

INTERNATIONAL
TRUTH
AND JUSTICE
PROJECT

Press Release: ITJP challenges Government of Sri Lanka to investigate six identified alleged perpetrators of rape and torture in the military.

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Johannesburg: The International Truth and Justice Project has shared information with the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) identifying six alleged perpetrators of rape and torture in the Sri Lankan military.

“When it meets on 22nd February in Geneva, we expect CEDAW to share this information with the Sri Lankan Government and request that they immediately suspend the six officers pending a credible investigation,” said ITJP’s Executive Director, Yasmin Sooka. “This Government keeps on asking us for the names and addresses of the victims; through CEDAW we are passing on information regarding alleged perpetrators so let’s see if the Government is really serious about justice. Our report sets out all the steps they should take; CEDAW can monitor their progress”.

ITJP’s submission, just made public, is based on detailed testimony from 55 women describing torture, horrific sexual assaults and in three cases prolonged sexual slavery while held in state custody. 48 of the victims were detained under the Government of former President Rajapaksa and 7¹ of them under the new Government of President, Maithripala Sirisena.

“President Sirisena and his government have failed in their duty to investigate credible allegations that there was a deliberate policy of using sexual violence to inflict torture,” said Ms Sooka. “This makes the Sirisena Government complicit in the continuation of the violations through its failure to investigate and hold those responsible accountable,” she added.

The ITJP has identified numerous officers in the Sri Lankan police and military allegedly with either direct involvement and/or command responsibility for the torture and rape of women. It has now documented 41 cases of torture and/or sexual violence by the security forces under the current Government, including as recently as December 2016.

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¹ One case straddled both Governments but is counted as a Rajapaksa era abduction though detained and tortured under the Sirisena period too.

