

(Media Release)

27 November 2008,

Tamil Eelam.

**“We have never planned to act against the interests of any country -
We wish to renew our good relationship with India”**

-Tamil Eelam National leader in his annual Heroes’ Day statement on 27 November 2008-

The leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), V Pirapaharan, in his annual Heroes’ Day statement said that the LTTE has never stood in the way of the national, geopolitical, or economic welfare of any other country and added that the profound aspirations of the Tamil people too are not harmful to the welfare of any country or its people. He further said that during the long struggle waged by the LTTE it has never planned to act against any country. He appealed to the countries that have banned the LTTE to remove this ban.

He said that though the LTTE adopted the armed struggle, it has always wished to solve the Tamil national problem through peaceful means. He said, “We have never been against adopting peaceful means and we have never hesitated to take part in peace talks.”

He said that trials and tribulations that LTTE faces now are neither new nor insurmountable to the movement and expressed confidence that the challenges will be defeated with the overwhelming strength of the people.

He went on at length on the relationship of the LTTE with India. He said, “Great changes are taking place in India. The voices of support for our struggle that were stifled are again being heard loudly.” He expressed his desire for the renewal of good relationship with India.

Expressing his gratitude to the people of India he said, “Notwithstanding the dividing sea, Tamil Nadu, with its perfect understanding of our plight, has taken heart to rise on behalf of our people at this hour of need. This timely intervention has gratified the people of Tamil Eelam and our freedom movement and given us a sense of relief. I wish to express my love and gratitude at this juncture to the people and leaders of Tamil Nadu and the leaders of India for the voice of support and love they have extended.” He also appealed to the Indian government to take constructive actions to remove the ban which remains a stumbling block for the good relationship between India and the LTTE.

He also commended the younger generation of the Diaspora for its earnest contribution for the freedom of the Tamil nation.

Full text of the Speech:

My beloved people of Tamil Eelam,

Today is Maveerar Naal – our Great Heroes Day.

On this day of purity we remember and honour our dearly beloved heroes whose supreme sacrifice for the liberation of our motherland continues to fill all our hearts.

It is for us a commemoration day of reverence when we pay homage to our brave and valiant heroes who have transformed our land from one that was for many years subjugated by foreign rule into a defiant land refusing to submit to the will of the alien oppressor.

This is our national day on which we engrave tenderly in our hearts the memory of our great heroes who died and whose sacred aspiration was the redemption of our land so that our people may live in freedom and with self-respect.

Our heroes loved this land deeply. From the moment they fixed their eyes on the redemption of our motherland to the moment they closed their eyes permanently, the sacrifices they made have no parallel in the history of the world. No country but ours had at any time encountered such wonderful dedication as expressed in the actions of our valiant heroes.

It was on this land that our heroes were born. They grew up here and lived here. It was on this land that their footsteps have their imprints. The air they breathed is mingled with this land. From time immemorial, from generation to generation the Tamil people lived on this land. It was this land which our heroes loved deeply. Our heroes died for this land and are at rest in its bosom. The land where they are embedded, belongs to us. It is our own land. But an arrogant Sinhala nation stands adamant and is determined to occupy and conquer this historic land.

All human suffering springs from unbridled desire. Unless one extricates oneself from the clutch of greed, one will not free himself from the fetters of sorrow. With its greed for land, Sinhalam has entered a militaristic path of destruction. It has sought to build the support of the world to confront us. It is living in a dreamland of military victory. It is a dream from which it will awake. That is certain.

My beloved people!

The land of Tamil Eelam is confronted with an intense war as never before. Rearing its head in different parts of Wanni, the war is gathering momentum. As the Sinhala state is committed to a military solution, the war is becoming intense and widespread. The underlying intent of the Sinhala state is to wipe out the national life and resources of the Tamils and subjugate the Tamil nation under alien Sinhala military suzerainty. With this in view, it is executing its war plan at full gallop. Pooling together all its military resources and arsenal, and with all its national wealth to buttress it, the racist Sinhala state has waged a fierce war on our land. Our freedom fighters, have dedicated themselves to unbending resistance against this war of aggression launched by the racist Sinhala state. With various

countries of the world buttressing the genocidal war on the people of Tamil Eelam, we are waging a defensive war for the freedom of our people.

Today, our movement has embarked on a historic journey, hazardous and strenuous. In this historic venture, we have encountered numerous turns, twists and confrontations. We have faced forces much mightier than ours. We have had direct confrontations even against superior powers, stronger than us. We have withstood wave after wave of our enemy attacks. Standing alone, we have blasted networks of innumerable intrigues, interwoven with betrayal and sabotage. We stood like a mountain and faced all dangers that loomed like storms. When compared to these happenings of the past, today's challenges are neither novel nor huge. We will face these challenges with the united strength of our people.

This land which the Sinhala state is trying to occupy and enslave, has never belonged to it. This land is ours. Ancient Tamil civilisation stood long and firm on this land. Our ancestors lived and belonged here. Our ancient kings built kingdoms and dynasties and ruled from here. On this land where the roots of our nation have sunk deep, we wish to live in peace and with dignity and make decisions on our lives without the intervention of foreign rulers.

From the day that British colonialism was replaced with Sinhala oppression, we have been struggling for our just rights - peacefully at first and with weapons thereafter. The political struggle for our right to self-determination has extended over the last sixty years. During this period our struggle has gone through different shapes, developments and advanced to maturity. In the beginning, it was a peaceful and democratic struggle by our people for justice. The racist Sinhala state resorted to armed and animal like violence to suppress the peaceful struggle of the Tamil people for their political rights. It was when state oppression breached all norms and our people faced naked terrorism that our movement for freedom was born as a natural outcome in history. We were compelled to take up arms in order to protect our people from the armed terrorism of the racist Sinhala state. The armed violent path was not our choice. It was forced upon us by history.

Even though the armed struggle was thrust on us by inevitable needs, yet we wish to stop the war and seek a peaceful resolution to the national question of our people. Our freedom movement is always ready for it. We are not opposed to a peaceful resolution. We have never hesitated to participate in peace talks. From Thimpu to Geneva, under diametrically varied historical circumstances, we have adopted peaceful methods and participated in talks in order to win the political rights of our people.

Although we acted honestly and whole heartedly, to find a peaceful resolution to the national question, all talks were futile. The intransigence of the Sinhala state, its dishonest approach and its faith in military solution were the cause for failure of the talks. Even at a time when we had produced spectacular achievements in battle fields and broken the back-bone of the Sinhala armed forces, we participated in the peace negotiations facilitated by Norway. Bringing the war to an end, we participated with honesty and diligence in the peace negotiations which protracted for six years.

We continued to exercise patience at the military rampages and provocations by the armed forces. It is not that we trusted the racist Sinhala state to respect our people's fair claims and advance justice, but it was to expose the hypocrisy of the Sinhala state and at the same time to impress upon the international community our commitment to peace, that we participated in the negotiations.

During the peace talks convened in different capitals of the world, there were no attempts to resolve the day-to-day needs of the Tamil people or to negotiate a resolution to the underlying national question. Sri Lanka made use of the opportunity of the peace talks to attempt to weaken the LTTE and hoodwink the Tamil nation and the international community. Using the talks as a masquerade, the Sinhala state made preparations to wage a major war on the Tamil nation. Making use of the cease-fire and the peace environment, the Sinhala state resuscitated its devastated economy and rebuilt its military might that was in shambles. It concentrated on heavy recruitment, refurbishing its arsenal, strengthening the armed forces and conducting military exercises. While the Tamil nation was engaged in peace-building, the Sinhala nation dedicated itself to preparations for war.

Meanwhile, some countries which identified themselves as so-called Peace Sponsors, rushed into activities which impaired negotiations. They denigrated our freedom movement as a terrorist organisation. They put us on their black list and ostracized us as unwanted and untouchable. Our people living in many lands were intimidated into submission by oppressive limitations imposed on them to prevent their political activities supporting our freedom struggle. Humanitarian activities pursued by our law-abiding people in many countries, well within the purview of the law of the land, have been belittled and curtailed. These activities were aimed at providing humanitarian aid to helpless victims of genocidal attacks by the Sinhala Sri Lanka state in Tamil areas. However, these humanitarian activities were branded as criminal activities in those countries. Representatives of the Tamil people, along with community leaders were arrested, jailed and insulted. The explicit bias shown by the activities of these countries affected the talks, in its balance and in its consideration of our status as an equal partner. This further aggravated the racist attitude of the Sinhala state. Sinhala chauvinism was encouraged to raise its head with impunity and inevitably push the Sinhala state further on its war path.

The Sinhala state shut tight the gates to peace and waged its war again on the Tamil nation. The cease-fire agreement facilitated by the international community was abrogated unilaterally by Sinhala Sri Lanka. Strangely no voice of protest was registered by any peace sponsor. Not even as a formality. Nor was any concern expressed. In contrast, some countries from the international community are providing an abundant supply of war materials, military training and expert advice, all for free. This has encouraged the Sinhala state to aggravate its genocidal war against the Tamils with a terrorist audacity .

Today, the Sinhala state has, as never before, placed its trust on its military strength, on military modalities and on a military solution. Its desire to impose its military suzerainty over the Tamil homeland and order a stringent military rule over the Tamils, has increased. As a result, the war has gathered intensity and momentum. In truth, this is not a war against the LTTE as the Sinhala state professes. This is a war against the Tamils; against the Tamil nation. In short, a genocidal war.

This war has affected Tamil civilians more than any body else. By turning the heat of war on our people and by burdening them with immeasurable sufferings, the Sinhala state is aspiring to turn our people against the LTTE. By closing the trunk-line roads, embargoing food and medicine and by suffocating people in tight military encirclements, the government has unleashed barrages of bombardments and shelling. Having lost their private lands and the serene life on them, our people have been reduced to destitution and live as wandering refugees. They have been forced to carry the cross of eternal suffering from birth to death. Struggling with disease and misery, malnutrition, ageing and untimely death, our people are

steeped in suffering. With the solitary purpose of breaking the unbending will of our people, the Sinhala state has unleashed waves of oppression on them and subjected them to grievous injustice. A huge economic war has been declared on our people, their economic life shattered and their day-to-day living impaired. In Tamil areas under military control, hundreds of people disappear or killed, every month. In Sinhala areas, disappearance and killing of Tamils have become a normal routine.

Tamil areas under military occupation are encountering an accelerated agenda of genocide, today. Death, destruction, army atrocities and open prison-life in one's own land, are the unendurable suffering our people have to suffer, as an order of the day. Arrest, imprisonment, torture, rape, murder, disappearance and clandestine burial in unknown graves form a vicious circle in which the lives of our people is enmeshed. Yet, our people have not lost hope. No measure, however punitive, can withhold their will to resist. Their yearning for freedom remains strong. No aerial bombardment can wipe out their determination to attain their freedom. Our people are used to carrying the cross of suffering. They are used to facing destruction and loss, daily in life. This suffering has further tempered their will to be steadfast in their aspiration. With such impetus, the urge for freedom has gathered momentum as never before.

Facing a great confrontation for such a long period, we have sacrificed so much and fought for so long, for nothing else, but for our people to live in freedom; live with dignity and live in peace. We are conducting this struggle with the unrelenting support of the Tamil people, the world over. Besides, our struggle does not contravene the national interest, geo-political interest or economic interest of any outside country. The inherent aspirations of our people do not in any way hamper the national interests of any country or people. At the same time, it may be noted that during the long history of our struggle, we have not conducted any act of aggression against any member state of the international community.

Our freedom movement, as well as our people, have always wished to maintain cordiality with the international community as well as neighbouring India. With this in view, we wish to create a viable environment and enhance friendship. We wish to express our goodwill and are looking forward to the opportunity to build a constructive relationship. Cordially I invite those countries that have banned us, to understand the deep aspirations and friendly overtures of our people, to remove their ban on us and to recognise our just struggle.

Today, there are great changes taking place in India. The dormant voices in support of our struggle are re-emerging aloud again. There are also indications of our struggle becoming accepted there. The positive change in environment gives us courage to seek renewal of our relationship with the Indian super power. The earlier approach and interventions of India were injurious to the people of Tamil Eelam, as well as to their struggle. The racist Sinhala state, with its intrigues, conspired to bring enmity between our freedom movement and the earlier Indian administration. The conflict arising out of this environment aggravated into a major war.

It was because we were firmly committed to our conviction and freedom for our people, that friction erupted between our movement and India. However, at no stage did we ever consider India as an enemy force. Our people always consider India as our friend. They have great expectations that the Indian super power will take a positive stand on our national question.

Notwithstanding the dividing sea, Tamil Nadu, with its perfect understanding of our plight, has taken heart to rise on behalf of our people at this hour of need. This timely intervention has gratified the people of Tamil Eelam and our freedom movement and given us a sense of relief. I wish to express my love and gratitude at this juncture to the people and leaders of Tamil Nadu and the leaders of India for the voice of support and love they have extended. I would cordially request them to raise their voice firmly in favour of our struggle for a Tamil Eelam state, and to take appropriate and positive measures to remove the ban which remains an impediment to an amicable relationship between India and our movement.

My beloved people!

No great changes have taken place in the Sinhala political panorama. Politics there has developed into the form of a demonic war. In a country that worships the Buddha who preached love and kindness, racist hatred and war-mongering vie with one another. We can listen only to the throbs on war-drums. No sane voice is being raised either to abandon war or to seek peaceful resolution to the conflict. In Sinhalam, from politicians to spiritual leaders, from journalists to ordinary people, their voice is raised only in support of the war.

The Tamil Eelam nation does not want war. It does not favour violence. It is the Sinhala nation that waged war on our nation which had earlier adopted the path of ahimsa and asked for justice through peaceful means. When the SAARC leaders of our region met in Colombo, we expressed our goodwill and declared suspension of hostility. On the contrary, it was the Sinhala nation that rejected our overture, ridiculed us and continued with the offensive. It is the Sinhala nation that has laid down unacceptable and insulting conditions. It is the Sinhala nation that is continuing with the war.

The Sinhala nation is conducting a major war of genocide against us in our land, the news about which is denied to the outside world. Successive Sinhala regimes have hoodwinked the international community with a series of deceptions. Commencing with the round table conference, the list of deceit has now stretched to include the All Party conference of late. During this period the international community remains cheated. The Tamil national question was also left to drag on with no positive resolution offered. Meanwhile, the Sinhala nation has used its armed forces to set the Tamil land, ablaze. It has wiped out peaceful life on Tamil land, making Tamils destitute, displaced and wandering. Sinhalam has refused to offer the basic rights of the Tamils, split the Tamil land into two, installed anti-Tamil armed groups in the seat of administration while conducting a tyrannical military rule. It is now continuing with the war, offering to submit its plan to offer a solution only after the LTTE is defeated. Does Sinhala nation want to offer a solution only after the Tamils are suppressed and killed? Does it want to wipe out the true representatives of the Tamils and their bargaining power before offering a solution? The Sinhala nation is refusing to acknowledge the historic homeland of the Tamils. In such a situation, how will it offer a just solution to our people?

When it comes to the Tamil national question, the Sinhala nation is adopting only one policy. It is obviously a policy of suppression. Even the tinge of hope our people had that the Sinhala nation will abandon its path of violence and offer justice, has now evaporated. No political transformation has taken place during the last sixty years in the Sinhala nation. Therefore, hoping it will happen in the future is futile. Our people are not ready to trust Sinhala nation again and get cheated.

It is true Tamil Eelam is a small nation on the globe. However it is a nation with great potential. It is a nation with a characteristic individuality. It has a distinctive language, cultural heritage and history. Sinhala seeks with its military might to destroy all these. It seeks to destroy Tamil sovereignty and replace it with Sinhala sovereignty. As the freedom movement of the people of Tamil Eelam we will never, ever allow Sinhala occupation or Sinhala domination of our homeland.

Whatever challenges confront us, whatever contingencies we encounter, whatever forces stand on our path, we will still continue with our struggle for the freedom of the Tamil people. On the path shown by history, on the command of the circumstances of today, we will continue with our struggle till alien Sinhala occupation of our land is removed,

At this historic juncture, I would request Tamils, in whatever part of the world that they may live in to raise their voices, firmly and with determination, in support of the freedom struggle of their brothers and sisters in Tamil Eelam. I would request them from my heart to strengthen the hands of our freedom movement and continue to extend their contributions and help. I would also take this opportunity to express my affection and my praise to our Tamil youth living outside our homeland for the prominent and committed role they play in actively contributing towards the liberation of our nation.

Let us all make a firm and determined resolution to follow fully the path of our heroes, who, in pursuit of our aspiration for justice and freedom, sacrificed themselves and have become a part of the history of our land and our people.

(the end)