



**Canadian Tamil Congress**  
**கனடியத் தமிழர் பேரவை**  
**Congrès Tamoul Canadien**  
*"The unified voice of Canadian Tamils"*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Evidence of Sri Lankan War Crimes Surface**

Footage of the Sri Lankan army callously executing Tamils, as shown on a reputable British news channel, has deeply troubled Tamil Canadians. The scenes on Britain's Channel 4 News have increased concerns about the safety of Tamils who are confined against their will in Sri Lanka's barbed-wire camps under strict military supervision. Their internment violates international norms and law. Many of these detainees have families and friends in Canada.

The footage features Tamils, who have been stripped naked and blindfolded, being killed. Eventually, the camera angle widens and shows several similar naked bodies lying in the dirt. Some move, many do not.

"The footage shows part of the truth the Sri Lankan government has been trying to hide for months," said Harini Sivalingam, policy director for the Canadian Tamil Congress. "These types of war crimes are what so many Tamil Canadians tried to warn the world about, but no one listened. The brutality and complete disregard for human life evidenced in these scenes shows how far Sri Lanka is from being anything close to a democracy."

Channel 4 News and BBC received the footage from Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka (JDS), a group that includes both Sinhalese and Tamils. The JDS is a group of journalists, writers, artists and human rights defenders who fled persecution in Sri Lanka. The footage is said to have been filmed in January 2009.

In light of the treatment of Tamils in the video, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) is even more concerned about the security of camp detainees. The CTC believes the international community must enact tougher measures to press Sri Lanka into releasing them. With no independent monitors able to freely visit the camps, Amnesty International has said many people are unprotected and at risk from enforced disappearances, abductions, arbitrary arrest and sexual violence.

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The CTC also believes the footage underlines the need for an independent international inquiry into war crimes committed during the conflict, as suggested by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.

“Even now, the Sri Lankan government is trying to cover up the facts by claiming this video is fabricated but as a source for the truth, its credibility is non-existent,” said Sivalingam. “Sri Lanka is still in a war against the truth coming out about its actions during the war.”

More than a dozen journalists who sought to tell the truth were killed during this government’s rule. Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports that human rights organizations, journalists, and other independent observers are still not allowed inside the camps and that humanitarian organizations with access have been forced to sign a statement that they will not disclose information about the conditions in the camps without government permission. On several occasions, HRW reports the government expelled foreign journalists and aid workers who had collected and publicized information about camp conditions, or did not renew their visas.

To watch the video, please visit:

[http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/world/asia\\_pacific/is+this+evidence+of+sri+lanka+aposwar+crimesapos/3321087](http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/world/asia_pacific/is+this+evidence+of+sri+lanka+aposwar+crimesapos/3321087)

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