



# අතුරුදහන්වූවන්ගේ පවුල් එකතුව காணாமற்போனாரின் குடும்ப ஒன்றியம் FAMILIES OF THE DISAPPEARED

**FOD**

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30<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Message from “ Families of the Disappeared” on international day of the disappeared**

The last fifty years has been turbulent, even traumatic for Sri Lanka. Two uprisings in the South led by Sinhala youth (1971, 1987-89) and a 30-year civil war led by separatist Tamil groups in the North wreaked havoc on the country. While there is no official total count of the killings or disappearances, the estimated figure could be as high as 150,000 to 200,000.

Various commissions were appointed, and many recommendations were made, but only very few of these were implemented.

In 2015, the then Government co-sponsored the 30/1 Geneva Resolution, based on which an “Office on Missing Persons” (OMP) was appointed to reveal the truth and an “Office of Reparation” (OR) was created to pay compensation. However, though they are still functioning ten years later, little of significance has resulted. Regrettably, in 2022, the new government at the time withdrew from co-sponsorship of the Geneva 30/1 proposal, but still both the OMP and the OR remain.

The organisations in the North-East working closely with war-affected families have decided to reject such local redress mechanisms and are demanding an international inquiry. Families of Southern victims have nothing against an international inquiry, but rather than focus exclusively on such an unlikely outcome as an international inquiry, they have focused their energy on pushing the already-existing local mechanisms to produce satisfactory results.

The victims' families placed great hope in the current government since the political party leading this government was responsible for the two uprisings in 1971 and 1987-9 and was therefore at the receiving end of much state violence. However, though they have been in office for almost one year, there is still no clear indicators to show that this government will act differently from previous ones on the issue disappearances.

Though the new government says that it is willing to cooperate with the UN, it yet declines to support UN SLAP or any form of accountability initiative which involves international involvement.

A few mass graves have been excavated since 2009 under the supervision of the Courts, but though many skeletons and bones have been found almost daily, not one single bone has been identified. Nor has any proper mechanism been introduced, leading to frustration and despair to all those interested in justice, accountability and non-repetition of these atrocities.

Hence, we as FoD demand

From the Government, that it

- Strengthens local mechanisms, supplying necessary staff to the OMP and providing necessary funds for reparation as well as for the work related to mass graves.
- Conducts the mass grave excavations according to international rules and regulations, while proactively obtaining support from relevant international agencies.
- Speeds up all court cases of disappearances, without spending years and years to complete them.

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காணாமற் பண்ணுதல் மனிதகுலத்திற்கு எதிரான குற்றமாகும். மீண்டும் நடக்க விடோம்!  
Disappearance is a CRIME against HUMANITY, LET US NOT ALLOW IT TO HAPPEN AGAIN!



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- Produces the full list of all surrendeeds at the end of the war.
- Starts revealing the truth of what happened to the disappeared, because this is the main task of the OMP.
- Commits to use every cent from the approved allocation for 2025 of Rs. 1000 million to disburse Rs 200,000/- per disappeared family as a temporary payment before the end of the financial year.
- Allocates Rs 2000 million from the next budget to continue with the payment of Rs 200,000/-.
- Strengthens the OMP by providing it with the necessary staff to effectively fulfill its core functions.
- Begins a discussion on calculating a permanent package of compensation, using global best practice.
- Cooperates with and supports all UN efforts on this issue.
- Stops harassment of active family members in the North and East.
- Respects the right of the North and East families of their desire to publicly commemorate their loved ones.

“Families of the Disappeared” is involved with the issue since 1989. We have made OCTOBER 27<sup>th</sup>

As an annual commemoration for the disappeared since 1991 and has created the “ Monument for the disappeared”

Brito Fernando

President

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