

Saturday, June 10, 2006

Request for Parliamentary Resolution to Stop Genocide in Sri Lanka

The Hon John Howard MP,
Prime Minister of Australia,
Parliament House, PO Box 6022
House of Representatives,
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600.

Dear Prime Minister,

The Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) between the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) came into effect on February 23, 2002. Australia expressed its total support to the agreement. The peace talks of the last four years did not lay any foundation for a political resolution for the Tamil people. Yet again, the Sri Lankan government is using violence as a means to suppress the legitimate rights of the Tamil people. In fact, the Cease Fire Agreement is on the verge of collapsing.

The ongoing violence, murder and human rights violations perpetrated by the Sri Lankan security forces and the Tamil paramilitary forces - aided and abetted by the Sri Lankan government in the northeast, is causing grief, distress and exasperation to the Tamil Diasporas in Australia.

International truce monitors said, "We have very strong indications that at least parts of the government troops have been involved in these killings". The refusal to vacate schools, religious and public buildings occupied by the armed forces and the continuous restrictions on fishing and farming are also clear violations of the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA). Sri Lanka's Supreme Court ruled recently that the Government should take immediate steps to resettle families in their lands now occupied by Government troops.

Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has consistently pointed out that the crisis in Sri Lanka is a crisis of democracy, with its roots in the authoritarian style of rule that arose because of the 1978 Constitution. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in its 'State of the World's Refugees 2006 Report' stated that the Sri Lankan government's "weaker response to the plight of those affected in the island's north and east has served to prolong suffering and uncertainty. To-date, the Sri Lankan Government has failed to put forward any concrete proposal for a political solution to the national crisis except to challenge the validity of the CFA as unconstitutional

On 2 June 2006, Mr. Richard Boucher, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, said ".there are legitimate issues that are raised by the Tamil community and they have a very legitimate desire, as anybody would, to be able to control their own lives, to rule their own destinies and to govern themselves in their homeland; in the areas they've traditionally inhabited ..."

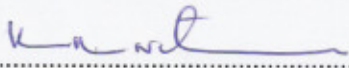
In view of the current state of affairs, we, the undersigned Australian Tamil organizations representing Australian Tamils in Queensland, call on the Australian government to pass a parliamentary resolution to:

1. Condemn the extra-judicial government sponsored genocide against Tamil people.
2. Recognise that the Tamils in Sri Lanka have a very legitimate desire to control their own lives, to rule their own destinies and to govern themselves in their homeland and assert the fact that the Tamils have their inalienable right to homeland and self-determination.

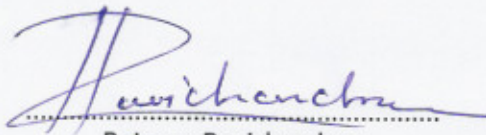
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3. Emphasise the need for the observance and actions by the parties to the Cease Fire Agreement of February 2002 for fully implementing it and immediately halting the state-sponsored violence, murder and human rights violations perpetrated on the innocent and unarmed Tamil people.
4. Exert political pressure upon the Sri Lankan government that the Tamil people's national and existential problems be resolved in an equitable manner only through peace talks with supervision and support of the international community, e.g. Norway, Australia.
5. Send a fact finding parliamentary delegation to Sri Lanka as a preliminary step toward an involvement and contribution by the Australian Government for finding a lasting peaceful resolution for the grievances by the Tamils in Sri Lanka..

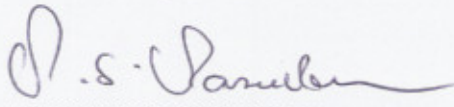
Yours sincerely,



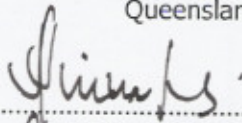
Dr.K.K.Navaratnam
President
Tamil Association of Queensland Inc



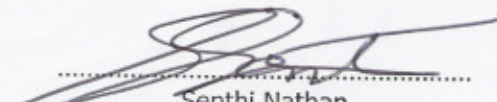
Ratnam Ravichandran
Secretary
Eelam Tamil Organisation
Queensland



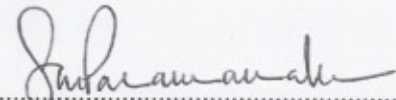
S Vasudevan
President
Jaffna University Alumni Association
Queensland



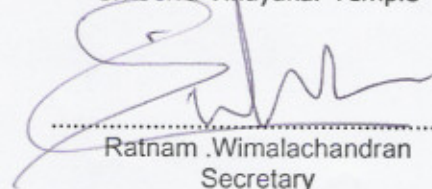
Dr Ragu Ramalingam
President
Tamil Senior Citizens Association
Queensland



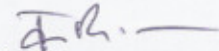
Senthil Nathan
President
Peradeniya Engineering Faculty
Alumni Association
Queensland



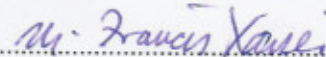
S.M.Paramanathan
President
Hindu Ahalaya Sangham Inc/
Sri Selva Vinayakar Temple



Ratnam Wimalachandran
Secretary
Tamil Coordination Committee
Queensland



M.Ramanujam / M. RAMASUNDARAM
President
Sri Lanka Upcountry Association
Queensland (AUSPIO)



Francis Xavier
President CONVENOR
4EB Tamil Oli Management Committee
Queensland



S Ganeshapalan
President
Tamil Youth Group
Queensland

Copy to: Australian Parliamentarians



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Dr.Jeevan Senthilvaasan
President
Brisbane Tamil School
Queensland



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Dr.R Mahalinga Iyer
President
Jaffna Hindu College Old Boys
Association, Queensland - Australia

Annex01 – Genocide is defined by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as an act committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. The Government of Sri Lanka is a signatory to this international Convention. The question of Genocide of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka was raised in 1983, when 3,000 Tamil civilians in Colombo were massacred in the worst single act of civilian killing in Sri Lanka. Since then there have been several Tamil killing of a genocidal nature. We have now had disturbing evidence of a massacre of Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, which we enclose for your information.

1) Sri Lankan Army soldiers armed with bayonets and knives entered the house of a family of four and slaughtered 35-year-old father, 27-year-old mother, 9-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son on 08th June 2006, midnight in Vankalai, 12 km southeast of Mannar, Sri Lanka.



2) 13 Tamil civilians were massacred in Allaipitty, Jaffna, Sri Lanka by Sri Lankan Government Armed Forces on 13th may 2006.

