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Kilinochchi 6 August 2006

LTTE Press Release

Facilitators to ensure government reciprocate

Respecting the sentiments expressed by Mr. Erik Solheim, Norwegian Minister for International Development, the good will gesture with which Special Peace Envoy Mr. Jon Hanssen Bauer visited Kilinochchi along with H.E. The Norwegian Ambassador Mr. Hans Brattskar for a meeting with the LTTE and the assurance that the humanitarian consideration of the LTTE would be reciprocated by similar humanitarian consideration by the Sri Lankan Government, the LTTE Leadership has decided to instruct the District Political Head in Trincomalee to interact with the people in Mavilaru to open the water gates. The LTTE leadership made this decision more importantly to safeguard the CFA that is threatened by the actions of the GoSL in carrying out air strikes, artillery shelling and troop movements. The GoSL actions were received as an intention to entrench positions in the LTTE territory under the guise of a humanitarian effort, calling these 'restricted military actions' that unfortunately would culminate in a full scale war.

While respecting international concern over the water issue at Mavilaru, the LTTE wishes to reiterate that it is the GoSL that complicated the situation by military intervention while the LTTE District Leadership and the people of the area had genuine intentions to address their drinking water problem and economic embargo even on essentials. The GoSL's military intervention was totally in contravention of CFA as the LTTE and the villagers were engaged in a discussion with the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) to reach an agreement to open the water gates through negotiated means. The LTTE has agreed to urge the Mavilaru villagers, who were frustrated over the inaction and discriminatory attitude of the GoSL, to engage in a constructive discussion with the SLMM to open the water gate.

The Special Peace Envoy and the Norwegian Ambassador have fully comprehended the situation from the perspective of the Mavilaru villagers and assured that they would proceed with the arrangement of a committee to look into the grievances of the Mavilaru villagers. They also appreciated LTTE Leadership's decision to instruct its District Leadership to interact with Mavilaru villagers and cause the opening of the gates immediately. It is agreed that a time frame would be set to put in place concrete arrangements to provide the requirements of Mavilaru villagers. They also agreed to convey to the GoSL that the Tamil people are seriously concerned with SLAF air strikes and artillery shelling that has killed civilians, destroyed homes and displaced thousands of people.

The LTTE also wishes to reinforce its commitment to the CFA and the peace process while at the same time expecting the GoSL to fulfill its CFA obligations relating to military occupation of a people denying them access to their habitats, farm lands and fishing. The CFA in fact provides for measures to be taken by the GoSL as the party responsible for occupied parts of the Tamil habitats to create a positive atmosphere that would enable confidence building and reduce a hostile military presence in the midst of a people who have suffered immensely in the hands of the occupying military for more than two decades.