



Will Referendum bring Peace to Tamil Conflict in Sri Lanka? New York Conference with International experts.

Experts from Kosovo, East-Timor, South Sudan, Quebec and other countries. Event on May 14th.

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Several internationally renowned experts from Kosovo, South Sudan, East-Timor, Quebec and other countries are participating in a conference in New York on May 14th to discuss whether holding a Referendum is the best solution to the protracted Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka.

The participants will share their experiences in holding referendums in their countries as a means to find political solution and whether it will be a viable initiative to bring permanent and lasting solution to the protracted Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka.

The Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka is dragging on for over sixty years despite several agreements between the Government and the Tamil leaders and several rounds of peace talks with active international mediation.

Tamils resisted Sri Lankan Government's oppression for the first thirty five years through peaceful non-violent means and the final thirty years with active armed struggle. Even though the Government was able to defeat Tamils militarily about six years ago, the conflict is still going on.

BACKGROUND:

Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka faced repeated mass killings since 1958 and the mass killings in 2009 prompted UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to appoint a Panel of Experts to report on the scale of the killings.

According to UN internal review report on Sri Lanka, over 70,000 Tamils were killed in five months in early 2009 and Tamil women were gang raped by the Sri Lankan Security forces. There are over 90,000 Tamil war widows and thousands of Tamils disappeared due to the conflict.

According to this UN report, the killings and other abuses that took place amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Independent experts believe that there are elements of these abuses that constitute an act of genocide.

Members of the Sri Lankan security forces are almost exclusively from the Sinhalese community and the victims are all from the Tamil community.

A Buddhist Monk shot and killed a Sri Lankan Prime Minister in 1959 for having talks with Tamil political leaders.

Tamils overwhelmingly voted in a Parliamentary election in 1977 to establish an independent and

sovereign country called Tamil Eelam. This Parliamentary election was conducted by the Sri Lankan Government.

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