

The Sri Lanka office on missing persons: truth and justice in tandem?

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Abstrak

ABSTRACT

In October 2015, by co-sponsoring United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 30/1 entitled Promoting Reconciliation, Accountability and Human Rights in Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan government formally committed to embarking on a transitional justice process following three decades of armed conflict. Several thousand people allegedly disappeared during this period, often in connection with the armed conflict or as a result of internal disturbances. It is in this context that the Office on Missing Persons (OMP) was operationalized in 2018. This article discusses the nature of tracing investigations into the fate and whereabouts of missing persons of the type to be carried out by the OMP. It argues that these investigations, while ostensibly pursuing a humanitarian approach, cannot be artificially and hermetically separated from criminal justice processes. Further, it seeks to demonstrate that an integrated approach whereby strong linkages with criminal processes are provided for and encouraged best serves the interests of truth and justice.