

SPUR (Society for Peace, Unity and Human Rights for Sri Lanka Inc)

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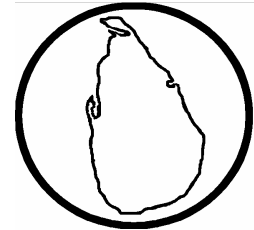
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28 April 2008

Hon Stephen Smith MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Robert McClelland MP
Attorney General
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sirs,

Appeal for Stronger Sanctions against Tamil Tiger Terrorism

The Society for Peace Unity and Human Rights for Sri Lanka (SPUR) is writing to you regarding the escalating campaign of terror waged by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) against the civilian population of Sri Lanka and their elected representatives.

As you are aware, the Tamil Tigers have carried out a spate of suicide attacks and bombings on non military targets including the public transport network of Sri Lanka over the past few months. The most recent of these occurred only a few days ago in Piliyandala where the LTTE blasted a public bus carrying office workers and school children, killing at least 26 people and seriously injuring scores of others. This follows several other bus bombing massacres including those at Kebethigollawa and Buttala, as well as the suicide attack at a Colombo Railway Station, which killed almost the entire multi-ethnic Baseball team of a leading school in Colombo. A number of other bombs and mines placed in highly populated areas have been detected and defused due to the vigilance of the general public and law enforcement authorities.

You are, of course, fully conversant with the recent suicide attack on the Sri Lankan Minister for Transport and Chief Government Whip, Hon Jeyaraj Fernandopulle and several others at an Athletics event to celebrate the Sinhala and Tamil New years. Mr Fernandopulle, a Tamil Catholic, was highly regarded by all Sri Lankans for his inclusive approach towards all ethnic and religious groups, and for his unequivocal condemnation of Tamil Tiger separatist terrorism. His killing by the LTTE follows a familiar pattern of eliminating all other Tamil leaders including the former Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamer as well as a large number of Tamil Members of Parliament and several Mayors of Jaffna who were perceived as a threat to their claim of being 'sole representatives of the Tamil people'.

In this context, we would also like to place on record our appreciation of the Australian Foreign Minister's Media Release dated 07 April 2009, which unreservedly condemned of this suicide bombing, and denounced the 'terrorist methods' used by the LTTE.

As highlighted by Travel Advices issued by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, these indiscriminate attacks by the Tamil Tigers pose a significant risk to Australians of Sri Lankan background, who travel to Sri Lanka for variety of 'non discretionary' reasons, and also to Australian Business interests in Sri Lanka.

As security analysts have pointed out, the LTTE employs its international network to raise material and financial support for its campaign of terror, often using deception and coercion of both the

Tamil Diaspora and the general public of host countries. At least to some extent, this is possible because the LTTE and its front-organisations, which masquerade as Humanitarian, Rehabilitation, Women's and Youth Groups, still enjoy a degree of freedom in some countries. In Australia, **where the LTTE has not been explicitly listed as a terrorist organisation**, the Tigers have openly celebrated 'heroes days' glorifying suicide bombers, extorted funds from Tamil Businesses and Religious Institutions, and bestowed the highest LTTE honour of 'Mahamanthir' (Great Man) on at least two Australian residents for their contributions to promote LTTE agenda in Australia.

Many Western countries including the United States, United Kingdom, European Union, Canada and Malaysia have designated the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. India has also continued with its ban since 1992 when a LTTE woman suicide bomber killed former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The LTTE is restricted in several other countries because of its listing as a terrorist organisation under UN Security Council Resolution 1373. The LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and intelligence chief Pottu Amman are proclaimed absconders in India, and wanted by Interpol. Prabhakaran has been also convicted by the Sri Lankan Supreme Court to 200 years imprisonment for killing 80 civilians by bombing the Central Bank.

Earlier this year the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) issued a Statement entitled 'Taming the Tamil Tigers' which outlined the international threat posed by the LTTE and referred to the Tamil Tigers as being 'among the most dangerous and deadly extremists in the world'. The FBI appealed to the public to be 'careful with your donations', and warned that 'the Tigers have raised funds under a variety of cover organizations, often by posing as charities'.

Our Appeal

Like many Sri Lankan Australians, SPUR believes that the LTTE is not only the biggest impediment to peace in Sri Lanka, but is also a player in the global terrorist network.

The International isolation of the LTTE may eventually force it to abandon its campaign of terror and return to the negotiating table. Furthermore, it would send a message to all terrorist organisations that Australia rejects terrorism in all its forms, and that it applies the same uniform standard when dealing with terrorist groups across the world.

Therefore, we humbly appeal to your government to impose further sanctions on the LTTE and its front-organisations by listing them under the Australian Criminal Code Act of 1995, until it has given up terrorism in word and deed.

Like many Sri Lankan Australians, we believe that the Australian Labor Party and the Federal Coalition should adopt a bipartisan stand towards Sri Lanka, and provide support for a resolution of the conflict so that it satisfies the aspiration of all Sri Lankans without compromising the Unity and Territorial Integrity of Sri Lanka,

We would welcome your response to our submission, and shall be glad to provide additional information and supporting material if required.

Yours sincerely

Dr Dasarath Jayasuriya
(President)