The FTI Executive Director noted that before the civil conflict people lived

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## Traditional Leaders Welcome Reconciliation Efforts

*From page 4*

together and did things in their localities with the spirit of love and passion for one another, but that changed with the war. He disclosed that he developed a concept paper in 2002 and shared his ideas with a colleague while on studies in the USA, adding that in January 2008 he embarked on a nationwide consultation, from which it came out clearly that people want to reconcile with each other.

He said at the moment, FTI is operating in Kailahun, Kono, Koinadugu, Moyamba and Bombali Districts.

"We are operating a policy whereby we provide the guide but the programme itself is owned by the people in the community," John stated. John said they will have to establish reconciliation committees comprising a pastor, an imam, a youth leader, and a women's leader to develop outreach structures.

He said ceremonies such as burn fires are normally organized where they invite community members and arrange for victims and perpetrators to interact with a view to making peace.

He said the ceremony also provides an opportunity for offenders to come forward

and confess their wrongs and ask forgiveness.

"The process also leads to the undertaking of community projects like farming, football matches, peace tree planting and women's support groups," he said.

Rev. Osman Fonah said the people of Bombali District should count themselves lucky to be part of the reconciliation process, but noted that if the process should go further, they as local authorities with a stake in their communities, have a crucial role to play.

Voice of America

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

### **ICC to Name Suspects in Kenya Post-Election Violence**

The International Criminal Court is set to name six key suspects in Kenya's 2008 post-election violence.

ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo says the suspects are considered "most responsible" for the unrest that killed about 1,300 people.

The names are expected to come out Wednesday, when the prosecutor asks judges to summon the individuals.

On Tuesday, Ocampo warned the suspects to surrender voluntarily and cooperate with the court. He said he has asked judges to impose restrictions on the suspects, including one that they not try to contact or influence victims or witnesses of crimes.

Ocampo plans to file two court cases, each one against three suspects. The world body must then decide whether to indict those allegedly involved in the violence.

### **REST OPTIONAL**

On Monday, the Kenyan government announced the creation of a local court to try those linked to the unrest.

Kenya erupted in riots and ethnic killings after President Mwai Kibaki was proclaimed the winner of the late 2007 presidential election. Opponent Raila Odinga and his supporters accused the president of stealing the election through fraud.

The country did not fully calm down until Mr. Kibaki and Mr. Odinga reached a power-sharing deal that made Mr. Odinga prime minister.

## Hirondelle News Agency

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

### **Ngirabatware's defence case adjourned to January 17**

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was Tuesday compelled to adjourn to January 17, next year, the defence case of former Rwandan Minister of Planning, Augustin Ngirabatware, two days before the scheduled time as one of the judges was reportedly bereaved.

"We will have to stop here because one of the members of the bench is bereaved," declared Tanzanian Presiding Judge, William Hussein Sekule without giving further details. Other members of the bench are Solomy Balungi Bossa of Uganda and Madagascan Rajohnson Mparany.

"The court is adjourned to 17 January, 2011 for the continuation of cross-examination," Judge Sekule said cautioning that in the meantime the accused should not get in touch with his lawyers.

At the time of adjournment, Ngirabatware who commenced his defence on November 16, 2010 was being cross-examined by the prosecution for the fifth day. The prosecution closed its case on November 15, 2009 after calling 20 witnesses.

Ngirabatware hails from what used to be the Nyamyumba commune, Gisenyi prefecture (North of Rwanda). He is the son-in-law of a wealthy businessman on the run, Felicien Kabuga, the alleged sponsor of the 1994 genocide.

The defendant, among others, is accused of inciting Hutus to kill Tutsis during numerous meetings in his home prefecture in 1994. In examination in chief with his lead counsel Peter Hebert, Ngirabatware denied that he ever went to his home prefecture of Gisenyi during the time in question.

The former minister fled Rwanda in July 1994 and subsequently worked in various research institutes in Gabon and France. He was arrested in Germany on September 17, 2007 and has been in ICTR custody since October 8, 2008.

NI /FK/ER/GF

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## UN News

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

### **Extensions granted to judges serving on UN war crimes tribunals**



The Security Council today extended the terms of several judges serving on the United Nations tribunals working to bring to justice the perpetrators of the worst crimes committed during the Balkans conflict of the 1990s and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda so that they can complete the cases on which they are working.

The Council took that action in two separate resolutions, one on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the other on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), both of which were adopted unanimously.

In doing so, the 15-member body took note of the assessments by both courts that they will not be able to complete all their work in 2010, as had been expected under their respective Completion Strategies.

It urged both tribunals to “take all possible measures” to complete their work expeditiously.

Since its inception 17 years ago, the ICTY, which is based in The Hague, has indicted 161 persons for war crimes committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The proceedings against 125 individuals have been completed. Only two indictees remain at large – Ratko Mladic and Goran Hadžic.

Meanwhile, ten fugitives wanted by the ICTR, which is based in the Tanzanian town of Arusha, still remain at large. The Tribunal was created in November 1994 to prosecute people responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda that year. Some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered, mostly by machete, in just 100 days.

## The New Times (Kigali)

Sunday, 12 December 2010

### **Rwanda: Genocide Archive Important in Fight Against Denial**

#### Editorial

On Friday, the Rwanda Genocide Archive was officially launched at the Kigali memorial centre in Gisozi. The archives consist audiovisual testimonies, various research papers and tonnes of documentation regarding the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, in which more than one million people perished.

A lot of information has been collected about the Genocide and having a central repository of all information regarding the horrific killings, is an important step in the process of healing and ensuring that Genocide never happens again.

The archives will help to give the right information to those seeking to know more about the Genocide both in Rwanda and abroad. At a time when individuals, backed by powerful interests are actively working to re-write our history and revise what happened to suit their own agendas, it becomes important that such information is available to put their motives to shame.

More so, many perpetrators of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi are still at large in foreign countries and some have changed their identities to evade justice. In order to avoid being punished for the heinous crimes they committed, they have, for long, been attempting to deny and play down the Genocide.

It is important that all information, connected to the Genocide, including, the cases handled by International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and other courts in the various parts of the world is turned over to Rwanda - where the crimes were committed. This will not only further enrich the archive, but contribute to the reconciliation process and enable Rwanda own part of its history.

# Sri Lanka Guardian

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

## ‘War Crimes: The global psywar against Sri Lanka

By Dr. Dayan Jayatilleka

*"You never empower the perps, no matter how many aces they're holding"*  
*Dave Robicheaux in James Lee Burke, 'The Tin Roof Blowdown' (2007)*

Let's confront the issue of "war crimes" and all that jazz. In the first place, where is it an issue and among whom? Hardly among the states in our neighbourhood or on the continent to which we belong. Is that because the standards of democracy are lower in Asia than elsewhere? It is true that in Asia, democracy is not always equated with liberalism, and there is sometimes differentiated from it, but that is a legitimate and fairly old debate in political theory and practice. No, the more understanding attitude that Asia displays towards Sri Lanka is because neighbours know best the reality of what happened, what was at stake, the dangers of dismemberment and the dynamics of external interference and intervention which use 'rights' as the entry point. Asia has had two searing collective experiences, colonialism and Cold War imperialism, and is therefore painfully aware of the value of national sovereignty and strong states.



Secondly, let us define the issue of war crimes. Is the denial that they were committed, a bland assertion that no civilians were killed? What a rational minded Sri Lankan rejects is the charge or the insinuation that civilians were intentionally targeted by the Sri Lankan armed forces, in the final or at any stage of the last war, and that any civilian casualties incurred derived from the disproportionate use of deadly force, given especially the character and capacities of the enemy. Civilians are hit during almost every single strike by Predator and Raptor drones, but that is neither intentional nor the primary target, and decisions have been made that the strikes were not a

disproportionate use of force in the circumstances. The prospect of civilian casualties when administering the coup de grace to a terrible enemy must be weighed against the civilian deaths that would result if that coup de grace were not administered and the terrorists lived on to regroup and re-launch operations. Every drone strike is fraught with such considerations. Sri Lanka's war, which did not take place on foreign soil, entailed precisely such considerations and calibrations. Sri Lanka's final offensive was to terminate a thirty year conflict which would have gone on for another thirty had the enemy not been liquidated utterly, like the Nazis they resembled. In that sense it was a Predator drone strike writ large; magnified or multiplied.

If so, why not accede to an impartial international war crimes inquiry? Let us, in the first place, dispense with the equation of the 'impartial' and the 'international'. The WikiLeaks revelations have shed light on the complicity between the UN inquiry into the killing of Lebanon's Rafik Hariri, and superpower agencies.

A summary of an article by Dyad Abu Jahjah in Open Democracy, founder and former president of the Arab European League reads: "Who has benefited most from the assassination of Rafik Hariri? As the UN special court

on Lebanon arrives at its version of events, one Lebanese reading finds confirmation in Wikileaks for pointing us in a different direction" This author of several books on the Middle East cautions that "...It is in this context that one must read the actions of the international tribunal investigating the death of Rafik Hariri and the indictment of Hezbollah that it will be releasing shortly...The efforts of the international tribunal for Lebanon that is housed in the Hague are now focusing on framing Hezbollah for the deed. This is done through engineered telecommunication evidence that implies that a Hezbollah network of operatives conducted the operation...The United Nations special court on Lebanon has from its inception been a political tool in the hands of the powerful. It is now being used to create a pretext to destroy the Lebanese resistance...When the indictment will be issued in the coming weeks (maybe days) things will take a dangerous turn in Lebanon. ..The web of lies is being drawn again, and soon the media will be telling us that it is a Sunni/Shia war that is the background to the problem, and that Hezbollah and behind it Syria and Iran want to seize control of Lebanon." (Dec 7th 2010, <http://www.opendemocracy.net>)

Those who sermonise on the need for a war crimes inquiry to restore international credibility, simply must pause to ask themselves why the person most qualified to do so, Judge CG Weeramantry, has so far chosen not to lend his voice to this slogan. Is it that he is morally and ethically inferior or of lesser courage than those who vociferate, or is it that he is possessed of far greater wisdom? A probable explanation is that he is fully aware of the realities and complexities of international inquiries, the way in which the dice is loaded against the Third World, and that each society deals with these issues in their own way and in their own time.

Why has Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith who aired his critical dissent on '56, and '72 and recommended devolution at the LLRC, praised the country's political leadership for ridding the country of terrorism and restoring peace, rather than joining the chorus insinuating that war crimes were committed and calling for an international investigation into war crimes allegations?

There is hardly anything that the incumbent administration can do to or for either Cardinal Ranjith or Judge Weeramantry. It is far more likely that they are sensitive to the unhealthy, lacerating consequences for polity and society of such externally propelled or induced inquiries in the aftermath of a popular war, experienced widely as one of emancipation and national reunification. Any such process must incubate and mature within each society. It is the society, the public and the nationally specific historical process in question that can legitimately and successfully call forth such a settlement of accounts though a great many societies choose to let the wounds heal, the social scar tissue to form and other forms of therapy, individual and collective to do their work.

The UK took 38 years and two commissions to issue a report into a massacre that took place in broad daylight on bloody Sunday. Spain initiated prosecution of its top prosecutor for seeking to open up the Spanish civil War, and that curtain of silence has done that country no harm— indeed it forestalled a military backlash and civic polarisation which could have impaired the transition to its vibrant democracy. The invocations of parallels from South Africa, Cambodia and Central America are ridiculous. In Cambodia, it is the commanders of the defeated Pol Pot forces who are being prosecuted, not the forces of the state that defeated them, led by Hung Sen. In South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was in the context of a negotiated, peaceful transition from minority rule to majority rule, not a panel which sat in the aftermath of a war waged by majority rule against a secessionist attempt at minority rule. The Central and Latin American experiences of transitional justice issued from negotiated peace settlements between guerrillas and governments or transfers of power from military juntas to civilian democracy (many of which entailed amnesty and immunity from prosecution for the military).

Sri Lanka belongs to none of these categories. The Premawathie Manamperi case is no precedent: that was a deliberate, eye-witnessed atrocity committed in a space held sacred by two communities, during a Sinhala-on-Sinhala civil conflict between the state and a rebel movement in its initial romantic incarnation. The emotions and social psychology that prevailed post 1971 and that which prevails now after a thirty year war of ethnic separatism (including memories of massacres of samaneras) are drastically different. The reality is that there was a social consensus for the prosecution of that crime but there is none for turning on this or that soldier, less than two years after a long sought and hard fought victory. Such action would tack dangerously against the national zeitgeist.

I have watched some of the videos which claim to reveal war crimes. Belonging as I do to the generation that recalls the visuals of Col Loan of the South Vietnamese police draw and fire his revolver into the head of a captured Vietcong suspect during the Tet Offensive, a TV cameraman being shot dead by a Somocista Nicaraguan National Guardsman while lying on the ground, and the indelible scenes from Srebrenica or the footage of mass executions from the camera of the carrier based US warplane over Bosnia, I can tell a smoking gun when I see one. From what

I have seen, the Channel 4 videos do not fall into that category. By contrast, what they do remind me of are the Tonkin Gulf incident (the North Vietnamese gunboats that supposedly ‘attacked’ the USS Turner Joy, but actually didn’t), the manufacture of consent for Kosovo and the Iraqi WMDs that weren’t.

Ever heard the term ‘revanchisme’ (or simply, revanchist)? It means revenge seeking, and originated with reference to fascist or pro-fascist groups seeking revenge for their defeat by the Allies in World War II. The Sri Lanka hating element of the Tamil Diaspora is in a revanchist mode, drawing support from those in the international order who seek revenge from us for ignoring their edict to stop the final assault on the Tigers. They are waging a global psychological war against Sri Lanka.

We are being set up. We are being framed and then asked to prove our innocence by submitting to an external inquiry, at a time and by entities other than of our own choosing. That’s a violation of sovereignty and of our national self determination. We must not fall victim to it. That this is not reducible to a merely a pro-regime view and is in fact the subject of a broad consensus is evidenced by the explicit remarks of the most popular personality in the Opposition and in every likelihood its incoming leader, in a recent interview given to Raisa Wickremetunga of the (hardly pro-government) Sunday Leader.

"Q: You said in Parliament that war crimes had only been committed by the LTTE. What is your comment on Deputy Leader Karu Jayasuriya’s interview published in a weekend newspaper?"

A: I’m not privy to the context and circumstances in which Karu Jayasuriya’s pronouncement or statement was made. I don’t know the minute details. I’ve always maintained my stance. This didn’t grow from yesterday or the day before. It was my policy decision right from the beginning and will remain so. This proposal was put forward by myself in fact, and has become party policy; to protect the armed forces and the defense establishment that so courageously annihilated the LTTE after more than three decades.

Q: In that sense, you condemn the UN war crimes probe?

A: As far as war crimes are concerned, I don’t think the UN has taken a balanced approach. It has taken a partial discriminatory approach when it comes to the defense establishment. The UN is supposed to be impartial and balanced, not politically prejudicial and discriminatory. I admit the UN performs a magnanimous role in making society healthy and peaceful, but I have great reservations on its motives and actions on the war probe." (Sajith On The Constitution And War Crimes, The Sunday Leader Dec 12, 2010)

Thus, on the issues of sovereignty, war crimes allegations and the defence of those who defend us —our armed forces —there is hardly any daylight between government and opposition. This is as it should be. As a society and a country, we must not close up or close off; we must remain open to the outside world; but as a state we shall not succumb, be suckered into sacrificing our sovereignty or committing suicide.

# Sri Lanka Guardian

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

By Vishwamithra

## Sri Lanka: Ignorance of looming threat of UN backed war crime trial and indulgence in rule by deception



"The controversy is continuing over the diplomatic fallout from President Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to Britain last week. Amidst this turmoil and conflicting reports the Rajapaksa regime needs to act urgently to set up a think tank to redesign the government policy in various spheres including both domestic and international geopolitics based on highest principals of truly democratic and transparent governance."

President Rajapakse was forced to return home from his bitter trip to London in disgrace amidst real possibility of being arrested in the UK; the first victim on whom the issuing of arrest warrant was imminent for alleged war crimes was one of the Major Generals who was in the President's entourage. The criminal law set in motion by the British Tamil Forum (BTF) would have been a certain success if not for the leakage of information on the judicial process initiated by them that allowed Presidential convoy hurriedly return home in one piece. Panic and fear psychosis experienced by the high profile delegation was such that they were forced to plead the British Government's mercy for permission to take the aircraft of the Sri Lankan Air Line, all the way to terminal 5 from where the President boarded the aircraft avoiding confrontation with BTF.

After the return of the President the government and the state controlled media, displaying their nudity, continued to engage in the habitual practice of misleading the people with false information on the drama unfolded and blamed the British Government for duplicity. Adding fuel to fire, some utterly ignorant and irresponsible ministers, led by bad mouthed Weerawansa, engaged in a calculated mud-slinging campaign and called the British Government 'a failed state'. These accusations were based on 'failing to provide facilities to the President Rajapakse during his private visit to London'. Further, utterly unfounded allegations were also levelled against the West for 'attempting to dishonour the President Rajapakse'.

### *Stupidity of comparing the British system based on values with that of Lanka based on deception*

There is no purpose served by comparing the UK, a true democracy, with Lanka, where the democracy is seen only on paper. Surely the Britain is amongst the handful of nations where liberty and the civil rights of its subjects are given the highest priority. Very few may know that respect to the individual liberty guaranteed to the British citizens are such that they are not even regulated by any form of official identity card system, like the NIC in Sri Lanka, which the British public perceives as an invasion of their liberty and privacy.

In the world stage, the UK is one of the very few countries where all international treaties, that brought in to protect the human rights and liberties of the people of all origin, are duly respected and recognised. Surely the outside world is unaware as to why the significant number of UK population consists of large numbers of immigrants who are provided with a safe haven in Britain against the threats of persecution in their own countries. Although the adherence to its international obligations has stretched British economy almost beyond its limits, the Britain as a

true democracy continues to observe its commitment in the protection of human rights and the right to lead a dignified life sans persecution. The pressure exerted by Britain for adherence to this policy is such that, according to 2007 statistics, in London alone, 31% of the population (over 3 million in number) represents ethnic minorities coming from the nations where failed leaders shamelessly exploit the poor and rob the national wealth, igniting social unrest. This policy has caused a huge pressure on the country's resources and public services such as health, education, transport, housing and employment. It is worthwhile to note that the Sri Lankan Tamil population in London who are provided with safe haven against persecution in their motherland, accounts for more than 300,000 people.

### ***UK obligations on war crimes***

In this scenario it is quite natural that Britain takes a strong stand against crimes against humanity and war crimes allegations and enforces domestic laws placed in keeping with its obligations under the Geneva Convention, which provides universal jurisdiction on war crimes. Where there is sufficient evidence for breaches of Geneva Convention, the British domestic law allows the private citizens to set the Criminal Law in motion against any foreign national concerned in war crimes, to be arrested whilst on the UK soil.

### ***Independence of the unique British Judicial system***

Unlike Sri Lanka the judiciary in the UK enjoys complete independence and free from any form of interference. In fact, in number of occasions the UK government had faced very uncomfortable situations with arrest warrants being issued by British Courts against the nationals of British allies including Israel. Britain is one of the pioneer-nations of universal jurisdiction in Europe, a concept that empowers judges to issue arrest warrants against any visitor accused of committing war crimes anywhere in the world. Like President Rajapakse, the foreign minister of Israel, Tzipi Livni too, had a narrow escape as she was not present in the UK, when the warrant for arrest was issued on her for war crimes during Israel's 2008-2009 war on Gaza, following an application made by Palestinian activists. That incident occurred in December 2009 angered Israelis and embarrassed the British government that pledged to change the law and to restrict private prosecution without the sanction of the Attorney General. However this amendment has not yet seen the light of the day.

After the end of the Rajapakse episode, the Foreign Secretary UK, William Hague, in a statement issued said that "The UK is committed to upholding international justice and all of our international obligations. Our core principle remains that those guilty of war crimes must be brought to justice"

### ***Tony Blair's conduct too is subjected to close scrutiny***

Another fine example of the working of the independence of the British justice is that the whole hearted attempt by the British public to bring the former Prime Minister Tony Blair and the former US President George Bush to justice for dragging the country unnecessarily to an unjustified war against Iraq and Afghanistan on false information presented to British public. The British public have been holding massive protest campaigns against the so-called 'war on terror' and collecting evidence in support of an impending prosecution against the former Prime Minister whose is responsible for the loss of freedom of movement within the country itself. Since the waging of this unwarranted war the people have been suffering from loss of security and safety whilst being subjected to massive security measures that invades their private life which should never have happened.

### ***Channel 4 exposures of war crimes and barking on the wrong tree***

There is abundance of evidence of civilian deaths that are freely available to the British media, which include a large volume of both photographic and video evidence. These include the killings of members of Prabakaran's family in cold-blood, his son, daughter and the wife, where the images taken with their pants down. The Channel 4 informed the British public that these images were shocking and cannot be shown. However, those who are concerned with the crimes against humanity have seen these images through different sources.

The most disturbing thing is that the people of Sri Lanka have never seen these images, whereas the outside world had access to them thanks to the irresponsible behaviour of some security force personnel who had captured these images of deaths towards the end of the Elam war and let them ended up in public domain.

In this background it is quite natural for the human rights activists and the UK government to accuse the Rajapakse administration for war crimes alongside Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, and the former Yugoslavia and demand for UN backed war crimes inquiry. However, for some strange reasons the people of Sri Lanka are kept in the dark about the real risk of war crime trial looming large. It is sad that the government of Sri Lanka continues to exploit the ignorance of the people and make them find fault with the outside world under the pretext that the war crime accusations level against the Sri Lanka are baseless and manifestly unfounded.

### ***Respect the peoples' right to know the truth not what govt wants them to believe***

It is reported that Sri Lanka's High Commissioner Nihal Jayasinghe had advised the President not to come to Britain because of real risk of facing wrath of Tamil diaspora in Britain. However, this advice has been mysteriously ignored by the level-headed people at the Presidential Secretariat. As a result the poor President Rajapakse was compelled to pay a high price for the total faith kept on his so-called advisors. He too is responsible for the shameful disaster for his sheer ignorance on the developments of the world stage whilst being a head of a state and for his desire for satisfying his ego. The ignominy suffered by the President Rajapakse was such that repeated requests by Sri Lanka's External Affairs Minister GL Peiris and the Sri Lanka's High Commissioner, for an opportunity for the President to meet the government representatives were refused by the British Government. Only the Defence Secretary Liam Fox, who visited Rajapakse many times in Sri Lanka when he was in the opposition, agreed to meet him but that too was in private capacity.

The controversy is continuing over the diplomatic fallout from President Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to Britain last week. Amidst this turmoil and conflicting reports the Rajapaksa regime needs to act urgently to set up a think tank to redesign the government policy in various spheres including both domestic and international geopolitics based on highest principals of truly democratic and transparent governance.

### ***UK's firm stand on Sri Lanka on alleged war crimes continues***

The British Prime Minister, David Cameron, has said in the House of Commons on last Wednesday that there should be an independent investigation into the claims that the Sri Lankan government was guilty of human rights abuses during the defeat of Tamil Tiger rebels last year. He stopped short of backing calls for an international war crimes tribunal. The Labour party MP, Siobhan McDonagh told parliament that there was growing evidence of alleged assassinations and other abuses. And the Prime Minister replied "I think the Honourable lady makes a fair point. We do need to see an independent investigation of what happened. Everyone has read the papers and seen the T.V. footage, (which people of Sri Lanka may have never witnessed) we need an independent investigation to work out whether what she suggests is right".

The chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Tamils (APPG-T), Mr. Lee Scott MP (Conservative), welcomed the British government's position. "In my view, an independent international inquiry is an important first step." This is the unequivocal stand of the West led by British Government on Sri Lanka despite repeated denial of war crime claims by the government of Sri Lanka.

British stand on war crime alleged to have been committed in Sri Lanka was reaffirmed by a press statement issued by Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The Foreign Secretary William Hague stressed the need for Sri Lanka to have a credible and independent process to address allegations of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law during the conflict. He hoped that Sri Lanka would show clear commitment towards democracy, human rights law and freedom of the press, the FCO statement said.

## Xinhua

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

### **Karadzic loses key testimony with death of Holbrooke**

The untimely death of veteran U.S. diplomat Richard Holbrooke has denied a key testimony for the war crimes trial of Radovan Karadzic, the former president of the Serb republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), reported the Serbian news agency Tanjug on Tuesday.

Holbrooke, who died on Monday, is regarded as the chief architect of the Dayton Peace Accords that brought a formal end to the bloody civil war in BiH. According to Kosta Cavoski, a legal professor and member of Karadzic's defense team, in 1996 Holbrooke guaranteed that Karadzic would not be prosecuted for war crimes if he withdrew from public life.

Karadzic adopted a false identity and hid from authorities for more than 12 years, before being apprehended in 2008 and brought before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for alleged crimes against humanity and genocide.

"Doctor Karadzic was counting on Holbrooke's testimony and his defense will clearly be deficient in this regard, as Holbrooke is no longer among the living," said Cavoski.

Although Holbrooke publicly denied the existence of such a guarantee, Karadzic's contention is supported by an unlikely source, Mohamed Sacirbey, the former foreign minister in the Muslim-led BiH government, who was Karadzic's wartime foe.

Cavoski stated that Karadzic and Holbrooke had made a "gentleman's agreement" in the presence of the late Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic. With both Holbrooke and Milosevic deceased, Cavoski said classified U.S. State Department archives would support the existence of such an agreement.

Peter Robinson, another legal advisor for Karadzic, said his client had expressed "sorrow and regret" over Holbrooke's passing, and that he had been hoping for Holbrooke's testimony.

ICTY judges have in the past indicated that the existence of such an agreement would not influence the court's decisions.