



GLOBAL SRI LANKAN FORUM UNITED KINGDOM

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In partnership with Global Srilankan Forum Excom www.gslfexcom.org

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Monday, 21st December 2020

Sarah Clarke
Lady Usher of the Black Rod
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear Lady Clarke,

Re: Formal Complaint on a proscribed group using Parliament as a backdrop to create tension and fundraising campaign on social media and other platforms

We would like to make a formal complaint that, on 26th November 2020 your department has knowingly or unknowingly allowed the use of the Palace of Westminster as a backdrop for an illumination by a group who were commemorating the fallen fighters of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), with the wording "We Remember" and "We remember the heroes who fought for freedom from Sri Lankan state genocide". On this day they commemorated their so-called heroes including dead child soldiers and suicide bombers who were responsible for various atrocities and massacre of innocent civilians as well as statesmen, including former Prime Minister of India Mr Rajiv Gandhi, incumbent President of Sri Lanka R Premadasa and Sri Lankan foreign minister Lakshman Kathiragamar.

We respectfully remind you that the use of Parliament building as a backdrop for propaganda purposes of a proscribed organisation, not only damage the reputation of the image of UK as an impartial country but also raises ambiguity on their role in the ongoing reconciliation process in Sri Lanka. This action violates the law of the land directly as LTTE is a proscribed terrorist group under the **Terrorism Act of 2000 (the Act)** which is the primary piece of counter-terrorism legislation in the UK.

We would like to bring to your notice the following Sections of the above Act that stipulate the following behaviours as **punishable criminal offences**.

- ✓ belong, or profess to belong, to a proscribed organisation in the UK or overseas (**Section 11** of the Act);
- ✓ invite support for a proscribed organisation (the support invited need not be material support, such as provision of money, property or image associated or wording, and can also include moral support or approval) (**Section 12(1)**);
- ✓ express an opinion, phraseology or belief that is supportive of a proscribed organisation, reckless as to whether a person to whom the expression is directed will be encouraged to support a proscribed organisation (**Section 12(1A)**);
- ✓ wear clothing, carry, image/symbol associated, choice of words or display articles in public in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that the individual is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation (**Section 13**); and
- ✓ publish an image of an item of clothing or other article, such as a flag, logo or wording in the same circumstances (**Section 13(1A)**).

Further, we wish to bring to your attention that the following specific acts in breach of the **Terrorism Act 2000** have taken place here and under your stewardship:

Section 13 Uniform [F1and publication of images].

[F2(1A) A person commits an offence if the person publishes an image of—

- (a)** an item of clothing, or image associated with the prescribed group
- (b)** any other article or image, in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that the person is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation.

(1B) In Subsection **(1A)** the reference to an image is a reference to a still or moving image (produced by any means).]

The penalties for above offences under Sections 11 and 12 are a maximum of 10 years in prison and/or a fine. The maximum penalty for a Section 13 offence is 6 months in prison.

The Act describes the criminal offence of displaying an advertisement by a proscribed organisation as follows:

“any word, phraseology, symbol, letter, model, sign, placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction, and (without prejudice to the previous provisions of this definition) includes any hoarding or similar structure used or designed, or adapted for use and anything else principally used, or designed or adapted principally for use, for the display of advertisements.”

As we do not recall Parliament has ever been used as a backdrop to promote a logo of an terrorist organisation which is proscribed in the United Kingdom, together with accompanying phraseology: "We remember the heroes who fought for freedom from Sri Lankan state genocide" in its entire history of the 160 years since inception, we would also argue that you have, perhaps unwittingly, implicated yourself in bringing the Palace of Westminster into disrepute by failing to act promptly to prevent this activity.

In order to assist you with any investigation and to take appropriate action to ensure that perpetrators of this act are ~~also~~ held liable and culpable, we have provided you with the link to the news publication of the above incident as attachment **1. below**. We also reliably understand that this offence has been committed using one of those River Thames pleasure cruise boats which has been hired to carry out this act.

We are disappointed to note that you were not conscious of the need to prevent the acts that were in contravention of the **Terrorism Act of 2000** taking place right in front of your sight and/or to investigate into and take action against those who have committed this dastardly deed.

It could also be said that an independent may find that you ought to have known about the possibility of the act in the nature of what we have mentioned above and there has been a dereliction of duty, misconduct and misfeasance in public office accordingly.

We would say, metaphorically speaking, that heads would roll, if the same act was committed by an ISIS group. Now that these unlawful acts having taken place under your stewardship, we would expect you to deploy the arms of law to take action against those who have flouted the law as there cannot be one rule for one proscribed terrorist group and another rule for other proscribed terrorist groups. Justice has to prevail and we have the legislation in place to deter activities of this nature.

Furthermore, we wish to bring to your attention that, in fact, we have an ongoing campaign by way of a petition against any plan to lift the ban on this proscribed group and ~~we~~ the petition has already attracted more than 13,000 signatures in support of this. Please the link as attachment 2 below.

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12,894 have signed. Let's get to 15,000!

 Chinthakaw Wickramasinghe signed 4 hours ago

 Menaka Jeevasiri signed 4 hours ago

We look forward to receiving your response, preferably within 14 days of receipt of this complaint.

Yours sincerely,



Jayaraj Palihawwadana

Secretary,

Global Srilankan Forum UK

Attachments:

1) Evidence of the prescribed groups image illuminating Parliament

<https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/uk-houses-parliament-lit-karthigaipoo-mark-maaveerar-naal>

2) Stand up against lifting the ban on brutal LTTE Tamil terrorists' organisations in the UK

<https://www.change.org/p/rt-hon-priti-patel-her-majesty-s-principal-secretary-of-state-for-the-home-department-maintain-proscription-of-ltte-tamil-terrorists-in-uk>