

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Students Revolted by Brutal Attacks on Tamil Students

*December 22, 2005* - The University of Toronto Tamil Students Association strongly condemns the recent attacks of innocent Tamil students by the Sri Lankan Army in Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

These attacks on non-violent protestors are a demonstration of hatred to the Tamil population and are in major violation given the current ceasefire agreement between both the government of Sri Lanka and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The army personnel who entered the premises of the University of Jaffna Tuesday afternoon, took open fire, charged tear gas and wounding atleast seven students and school officials. The students and staff of the Jaffna University were attacked mercilessly on their way to the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission (SLMM) to hand over a petition protesting against the conduct of the military in recent times. Just recently, 20 year old Tharsini Ilyathamby was found brutally gang-raped, strangled to death and left to rot in a well near a Sri Lankan Navy post in Punguduthivu. The students were angered and saddened by the ongoing atrocities by the Sri Lankan army against the Tamil students and wished that these concerns be raised immediately.

These assaults infringe the students' fundamental right to learn and express their viewpoints freely without fear of imprisonment or worse. We believe the government of Sri Lanka should uphold this fundamental right. It saddens us all to witness these events during a critical stage in the ceasefire agreement.

We the Tamil Students Association, urge the Canadian government and fellow student organizations to condemn these brutal and inhumane activities and further encourage the international community to take positive steps to contain further violations by the Sri Lankan Army. Those perpetrators involved in these atrocities should and must be brought to justice.

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