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## WAR CRIMES IN SRI LANKA

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### ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka has been marred by ethnic rivalry and internal armed conflict from the very beginning of its independence. But recently it occupied a central stage in the international arena for its war against the LTTE. This paper tries its best to rediscover the civil war in Sri Lanka with intent to know whether it has qualified to the extent that the International Humanitarian Laws (IHL), Laws of war or war crimes are applicable there. The focus of the paper is to look for the different crimes committed in the civil war with main focus on the crimes committed against the non-combatants in the last phases of war in 2009. What laws are applicable in Sri Lanka if war crimes have been committed and how far the international humanitarian law (IHL) was respected by the belligerents in Sri Lanka. The categorization of various crimes will also be attempted in the light of accepted Customary and Conventional or Treaty Laws. The role of UN and human rights organisations will also be looked at as far as the highlighting of war crimes in Sri Lanka is concerned, and the steps taken thereof to make them accountable.

**KEYWORDS:** Civil War, International Humanitarian Laws (IHL), Law of War, War Crimes, Combatants, Non-combatants, Belligerents, Customary Law, Conventional Law, Treaty Law, Sinhala, Liberation of Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE), Tamil Eelam, Jus ad bellum, Jus in bello, grave breaches, Prisoners of War (POW), Guerrillas, Insurgents, Geneva Conventions, war on terror,