

Let Canada hear our story Sri Lankan widows plead. (1986, September 26). *The Toronto Star*.

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COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankans widows and orphans of Tamil-related violence have asked their government to fly them to Canada so they can tell their side of the story to the Canadian public.

State officials said no money will be given for an airlift. But they added that several MPs are seeking help from Canadian organizations and Sri Lankans abroad to help pay for such a trip.

A government statement said an appeal was made through MPs and local government institutions after Umapathisivan Pararajasegaran, a Tamil refugee, said in Ottawa that the Sri Lankan high commissioner in the capital had committed torture.

“If Canadians are willing to listen to (Pararajasegaran) sympathetically, they would probably be more sympathetic to the plight of genuine sufferers,” a government spokesman said.

Women and orphans who are reported to be seeking the airlift at state expense include Sinhalese, Tamils and Moslems.

Militant Tamils have been waging a guerrilla campaign for a separate state in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, saying the Tamil minority has suffered discrimination by the Sinhalese majority.

Sources said the petitioners include children whose fathers are kidnapped and presumed dead.