



International Federation of Tamils

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Press Statement

EU STATEMENT ON SRI LANKA - AN IMPEDIMENT TO PEACE PROCESS

The International Federation of Tamils (IFT), wishes to express, on behalf of the Tamil Diaspora, its shock and exasperation at the lopsided EU statement on "Terrorism in Sri Lanka," issued on 26.09.05 condemning the LTTE.

The IFT wishes to point out to the EU, the plausible damage the "European Union Declaration condemning terrorism in Sri Lanka (26/09/05)," could bring to the peace process at a time when the extreme Sinhala nationalist terrorism is rearing its fierce head again in the southern parts of Sri Lanka. With the Presidential election propaganda machinery at its full swing, the extreme nationalist Sinhala elements rallying behind the Presidential candidate, Mahinda Rajapakse are clamouring for the abrogation of Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) facilitated by Norway and the P-TOMS, recommended by the CO-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference. From the Election Propaganda platforms these elements are making loud appeal to the outside world to ban the LTTE in all countries. With their anti-Tamil slogans, they are also urging the Sri Lankan armed forces to resume war against the LTTE. Now, they are going to misconstrue the EU Declaration as a vicarious moral support for their purported genocidal attempt. We wish to point out to the European Community that the EU Declaration may retard the peace process as well.

When Member States of the European Union gave asylum to Tamils two decades ago, it was in recognition of the fact that the Tamils faced annihilation in a genocidal rage of the extreme nationalist elements in Sri Lanka. The IFT fears the recent EU Declaration, inadvertently, is going to encourage a similar rage which is in the brewing.

The Cease-Fire Agreement (CFA) was forged between the Government of Sri Lanka acting on behalf of the Sinhala nation and the LTTE representing the Tamil nation and the Peace Talks were also held on the same equal basis. The international community, too, recognised and supported this understanding.

The decision not to receive any LTTE delegations into any of the EU Member States denies the Tamil people and the LTTE a chance to present, face to face, their case, predicaments and proposals to the EU countries. It also denies them of the chance to

continue gaining firsthand information and values of the well established democratic institutions functioning in the West.

At a time when there are too many political killings taking place in Sri Lanka, it is unfair and unacceptable to arbitrarily choose one party to the peace talks and penalise it.

On behalf of the Tamil people, the IFT pleads with each Member State of the European Union to refrain from taking any punitive action against the LTTE, as it will affect all Tamils, both at home, as well as in Europe, and will obviously jeopaordise the success of the peace process, also.

The IFT pleads for restraint and understanding
