



## தமிழீழ விடுதலைப்புலிகளின் சமாதானச் செயலகம் Peace Secretariat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

### **Tamils of Northeast are yearning for peace that is permanent, just, and dignified**

#### *Message from the LTTE Peace Secretariat on the International Day of Peace*

On this international day of peace in the year of 2006, at a time when the vast majority of the people on earth are enjoying a social, political and economic life that is peaceful, dignified and stable, Tamil people in the Northeast of the island of Sri Lanka yearn for the same that has eluded them for the past nearly six decades.

Tamils are the indigenous people of the Northeast, who lost their freedom during and as a result of the colonial period. During the nearly six decades that followed the colonial period, Tamils have been forced to fight for their lost freedom. Tamils have paid a colossal cost for this freedom that they long for. The cost that the Tamils have paid can be counted in the civilian lives lost; displacement; loss of property and livelihood; loss of growth in the educational sector; and loss of economic growth.

Nearly 100,000 civilians have lost their lives by the indiscriminate military attacks by the Government of Sri Lanka that has gone on for the nearly six decades. Two million people were forced out of their homes to other areas in the Northeast, and to other countries. Many of these refugees continue face extreme poverty and homelessness although they have had their own land that has been confiscated from them. The cost of destruction to property in the Northeast is colossal and is visible to those who have journeyed from the south of the island towards the north. Tamils who have been the leaders in educational achievement have fallen far behind by the deliberate policies of the Government of Sri Lanka to destroy Tamil educational institutions, beginning from the burning of the Jaffna library to the destruction of almost 500 schools in the Northeast.

If this was the situation prior to the Ceasefire agreement of 2002, the killing of civilians, destruction of property, denial of livelihood and destruction of schools have all been re-launched by Government of Sri Lanka during this ceasefire period. Some of the recent massacres includes, killing of 37 civilians in Allaipiddy on 11 August, killing of 51 school girls in Mullaitivu on 14 August, killing of 97 civilians in Trincomalee in military onslaughts from August to September and the killing of 10 civilians in Amparai on 18 September. The number of civilians killed by the Sri Lankan military during the ceasefire period stands close to 1000. More than 250,000 people have been displaced during the ceasefire period. The spectre of disappearances that has haunted the Northeast for two decades has re-appeared catching the attention of the international human rights community.

It is this colossal destruction brought on the Tamil people by the Government of Sri Lanka, weighing heavily on the conscience of the international community, resulted in the



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internationalization of the Tamil struggle. In recent times, other peoples in the world who have struggled for freedom and have paid huge price for it, like the Tamil people, have gained the freedom they longed for. Eritrea, East Timore, and Montenegro are some of the most recent examples.

On this international peace day, the Tamil people earnestly hope that a permanent, just and dignified peace will be in their grasp soon.