



தமிழீழ விடுதலைப் புலிகள் Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Political Wing

24 September 2007

Recognize the Sovereignty of the Tamil People - LTTE urge the 62nd session of the UNGA -

The delegation led by Sri Lanka's President, Mahinda Rajapakse is gathered in New York, USA, to take part in the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly. This delegation, as in the past, will use this opportunity at the UNGA to discredit the Tamil struggle for self-determination as terrorism and mislead the international community to cover up Sri Lanka's failed records on human rights, humanitarian issues, and peace process.

At the time when world leaders are assembling at the 62nd session of the UNSG to discuss international issues, the Political wing of the LTTE wants to focus attention on issues related with the current conflict situation and the peace process. As the LTTE and Tamil people are denied a fair chance to interact directly with the International community (IC), we choose to submit this statement.

(a) Sri Lanka and the Peace Process

Since elected to office, President Mahinda Rajapakse has been systematically weakening the IC-backed cease-fire agreement (CFA) between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the LTTE.

It has blatantly ignored all the promises that were made at the Geneva talks.

Further, the GoSL has tried to isolate the LTTE, a party to the Cease-fire and peace talks, from the IC and thus obstructed the Tamil people from directly interacting with the IC on their legitimate aspirations in a fair conflict resolution process.

GoSL has made schizophrenic public statements that ranged from, the intention to "wipe out the LTTE" and give a political solution to the Tamils, and to "weakening the LTTE" in order to "force" it to come to the negotiating table.

The appointment of the All Party Representative Committee (APRC) to come up with a constitutional framework for a resolution to the conflict is another classic example of its duplicity.

This tactic of appointing 'APRC's and 'Round Tables' to resolve the national conflict are an established deceptive habit of the successive Governments of Sri Lanka. But some members of the international community had shown confidence in this latest APRC and have been assuring everyone that it would come up with a framework for the resolution of the conflict. This misplaced confidence has not brought any constructive outcome to date.



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On the other hand, the leaders of the GoSL make regular toxic comments and victory parades on the execution of the military campaign. Cynically exploiting the international discourse on “terrorism”, the GoSL locally justifies a war against the Tamil nation.

The latest and most categorical evidence came at the speech given by the Defense Secretary, Gotabhaya Rajapakse, in the presence of his brother, President Mahinda Rajapaksa, in Trincomalee on 14 September, which was nationally televised. He said,

"We cannot establish permanent peace in the country by winning only half or two third of the war against terrorism..... President Rajapaksa cannot implement the desired political solution to the north and east conflict unless LTTE terrorism is defeated 100 percent."

Two important facts can be gleaned from this statement that was clearly endorsed by the President himself. Firstly, that the GoSL intends to intensify the war in the north and secondly that the APRC was a façade to fool the international community.

Indeed less than a week after making this televised statement in Sinhala, the GoSL on the eve of its representation at the UN General Assembly has again paid lip service to the peace talks.

Genocidal war against Tamil people

The growing statistics of civilian casualties amply prove beyond doubt that this war conducted by the Sri Lankan armed forces is indeed a genocidal war against the Tamil people. Oppressive laws sanctioned by a majoritarian Sinhala Government are legitimizing its brutality. The Emergency Regulations give cover and impunity for unlawful arrest, torture, killing, and disposal of bodies without investigations.

Human rights and humanitarian law violations: In the 21 months since President Rajapakse came to power in November 2005, 1974 Tamil civilians were killed by the Sri Lankan Armed forces and its allied paramilitaries and 842 Tamil civilians were either arrested or abducted and then disappeared by the same forces. Among those killed were four popular Tamil parliamentarians, Joseph Pararajasingam, Nadaraja Raviraj (both of whom were sitting MPs), A Chandra Nehru (a former MP) and V Vigneswaran (an MP designate elected to replace the assassinated Pararajasingam). Over 69 of those killed during this period were children under the age of 16. In addition to these killing of children, more than 150 civilians, among them many children, have sought safety in the Jaffna Human Rights Commission in fear of their life. Indeed the vast majority of the civilians who have been killed and disappeared in this period are the Tamils.

More than 500,000 people in the Jaffna peninsula are cut off from land access to the outside and are denied delivery of essential items by land and are kept in an open prison for its own military purpose by the GoSL. Despite repeated requests by the people of Jaffna and at the last Geneva talks by our side, the GoSL has not heeded to this request and has kept the A9 route closed.



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Land grab: The occupation war started by the GoSL last year has forced hundreds of thousands of Tamil people from their land thus depriving them of livelihood. Many civilians were killed and disappeared in the process. The displaced were then forcefully resettled against their wishes in certain locations. Indeed the UN High Commission for Refugees announced that it was withdrawing from the resettlement involvement due to this flawed process. In Sampur and Muthur East, the GoSL confiscated lands belonging to the people by declaring them as High Security Zones and is implementing programs to create new Sinhala settlements in these regions.

Media suppression: In order to obstruct information about its war on the civilians that is causing unimaginable hardship for the people, the GoSL is suppressing media freedom in many aspects. Those who operate despite such threats are murdered. Eleven journalists have been murdered since 2005 by the GoSL operated forces. The “Uthayan” daily from Jaffna, the voice of the most threatened people, is continuously operating under threat. Another journalist from the south who exposed corruption in weapon procurements of the GoSL has also come under death threat.

Labeling ‘terrorist’: Representatives of the international community, who have raised their voices on these horrendous violations of humanitarian norms, have been repeatedly targeted by the GoSL with the most vicious attacks. It is typical of the leaders of the GoSL to use the brush of “terrorist” and “LTTE sympathizer” on anyone who raises their voice for justice and decency in this island. Among those who have been painted thus are, UN Under Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, UN representative for Children Affected by Armed Conflict, Ambassador Allan Rock, and Australia’s Former Foreign Minister and current President of International Crisis Group, Mr. Gareth Evans. They have all been called by senior members of the GoSL as “White Tigers”.

(b) LTTE and the peace process

We strongly believe that the international community understands that the Tamil liberation struggle against oppression has been taken up according to international norms. And it cannot be compared to aimless, intolerant causes of violence: terrorism

Further, we expect the international community recognize that it is always the LTTE that keeps the doors wide open for peace talks. LTTE unilaterally declared a ceasefire in 2000, after recapturing many towns in Vanni and the major Sri Lankan military camp in Elephant Pass, thus paving the way for the ensuing peace efforts. Yet the then regime of President Kumaratunge did not come to the peace table until after testing its military strength in yet another military operation and facing further losses.

We again gave time and counsel to the new regime of President Rajapakse to take forward the peace process. But his regime ignored all the agreements reached at the table, and even refused to heed the humanitarian needs of the people.



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Whereas the LTTE continued to respect and urge for a full implementation of the cease-fire agreement, the Rajapaksa regime eventually embarked on its war of occupation. It started the Mavilaru attack on the pretext of humanitarian need despite the patience exercised by the LTTE.

This military campaign of Sri Lanka has continued ever since in the east and the north, under variously codenamed operations, while the LTTE has continued to restrain itself, confining only to defensive operations.

(c) Expectations of the Tamil people from the international community

In the context described above, we urge the international community:

1. To recognize the concept of the sovereignty of the Tamil people, and support the peace process in accordance with this principle.
2. To provide appropriate opportunities to the Tamil people to express their aspirations, as have been given to the people of East Timor and Kosovo.

The Government of Sri Lanka must, end its deceptions; halt its, military oppression, ethnic cleansing, and serious human rights violations; accept the aspirations of the Tamil people; and come forward to find a resolution that is based on the right to self-determination of the Tamil people. The IC must reign in on the GoSL to bring it in line.
