

Act' Solidarité Internationale pour les Droits de l'Homme (ASI-DH)

Thank you. I take the floor on the behalf of the mothers of the disappeared who are beside me from Tamil communities affected by sexual violence, militarization and longstanding discrimination in the occupied territories of Tamil Sri Lanka. Trust and social cohesion cannot be built on denial, militarization, and [inaudible] erasure. It requires truth, justice, and genuine political will. In our context, the main barriers to peaceful coexistence are not simply social tensions, but deeply rooted systems of structural discrimination, ethnic repression, and state-sponsored impunity. For more than 15 years, after the end of the armed conflict, Tamil civilians in the north and east of Sri Lanka continued to live under heavy military presence, land occupation, cultural destruction, and surveillance. Thousands of families still search for their forcibly disappeared loved ones. How can trust exist when victims are still criminalized for seeking truth? How can social cohesion be achieved when memorialization is suppressed and military camps stand where villages once existed? Building trust requires acknowledging past atrocities, respecting the right to memory, and dismantling structures of fear. It also requires ensuring meaningful participation of minority communities in decision-making, not as tokens, but as equal partners. We also highlight that trust cannot be built when international mechanisms fail to act decisively against crimes such as enforced disappearances, and what we continue to identify as genocide against the Tamil people. Silence from global institutions only reinforces mistrust at the local level. We therefore urge this Forum to reaffirm that social cohesion must be rooted in accountability, demilitarization, land restitution, and the recognition of collective rights, including the right to self-determination. Without justice there cannot be trust, without truth there can be no coexistence.