

Association culturelle des Tamouls en France

Thank you Chair. Today, we are asked how minority voices can be amplified in peacebuilding, accountability, and transitional justice processes, but how can minorities amplified when those who carry them are silenced, criminalized, or physically prevented from reaching international spaces. I would like to draw attention to the case of [inaudible], a Tamil human rights defender who has supported families of enforced disappearances and facilitated their access to the United Nations processes. Arrested during the World Congress on Enforced Disappearances held in Geneva in January 2025, he was detained by Swiss authorities. He is trying, training, and amplifying voices, such as [inaudible]. His case reflects the risk faced by those who dare to amplify minority victims' voices, even here. Beyond repression inside Sri Lanka, we are also witnessing a troubling pattern of systematic visa refusals by the Swiss authorities, not only to victims from Tamil [inaudible] but also to their supporters and civil society representatives in different countries. These refusals are often justified on the grounds that their purpose of travel is not credible, even when they are invited to UN meetings. This raises the fundamental question: why are survivors and defenders who seek to engage peacefully with international institutions subjected to such a standard, and how can minority voices be amplified if access to the very spaces of justice is selectively restricted? Amplification cannot exist without access, access cannot exist without non-discrimination, and justice cannot exist without the voices of victims themselves. We urge this Forum to address the issue of visa barriers and reprisals against human rights defenders, and to call upon host states to ensure fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory access to international human rights spaces, because peacebuilding begins not only with listening, but with allowing people into this room. Thank you.