

WINNER: NO FIRE ZONE

Holding the Sri Lankan government accountable for war crimes during a hidden war.





NO FIRE ZONE

No Fire Zone tells the story of the final 138 days of the 26-year Sri Lankan civil war, a brutal offensive which saw between 40,000 and 70,000 civilians die. Through powerful personal stories, eyewitness testimony and video evidence this film shows how thousands of civilians were told to gather in what the government promised would be a no fire zone and were then systematically shelled and deliberately denied adequate food and medicines.

With direct evidence of war crimes, summary execution, torture and sexual violence recorded by both victims and perpetrators on mobile phones and small cameras, this is not just a film of record but also a call to action.

WHAT THE CRITICS SAID

"A difficult enraging watch... Tragically it's essential viewing" – Time Out UK



One World Film
Festival Prague 2014
Winner Vaclav Havel
Jury Special Mention



Nuremberg Film Festival 2013
Winner Audience Award



Film South Asia 2013
Special Jury Mention



A man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt, is seated on the left, looking towards a woman on the right. The woman is wearing a blue jacket over an orange top and an orange headscarf. She is gesturing with her hands as if speaking. The background is a dark wood-paneled wall. The title 'THE CAMPAIGN' is overlaid in large white text across the center of the image.

THE CAMPAIGN

CONTEXT

In 2009 the government of Sri Lanka conducted the last few months of their civil war against the Tamil Tigers in virtual secrecy: the UN and international media were excluded and local press intimidated into silence. The perceived peace in Sri Lanka had cost as many as 40–70,000 civilian deaths, a massacre that was virtually unknown around the world; the overarching aim of the campaign was therefore to bring worldwide attention to the war crimes and crimes against humanity that had been committed.

IMPACT DYNAMICS

As a tool for analysing campaign strategies, BRITDOC has devised what we call the Four Impact Dynamics; broad categories for the kinds of change you can make in the world. This has been developed by studying the films that we have worked with as well as working with

NGOs and activists to understand how they conceptualise their work. More information on the impact dynamics can be found in *impactguide.org*. Below we apply the impact dynamics to the campaign goals of *No Fire Zone*.

CHANGING STRUCTURES

Top down change – whether in politics or business, directly influencing law and policy to change the context.

Get the UN Human Rights Council to vote for an independent international inquiry into the crimes at the end of the war and ongoing human rights abuses in Sri Lanka.

Target audience:
Diplomats of member countries of UNHRC.

CHANGING MINDS

Mass awareness and understanding – creating a shift in public attitudes.

Put the call for justice at the heart of the international agenda.

Emphasise the present-day relevance of what happened in 2009 by shining a light on ongoing human rights abuses, carried out under cover of a perception around the world that the end of the war had brought peace and reconciliation to Sri Lanka.

Target audience:
International civil society, lawmakers.

CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

Actively mobilising people to do different not just think different, whether that's to buy or boycott, donate or volunteer.

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Grassroots organising – providing the focal point around which people come together.

HOW THE CAMPAIGN WORKED

The campaign strategy was driven by high level influencer screenings organised in conjunction with civil society partners; the team worked closely with national and international partners including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group and many Tamil organisations.

These screenings were organised into short tours of key regions ahead of political votes and events, often including parliamentary screenings.

There were multiple screenings in 27 countries over five continents, director Callum Macrae attending screenings and debates in 19 countries.

The overall strategy was to maximise impact in Asian, African and Latin American countries where Sri Lanka was having partial success portraying calls for human rights as a “western” agenda.

CAMPAIGN LAUNCH IN INDIA

The team decided to launch the UN Human Rights Council campaign in India; India’s vote was judged to be most critical, as it would influence others particularly in the Global South. In February 2013, a month before the film’s

premiere at the UN Palais des Nations, the team released extracts from the film and mounted a major Indian publicity initiative.

In a strategy that was to be repeated throughout the campaign the team broke a dramatic news story, in this case releasing photographs of Balachandran, the 12-year-old son of Tiger leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran, who was pictured alive and in captivity prior to his execution.

Macrae wrote an op-ed in The Hindu newspaper and it later ran the story on the front page. It created a political storm and dominated the news agenda in India for the next few days as well as creating a wave of international press coverage.

ADVOCACY AT THE UN

A month later, in March 2013, *No Fire Zone* premiered at the UN Human Rights Council in



Geneva, hosted by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. This was effectively the launch of the campaign for an international inquiry.

All 47 countries on the UN Human Rights Council were targeted as they would vote on any resolution on human rights and accountability of Sri Lanka; the team sent letters to the national missions of every member country and key embassies as well as their embassies and High Commissions in London. The team also set up a number of private screenings and meetings at embassies ranging from Venezuela to Sierra Leone.

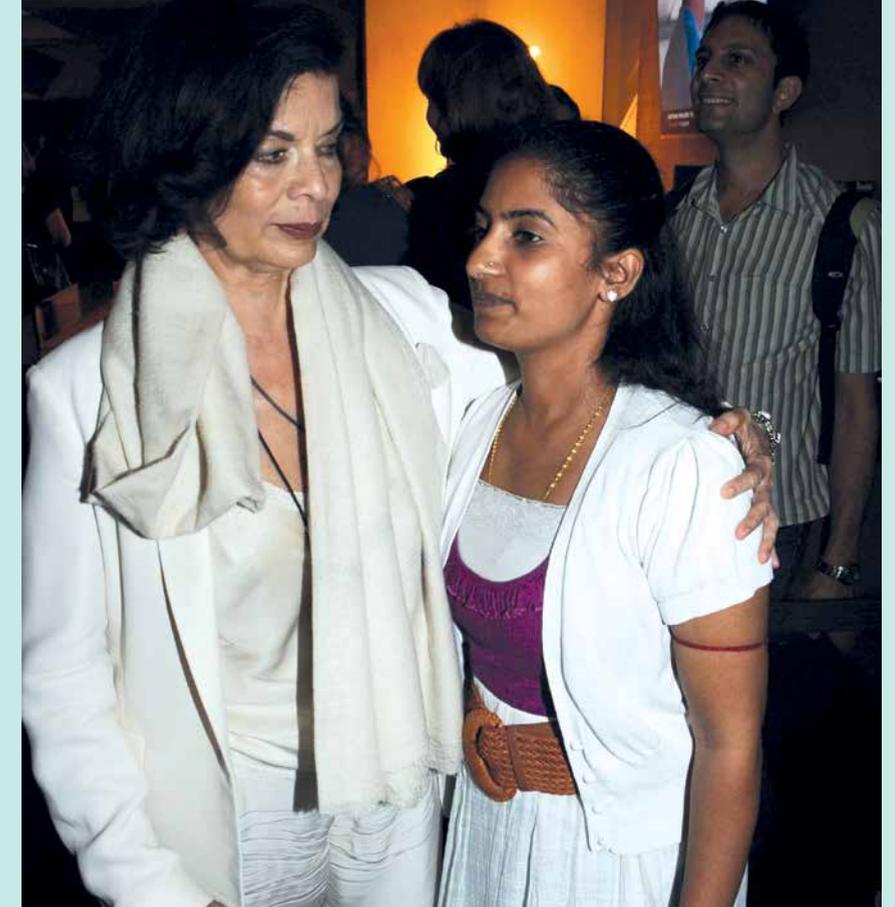
The campaign also wanted to maximise pressure on key influential western countries including the UK, US, Canada and Australia and the countries of the European Union; high profile screenings were held in parliaments from Australia to Malaysia, from

the UK to Capitol Hill, and from the UN to the European parliament. Key was the use of the film and its revelations to generate media coverage beyond the usual film reviews.

In most cases the team worked closely with local NGOs. The seven-city tour of Australia and New Zealand included a screening at the Australian Parliament which was sponsored by 15 separate NGOs. These included the Human Rights Law Centre, the Australian Tamil Congress, the Refugee Council of Australia and the Maritime Union of Australia (important because of the contentious issue of many Tamil asylum seekers arriving by boat).

The Global Tamil Forum organised a meeting in the House of Commons where Macrae spoke from the platform in the UK, along with Labour leader Ed Miliband, Baroness Warsi of the Conservatives and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg who paid tribute to the film, saying it left him “reeling” as well as “shocked, distressed and moved”.

Generating press and controversy, and continuing to provide new revelations to the press, was the key to sustaining pressure on politicians. Leading up to the UN Human Rights Council vote in March 2014 Macrae screened a specially created 10-minute short



from the film highlighting sexual violence. This was shown at three separate fringe meetings attended by many national missions, and he spoke at all three. Macrae also brought over Dr Vararharajah, one of the Tamil doctors who was trapped in the no fire zone, to testify at a meeting at the UN co-organised with HRW - and made a short film from extracts to accompany that meeting.

OTHER CAMPAIGNS

As well as lobbying the UN, specific

campaigns were also built around significant events, such as the build up to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Sri Lanka in November 2013 and the “Defy the Ban” campaign.

DEFY THE BAN

This campaign was mounted in response to a screening in Malaysia in July 2013 which was raided by 40 censorship board officials and the police on the instigation of the Sri Lankan government. The campaign in defence of the

organisers, one of whom now faces a maximum of three years in jail, significantly raised the profile of the issue and of censorship in general. In Nepal a similar attempt to ban the film led to protest screenings and public debate.

COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING

CHOGM was seen as a crucial focus for the campaign. For the Sri Lankan government this marked their return to the international diplomatic fold after the successful closing out of the civil war. Initially devised as a boycott campaign, the team responded to diplomatic events on the ground to create significant impact.

Again, Macrae broke a news story in the run up, about the capture and subsequent execution of the Tiger TV presenter Isaipriya which led to widespread demonstrations in Tamil Nadu.

MASS AWARENESS

In India the campaign was able to capitalise on a letter from the Indian board of film certification which had refused the film a theatrical release certificate, specifically stating as one of the justifications, that it may “strain friendly relations with Sri Lanka”. A free download in English and Hindi was the campaign response.

As well as India, free streaming of the film in Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Nepal provided an effective response to censorship bids and was intended to bring the film to the general public to create sustained pressure on politicians. The film received 30,000 hits in the two days after free streaming went live.

A collaboration with Channel 4 produced an innovative free app based on the film; it allows anyone to download the entire film and access and interact with content including news reports; United Nations and Red Cross reports and analysis of the atrocities; a timeline from 1956 to the present day; biographies, location maps; video from key contributors and filmmakers; and live links to the latest opinions, online content and further reading.

The team also produced a special Prezi presentation comprising a five-minute introduction to the film and the background to the story: bit.ly/SriLankaPrezi

“IT IS HARD TO THINK OF ANY FILM TEAM WHO SINGULARLY HAS HAD SUCH AN IMPACT ON MAJOR ISSUES OF WAR AND PEACE”

—
Erik Solheim
Chief Negotiator, Sri Lankan peace process 2000–2005





CAMPAIGN IMPACT

The strategy of using media publicity to drive the campaign achieved its first success in India during the campaign launch in February 2013. Screenings, media and advocacy campaigns constantly made the front pages and primetime television – over 150 major news stories and dozens of interviews over the week following the launch, not just in India but internationally. India's refusal to grant Callum a visa further increased visibility and was condemned in an editorial in the Times of India.

Politically, the DMK party (the main opposition party in Tamil Nadu) withdrew from the Indian governing coalition led by Congress in protest as a result of the Balachandran revelations.

This political storm was credited with guaranteeing the Indian government's support of the resolution when it was voted on at UNHRC in March 2013. The eventual wording of the resolution – although watered down from its strongest draft – was seen by informed observers as stronger than anything that had been expected a few weeks before.

COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING

Following the campaign's revelations that Tiger TV presenter Isaipriya had been captured and

executed, many Indian politicians called for Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to boycott CHOGM which he then did, as did Canada and Mauritius in separate actions.

Due to the UK's role in the Commonwealth, persuading UK Prime Minister David Cameron to see the film was judged to be crucial. It had a high impact: he publicly cited it on at least 4 occasions. In November 2013 he issued a statement: *"No Fire Zone... raises very serious questions that the Sri Lankan government must answer about what it did to protect innocent civilians. Questions that strengthen the case for an independent investigation. Questions that need answers if Sri Lanka is to build the truly peaceful and inclusive future its people deserve."*

While the intention had been to force Cameron to boycott the event, his subsequent attendance was exploited by the campaign and was widely covered in the press. He became the first foreign leader to visit Tamil homelands since independence in 1948. Significantly, he also called for a credible international investigation.

The Malaysian parliamentary screening led directly to the formation of a parliamentary group of Malaysian MPs to raise the issue of Sri Lankan war crimes and call

for a change of government policy in support of an international inquiry.

An unexpected measure of the impact of the film was a major and well-financed campaign against the film team by Sri Lankan government supporters including a 222-page book to which Callum wrote a detailed 20,000-word rebuttal (described in a tweet by former Norwegian Foreign minister Erik Solheim as *"the most impressive rebuttal I have ever read"*).

"NO FIRE ZONE... RAISES VERY SERIOUS QUESTIONS THAT THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT MUST ANSWER ABOUT WHAT IT DID TO PROTECT INNOCENT CIVILIANS. QUESTIONS THAT STRENGTHEN THE CASE FOR AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION."

— **David Cameron,**
Prime Minister, UK



MACRAE & THE CHANNEL 4 CREW GET VISAS TO VISIT SL - News item

One unplanned but notable effect was the fact that the film - and its international impact - seemed to restore hope to Tamils in the former war zones in Sri Lanka who were despairing of ever getting justice and believed the world had forgotten them.

M A Sumanthiran, the leading spokesman of The Tamil National Alliance (Sri Lanka's main Tamil party) wrote: *"The film No Fire Zone was like saline to a person dying of dehydration... The world*

was forgetting the cruel phase of this war and seemed to be getting on. No Fire Zone changed all of that. It tugged at the conscience of the world. No one who saw it can carry on as before. And for those who had been through it personally, it was a vindication of their stories that no one was willing to listen to."

GOAL ACHIEVED — MARCH 2014

The team achieved their campaign goal just one year after launch

with the UN decision in March 2014 to set up an international inquiry into Sri Lankan war crimes. The vote was 23 countries for, 12 against and 12 abstentions (many of the abstentions were in reality 'victories' as they were persuaded not to oppose). This achievement involved nothing less than a volte face on the part of the UN Human Rights Council; after the war ended in 2009, the UNHRC had voted to congratulate Sri Lanka for its 'success' in defeating terrorism.



CAMPAGN IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS

No Fire Zone

While this result was the combined effort of many organisations working together, there is acknowledgement that the film and the campaign played a critical role:

“No Fire Zone has achieved what no other has in opening a window on the final days of hell at the end of the Sri Lanka civil war... its impact on the international community is undisputed. I have no doubt that it is such evidence as this that led to the passing of the UNHRC resolution in March 2014 calling for an investigation into accountability at the end of the war and after, as the GoSL continues to wage the war by other means against the Tamil population.”

— International human rights lawyer Yasmin Sooka, formerly a leading member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa and author of its final report.

“Few films in recent years – few films ever, perhaps – have had such an extraordinary advocacy impact as the series of films on Sri Lanka’s Killing Fields culminating in No Fire Zone. No Fire Zone made the impossible seem possible, through dedication and commitment to the truth. I salute that achievement. This has changed the prospects for justice in Sri Lanka, and sent important signals for justice worldwide.”

— Steve Crawshaw; Director, Office of the Secretary General, Amnesty International.

“It is hard to think of any film team who singularly has had such an impact on major issues of war and peace.”

— Erik Solheim; Chief Negotiator, Sri Lankan Peace Process 2000–2005. Formerly the Norwegian Minister of Environment and International Development 2005–2012.

TELEVISION TERRITORIES



Finland
Denmark
United Kingdom
Sweden
India

ONLINE TRAILER

The team released the trailer and selected extracts for downloading; the trailer alone has been uploaded on 300 separate websites.

WEBSITE

nofirezone.org

 **82,000**
unique visitors

 **6,450**
sites have linked to it

SOCIAL MEDIA

 **8,008**
followers
[Twitter.com/Callum_Macrae](https://twitter.com/Callum_Macrae)

 **5,650**
followers
[Twitter.com/nofirezonemovie](https://twitter.com/nofirezonemovie)

 **1,888**
followers on the *No Fire Zone*
Facebook page

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY BY TWEET

After seeing the film, and one week before travelling to Sri Lanka for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, David Cameron tweeted

 **@Number10gov** Been watching @NoFireZoneMovie. Chilling documentary on Sri Lanka. Serious questions to put to @PresRajapaksa next week.

The inclusion of President Rajapaksa's Twitter handle in the tweet meant the PM actually tweeted the message to Rajapaksa; a fact which generated further comment on social media.

The chief negotiator of the Sri Lankan peace process, former Norwegian Foreign Minister Erik Solheim tweeted in response.

 **@SolheimDAC** What Cameron does in #SriLanka is the litmus test. But he has started off well by watching #NoFireZone!

Other prominent tweets included that of Hugh Grant who said he was left "reeling" by *No Fire Zone*.

The Indian writer Meena Kandasamy has tweeted several times in support of the team.

 **@meenakandasamy** Callum Macrae stopped from going to the North through orchestrated mob. #NoFireZone #Commonwealth #CHOGM fb.me/1KRjTQW8Q

The hashtag #NoFireZone has been used extensively and during the Channel 4 transmission it trended at no.1 in the UK. MPs, Australian senators, Indian politicians and writers have joined the conversation, as well as celebrities such as Bianca Jagger.

However, the internet has also been used by Sri Lankan government supporters in a sustained series of attacks. A Sri Lankan diplomat called Bandula Jayasakara, who was formerly President Rajapaksa's media advisor, has issued dozens of tweets attacking Callum describing him as being in the pay of the Tamil Tigers and threatening to "make sure you don't get a visa". Other government supporters issued several death threats to Callum in advance of his attendance at CHOGM.



AWARDS

- CPH:DOX Copenhagen 2013
F:ACT Award Jury Special Mention
- Festival des Libertes 2013
Winner FIDH Best Film Award
- Nuremberg Film Festival 2013
Winner Audience Award
- Film South Asia 2013
Special Jury Mention
- WatchDocs Poland 2014
Winner Audience Award
- One World Film Festival Prague 2014
Winner Vaclav Havel Jury Special Mention
- Docudays UA Kiev 2014
Winner Jury Special Mention
- Festival internacional de Cine y Video de Derochos Humanos Buenos Aires 2013
Winner Jury Special Mention
- Grierson
Nominated, Best Documentary on Current Affairs
- International Emmy
Nominee, Best Documentary

1940

1980

2000

2010

2012

2013

2014

<p>1948 Sri Lanka gains independence from UK.</p> <p>The majority Sinhalese begin to exercise dominance over the minority Tamil populations.</p>	<p>1984 Black July marks start of civil war between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government.</p>	<p>MAY 2009 Civil war ends.</p>	<p>JUNE 2011 UK broadcaster Channel 4 screens first of two news documentaries, <i>Sri Lanka's Killing Fields</i>.</p>	<p>MAR 2012 Channel 4 screens follow up, <i>War Crimes Unpunished</i>.</p>	<p>FEB 2013 Completion of feature-length film bringing story up to date, <i>No Fire Zone</i>.</p>	<p>MAR 2013 Premiere at UN Human Rights Council, Geneva.</p>	<p>NOV 2013 Sri Lanka hosts Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.</p>
<p>THE FILM</p>		<p>FEB 2013 Launch of campaign in India.</p> <p>Global Tamil Forum hosts screening at House of Commons, UK.</p>	<p>MAR 2013 Multiple screenings with diplomats. Letters and DVDs are sent to embassies.</p>	<p>MAY 2013 EU Parliament screening with International Crisis Group.</p>	<p>JUNE 2013 Commonwealth Tour of Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.</p>	<p>NOV 2013 Team flies to Sri Lanka to report on CHOGM.</p>	<p>FEB 2014 Callum Macrae writes 22,000 word rebuttal of Sri Lanka government's 222 page book: "Corrupted Journalism: Channel 4 and Sri Lanka."</p>
<p>THE CAMPAIGN</p>		<p>JULY 2013 Film screening in Malaysia is raided by censorship board officials. Pusat Komats members arrested.</p>	<p>NOV 2013 Canada, India and Mauritius boycott CHOGM. Cameron tweets "Been watching @NoFireZoneMovie. Chilling documentary on Sri Lanka. Serious questions to put to @PresRajapaksa next week."</p> <p>David Cameron is first foreign leader to visit Tamil homelands since independence in 1948.</p>	<p>MAR 2014 UNHRC votes to set up an independent international enquiry.</p>			
<p>REAL WORLD EVENTS</p>							
<p>IMPACT & ACHIEVEMENTS</p>							

A tropical beach at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and light blue. The ocean is a deep blue with white foam from the waves washing onto the shore. The beach is a light tan color, and a line of palm trees is silhouetted against the bright sky on the left side. The text "THE TEAM" is overlaid in the center-right of the image.

THE TEAM

**DIRECTOR**

Callum Macrae is a BAFTA and Grierson-nominated director and writer known for films on human rights and in defence of the disenfranchised. He's won many awards including two Royal Television Society, two One World and an Amnesty award in the UK as well as the Columbia DuPont and Peabody Awards in the US. In 2013 he gained a Scottish BAFTA Special Achievement Award. For the past two years he's been named by Broadcast Magazine as one of the top three directors across all UK TV genres. Before working in film he was an art teacher and, for two years, a dustman.

**PRODUCER**

Zoe Sale is an award-winning journalist and filmmaker. She worked on both previous UK TV documentaries about Sri Lanka and was part of the team nominated with Callum Macrae for the Nobel Peace Prize for this. For the last thirteen years she has been making current affairs and factual programming for the BBC, ITV, ITN, C4, C5 and National Geographic. Before training as a journalist she worked as a political researcher and environmental lobbyist.

CALLUM MACRAE
DIRECTOR

ZOE SALE
PRODUCER

JOANNA NATASEGARA
STRATEGY CONSULTANT

ABIGAIL
ANKETELL-JONES
STRATEGY ASSISTANT

MARK WILLIAMS
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

SOPHIE TOUMAZIS
PUBLICITY

ORGANOGRAM

TRADITIONAL
DISTRIBUTION

IMPACT
CAMPAIGN

CALLUM / DIRECTOR

+ Fundraising
+ Publicity
+ Project Management
+ Screenings
+ Partnership Management
(Two years)

ZOE / PRODUCER

+ Fundraising
+ Publicity
+ Project Management
+ Screenings
+ Partnership Management
+ Distribution
(One year)

ABIGAIL

Strategy Assistant
(6 months)

JOANNA

+ Strategy Consultant
+ Distribution
(Six months)

SOPHIE

Publicity

MARK

Project Administration
(Nov 2013 – present)

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Key campaign partner. Both the international HQ office and many local national offices, notably in the UK, New Zealand, Geneva, the US and India. Advised and supported outreach initiatives, organised parliamentary and public screenings and used the film extensively in advocacy.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Helped organise many key screenings particularly in the EU and UN. Used the film extensively in advocacy work and facilitated key screenings.

JOURNALISTS FOR DEMOCRACY IN SRI LANKA

An organisation of multi-ethnic independent journalists from Sri Lanka. Many exiled after threats to their lives, they supported the filmmakers particularly in terms of evidence-gathering and independent advice.

BRITISH TAMIL FORUM

Supported the advocacy work of the team, organised screenings and invited the team's participation in other events. Helped build public support for the work and linked them with key witnesses.

GLOBAL TAMIL FORUM

Organised key screenings including UK Parliament. Used the film extensively in advocacy and linked team with international activists and groups.

TAMILS AGAINST GENOCIDE

Supported the project from the start, used the film in advocacy, organised screenings and liaised closely on key issues such as sexual violence.

AUSTRALIAN TAMIL CONGRESS

Played a critical role in building widespread NGO and activist support for the Antipodean tour, organised several screenings and used the film extensively in advocacy.

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW CENTRE, AUSTRALIA

Played a key role in the Australian tour, organised the parliamentary screening with cross-party support and used the film extensively in advocacy.

US TAMIL POLITICAL ACTION COUNCIL

Have constantly used the film in advocacy and facilitated the team's work in North American and Geneva.

PUSAT KOMAS

Malaysian Human Rights NGO organised a parliamentary screening and a private screening which was raided. Lena Hendry, a Pusat Kommas staffer, was charged with censorship offences and faces three years in jail.

BUDGET

Film Budget:
£250,000

Funders:

- Bertha BRITDOC
- Journalism Fund
- Channel 4
- Pulitzer Center
- Stichting Democratie en Media
- Worldview

Outreach Budget
£217,000

Funders:

- Avaaz
- Bertha BRITDOC Connect Fund
- General donations and collections at screenings
- Ian Darling
- Kickstarter
- Sigrid Rausing Trust
- The Funding Network

CONCLUSION

No Fire Zone laid bare a hidden war, combining forensic journalism with unforgettably shocking video footage. This impact was brought to bear on the people of influence who most needed to see it; Prime Ministers, parliamentarians, diplomats and journalists, working in concert with human rights organisations and influencers. The campaign strategy was “top down” rather than “bottom up”;

carefully and thoroughly planned as a targeted influencing campaign with the goal of nothing less than making a government accountable for its war crimes. The international nature of this campaign was its hallmark, launching in India, premiering at the UN in Geneva, screening at the EU Parliament, visiting the Commonwealth countries of Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and more,

and making direct contact with diplomats and embassies from every country on the UN Human Rights Council. This was supported by rolling journalism on the part of the filmmakers, who continually updated the story and provided further revelations and news scoops at critical campaign junctures, setting a new precedent for how to conduct a global political campaign.

PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE

“Overwhelming and inspiring to see how targeted actions helped the film to achieve their goals in such a short period of time. Their work with world leaders, parliaments and international organizations is extremely thorough and could be a powerful model for achieving global awareness for other films.”

“No one can come away from watching No Fire Zone without the burning urge to campaign as much as humanly possible to bring Sri Lanka’s government to justice for what it has done... you suddenly have a room full of people who had never heard about these war crimes before, but now felt as though they could dedicate their lives to fighting for the victims.”

— Myriam Gwynned Dijck, International Political Forum

WATCH THE FILM

Stream on **Distrify**
via **NoFireZone.org**

FOLLOW

@NoFireZoneMovie
facebook.com/No-Fire-Zone

CONTACT

Mark Williams
Mark@Outsidertv.co.uk



PRESS

A small press sample which illustrates the quality of conversation around the issues raised in the film.

1 THE HINDU
The killing of a young boy

2 THE NEW YORK TIMES
Revisiting the horror in Sri Lanka

3 THE INDEPENDENT
This is proof, beyond reasonable doubt, of the execution of a child - not a battlefield death

4 THE DAILY MAIL
Given a snack and then taken out and shot: Horrifying last moments of helpless boy, 12, who was 'executed by Sri Lankan army because his father was a Tamil Tiger leader'

5 THE GUARDIAN
Sri Lanka: Questions from the killing fields

A 113-page summary of press coverage is published in the following issue document:

issuu.com/tpr-media/docs/final_no_fire_zone_complete_coverag

THE HINDU SEARCH [] GO

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The killing of a young boy

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CHILLING DETAILS: Digital image analysis by an expert for Channel 4 has confirmed that this photograph showing 12-year-old Balachandran Prabakaran before and after he was shot dead, were taken with the same camera. No Fire Zone/Channel 4

TOPICS
World
Sri Lanka
unrest, conflicts and war
unrest, conflicts and war
act of terror
civil war

New photographs of LTTE chief Velupillai Prabakaran's son just before he was shot dead, obtained by Channel 4 TV, leave more questions for Sri Lanka to answer about war crimes

It is a war that has produced some truly terrible images, but this one is particularly disturbing. A young boy sits looking distressed, like a child who has been lost in a supermarket. He has been given a biscuit or some kind of snack. In the second photograph, he is looking anxiously up, as though hoping to see someone he recognises.

The boy is Balachandran Prabakaran, the 12-year-old son of Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabakaran.

These photographs, which we are releasing today, form part of the new evidence in the forthcoming feature documentary "No Fire Zone: The Killing Fields of Sri Lanka," the culmination of three years of research which will be shown for the first time next month in Geneva, to coincide with the U.N. Human Rights Council meeting. The new evidence in the film is certain to increase pressure on the Indian government not only to support a resolution on Sri Lanka and

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LETTER FROM INDIA
Revisiting the Horror in Sri Lanka
 By MANU JOSEPH
 Published: February 27, 2013

NEW DELHI — In the series of photographs shot in 2009, the bare-chested boy is first shown seated on a bench watching something outside the frame. Then he is seen having a snack. In the third image he is lying on the ground with bullet holes in his chest. The photographs, which were released last week by the British broadcaster Channel 4, appear to document the final moments in the life of 12-year-old Balachandran Prabhakaran, the youngest son of the slain founder of the [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam](#), Velupillai Prabhakaran.

The images are from the documentary film *"No Fire Zone,"* which tells the story of Sri Lanka's violent suppression of Mr. Prabhakaran's equally violent revolution, which had come very close to securing a separate state for the Tamil minority of Sri Lanka. After 26 years of civil war between the Tamils, who are chiefly Hindus, and the Sinhalese majority, who are chiefly Buddhists, the Sri Lankan state won decisively in 2009. Human rights activists say that hundreds of Tamil fighters, political leaders and their families, including Mr. Prabhakaran and his family, did not die in action but were executed. They estimate that more than 40,000 Tamil civilians died in the final months of the war.

Within its borders, the Sri Lankan government appears to wink at its Sinhalese population to accept their congratulations for ending the war, but it maintains a righteous indignation when the world accuses its army of planned genocide.

"No Fire Zone" includes video footage and photographs shot on mobile phones by Tamil survivors and Sinhalese soldiers that were somehow leaked. The film's director, Callum Macrae, told me that it will be screened at the 22nd session of the [United Nations Human](#)

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CALLUM MACRAE
 Monday 18 February 2013

This is proof, beyond reasonable doubt, of the execution of a child – not a battlefield death

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Compared to most of the terrible images which have emerged from the final weeks of Sri Lanka's civil war, it seems innocuous. A young boy sits, like a child lost in a supermarket. He has been given some kind of snack. He is looking up, as though hoping to see someone he recognises.

The boy is Balachandran Prabhakaran, the 12-year-old son of Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, and the new photographs tell a chilling story. This child has not been lost of course: he has been captured and is held in a bunker, apparently guarded by a Sri Lankan Army soldier. In less than two hours he will be executed in cold blood – and then photographed again.

Last year in this paper I wrote about the video footage we had obtained of the aftermath of Balachandran's execution, which had apparently been shot as a war trophy by Sri Lankan soldiers. These new photographs are important evidentially, because they prove that Balachandran was not killed in crossfire or in a battle – or even that he was executed by some maverick band of paramilitaries. His death was deliberate and calculated. The pictures fill in chilling details on the circumstances of his murder – and leave the Sri Lankan government with yet more questions to answer.

There are four new photographs in all – which digital image analysis indicates were taken with the same camera. Two show him alive – and two dead. The embedded information in the pictures places them

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Given a snack and then taken out and shot: Horrifying last moments of helpless boy, 12, who was 'executed by Sri Lankan army because his father was a Tamil Tiger leader'

- Balachandran Prabhakaran is seen with bullet wounds to the chest
- He was the son of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, who was also killed at the end of the Sri Lankan civil war
- Disturbing images feature in new documentary on the conflict
- Film's director said pictures prove boy was 'executed in cold blood'

By BECKY EVANS

PUBLISHED: 20:06, 19 February 2013 | UPDATED: 17:17, 20 February 2013



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WARNING GRAPHIC CONTENT

Disturbing new images have emerged of the dead body of the 12-year-old son of a Tamil leader that researchers say could prove he was executed by Sri Lankan government forces.

The photographs of Balachandran Prabhakaran, son of Velupillai Prabhakaran, head of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, were taken in May 2009 at the end of the government's conflict with the rebels.

The first pictures appear to show the child in the custody of Sri Lankan forces and he is seen sitting on a bench wrapped in a blanket and eating some food.

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Sri Lanka: questions from the killing fields

The UN human rights council must take a long, hard look at the allegations of war crimes by the Sri Lankan state

Editorial
The Guardian, Friday 1 March 2013 20:03 GMT
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After the showing of the documentary *No Fire Zone* in the Palais des Nations in Geneva yesterday, the Sri Lankan ambassador denounced it and criticised the UN human rights council for permitting the event to take place in a United Nations building. His speech was received in complete silence by a gathering which included a number of diplomats who are in Geneva to take part in the current session of the council, which is due to discuss Sri Lanka's human rights record. That silence, Sri Lanka's critics would say, was an eloquent one.

It certainly confirms at the very least that Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa's contention that no significant war crimes were committed by the government side toward the end of the civil war in 2009 is widely doubted. The film, the third from Channel 4 to focus on alleged atrocities and illegal killings during the final weeks of the conflict, will be shown here later this year. TV documentaries do not constitute absolute proof, but they do raise questions that need answering, as do reports by such organisations as Amnesty International and the International Crisis Group, and from within the UN system itself.

So far, the answers have been less than convincing. Thousands died in attacks which apparently failed to discriminate between combatants and civilians. Others, unless the documentary footage is dismissed as entirely fraudulent, were executed, including children. Yet the International Crisis Group charges that "no credible investigations into allegations of war crimes, disappearances or other serious human rights violations" have been conducted.

It is not only the conduct of the war that is at issue. The conduct of the peace that has followed the end of the conflict is just as problematic. Instead of devolving power, the Sri Lankan government has relentlessly centralised. It has dropped restrictions on presidential terms and recently rid itself of a chief justice who had upheld provincial rights. Instead of demilitarising the north, the army is still dominant there. And instead of accepting criticism and dissent, it has suppressed both. The conclusion must be that it is a necessity to head the country's international relations

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END OF ROAD FOR MACRAE
 Protest at Anuradhapura railway station forces Channel 4 team to return to Colombo

Roadblock
 Thousands of protesters surrounded the Anuradhapura railway station, forcing the Channel 4 team to return to Colombo. The protesters, led by Callum Macrae, were demanding the release of the Channel 4 journalist and his team.

Macrae vows to keep trying
 Callum Macrae, the Channel 4 journalist, vowed to continue his efforts to secure the release of the Channel 4 team and his colleagues.

UK hopes SL will uphold HR
 The UK government expressed its hope that Sri Lanka would uphold its human rights record during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

Editors' Guild concerned
 The Editors' Guild of Sri Lanka expressed its concern over the safety of journalists and the freedom of the press.

OFFICER PROBING FORMER PS CHAIRMAN THREATENED
 An officer probing the case of a former Public Service Chairman was threatened by a group of individuals.

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Channel 4's Vanni tour thwarted
 Thousands surround Yarl Devi in Anuradhapura
 Callum Macrae calls it an 'orchestrated demonstration'

Ministers make contradictory statements
 On casino licence

Packer predicts Sri Lanka could be another Macau
 Australia casino mogul James Packer yesterday predicted that Sri Lanka could be another Macau.

Army dismisses Jaffna protest as a 'circus'
 Military Media Spokesman, Brig. Raviar Wasinge, yesterday dismissed a protest in Jaffna as a 'circus'.

Cannot vouch foreign journalists' safety
 Media Minister Keheliya Rambod, said yesterday that he cannot vouch for the safety of foreign media personnel who travel outside the Colombo city.

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 Greetings to the Delegates of Commonwealth Peoples Forum 2013

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