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A tribute to human rights defender and Voice of Truth: Rev. Bishop Rayappu

Reverend Bishop Dr. Rayappu passed away in Jaffna, Sri Lanka on 1st April 2021.

Reverend Bishop Dr. Rayappu's leadership for the Victims and survivors of Genocide, as the Tamils' most prominent human rights defender, has contributed to the empowerment, visibility, and protection of Eelam Tamils across the World.

It is an honor to pay tribute to Rev. Bishop Dr. Rayappu Joseph on behalf of more than 3200 Organizations including 132 ECOSOC Accredited NGOs. Tamil Movement along with worldwide Tamils convey our heartfelt condolences to Rev. Bishop Dr. Rayappu Joseph's families and to all the Tamils across the World.

He has always been a strong voice, both within the Eelam Tamils and international community, reminding us all the need to safeguard and respect the rule of law and the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights for all Tamils victims and survivors of Tamil Genocide in Sri Lanka.

Quite simply, Rev. Bishop Dr. Rayappu Joseph is one of us; and has always been a courageous and resolute voice for human rights defenders, victims and survivors of Genocide in Sri Lanka.

He has been a strong advocate who speaks out without fear or favor on behalf of everyone here and there, for his tremendous commitment and tireless efforts over the last 50 years. His leadership as the Catholics' most prominent human rights defender has contributed to the empowerment, visibility and protection of Tamil human rights defenders, victims and survivors of Tamils Genocide, and the humanitarian services he carried out all over the world to aid the desperate people until his last breath. While his tasks has often been difficult, Rev. Bishop Dr. Rayappu Joseph has acted throughout his tenure as a fundamental underpinning for Tamils Rights to Self-determination, Tamils Rights defenders, Tamil victims, and civil society at every level; local, national, regional and international.

He lead the fact finding mission with independent experts and international intellectuals. Extracting datas from the very statistical information released by the district level Sri Lankan government departments, pertaining to the population in the war zone and those that came into the government-controlled areas, the Bishop arrived at the figure of 146,679 people remaining unaccounted for. He submitted it to the LLRC, despite the intimidations and threats of occupying Sri Lankan Security forces.

The Bishop always advocated for the right to self-determination and justice for the Eelam Tamil victims of Genocide.

"Eelam Tamils will always miss you, Rev. Bishop Dr. Rayappu Joseph, you showed us the way... you, the messenger of the Almighty, made us to realize the importance of compassion, of Right to Self-determination, of selflessness, of freedom and of Justice for Victims. You made us know to respect others as we seek respect to ourselves by others and regardless of our race, language, religion, or culture. You, the humblest, made us proud, made us to be known, to be respected through our work and values. You are the one ... among many religious leaders you are the star, among many, who made this world to come yet together, live together and build a Nation together for Eelam Tamils".

Goodbye Rev. Bishop Dr. Rayappu Joseph, your spirit is both in our heart and soul. **La lutte continue !!!**