

**UN rights chief faults Sri Lanka probe of alleged wartime abuses**  
**By Associated Press, Washington Post**  
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GENEVA — The United Nations' top human rights official on Wednesday faulted Sri Lanka for failing to investigate reports of widespread killings and other atrocities toward the end of its bloody quarter-century civil war.

In her report to the 47-nation U.N. Human Rights Council, High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay also said opposition leaders are still being killed or abducted and the government has made no arrests or prosecutions in cases of disappearances.

In May 2009, the government — dominated by the ethnic Sinhalese majority — defeated Tamil Tiger rebels who were demanding an independent Tamil nation after decades of perceived discrimination.

The report questioned the government's commitment to follow through on the recommendations of its own war commission report and urges Sri Lankan authorities to permit international experts to probe allegations of serious human rights violations.

"Unfortunately, however, the government has made commitments to only some of the commission's recommendations, and has not adequately engaged civil society to support this process," the report said. "The steps taken by the government to investigate allegations of serious violations of human rights further have also been inconclusive, and lack the independence and impartiality required to inspire confidence."

Sri Lanka's government disputed many of the findings. In a formal response that was released by Pillay's office, Sri Lanka said it has taken steps to investigate more than 50 instances of civilian killings and all reported cases of alleged disappearances from the end of the war.

The report comes as the Geneva-based council prepares to meet and take up the question of how well Sri Lanka has healed itself by uniting opposing factions after a war that the U.N. estimates killed 80,000 to 100,000 people.

The government is expected to face questions from the council in March on its progress in following up on that report, which also recommends investigating alleged human rights violations and giving autonomy to Tamils. The United States has said it will sponsor a resolution at the council for a second straight year on the report's implementation.

Sri Lanka's President Mahinda Rajapaksa last week ruled out giving Tamils greater political autonomy, appearing to back away from his long-stalled promise to empower the ethnic minority as part of the country's reconciliation process.

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