



Medical Association for Prevention of War, Australia, Inc

Phone 03 9023 1958

www.mapw.org.au

ABN 15779 883 661

Fax 03 9662 2619

Email: mapw@mapw.org.au

PO Box 1379, Carlton, Victoria, 3053

1 July 2010

The Hon. Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Human rights and Sri Lanka

I write on behalf of the Medical Association for the Prevention of War, an organisation of doctors and other health professionals working to prevent war by addressing its causes and consequences.

We congratulate the Australian Senate on its resolution welcoming UN Secretary-General's announcement of a three-member advisory panel on alleged human rights abuses during the final stages of Sri Lanka's civil war in 2009; and calling for an independent international investigation. In light of this resolution and the recent reports published by the International Crisis Group, International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch on war crimes in Sri Lanka we call for:

1. the Government of Australia to request the Government of Sri Lanka to allow for an independent and transparent inquiry into war crimes, crimes against humanity and other human rights violations committed against the civilian population, particularly during the period of the escalating war in 2009;
2. the Government of Australia to request the United Nations to consider prosecuting the Sri Lankan State forces for committing war crimes, and ensure that impunity is not given for State officials that were responsible for the intentional shelling of civilians, hospitals and humanitarian operations during the course of the war and the execution of surrendering combatants and their families;
3. the Government of Australia to remove the suspension on processing of Sri Lankan asylum seekers which is an inhumane treatment of people seeking protection;
4. the Government of Australia to recognise the systemic danger faced by the Tamils in Sri Lanka, and provide those fleeing from persecution the refugee protection they deserve.

The Australian government's suspension of processing Sri Lankan refugee applications and its failure to recognise the gross human rights violations of the Sri Lankan state, has been interpreted by many observers as a complicit support for the Sri Lankan government. We call upon the Australian government, in its actions, to once again re-assert Australia's rightful place at the forefront of upholding human rights.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Bill Williams
President

