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**urgent Press statement**  
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**Mass Killing Of Children In An Orphanage In Sri Lanka:  
Failure To Act Constitutes A Violation Of Duties**

The International Federation of Tamils most strongly condemns the deliberate aerial bombardment of an orphanage for girls in that took place at Chencholai Children's Home in Vallipunam in Manthuvil District in the north of the island of Ceylon. The most recent figures indicate 61 girls killed and 129 wounded. The girls from the area had congregated at the Children's Home for a course in first aid.

Regarding this attack, official spokesman of the Sri Lankan Govt., Minister Keheliya Rambukwella, defending the bombardment, insisted the target was, beyond doubt, an LTTE military training camp and those killed were military trainees. However, the SLMM official who personally visited the scene of carnage vouched he could find no trace of anything military about the place. The UNICEF Representative who visited the place was of the same opinion. The TRO officials pointed out that the land as well as the Institution were registered as belonging to the Orphanage and the Diplomatic community was also fully aware of it.

At the same time, Sri Lanka military force at Jaffna fired on St. Philip Neri's Church, Allipity, killing more than 15 persons and severely injuring over 100.

These atrocities follow on the heels of the cold-blooded assassination on 8 August 2006 of 17 aid workers from the French NGO Action Contra le Faim (Action Against Hunger) – a war crime prompting three independent experts of the UN (Hilani – rights defenders; Alston—extra-judicial, arbitrary and summary executions; Ziegler – the right to food) to issue a strong statement on 11 August 2006 condemning this as a "serious violation of the basic principles of human rights and humanitarian law and the Declaration of Human Rights Defenders." We have provided information of other grave breaches that have occurred in the past few weeks by the Sri Lankan military forces against the Tamil civilian population. Other atrocities are taking place as we write this: we are simply unable to keep up with the attacks that have now spiralled out of control.

Because the verified examples of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions at the hands of the Sri Lankan government force all parties to the Geneva Conventions to take requisite action in conformity with Common Article 1, we await action from UN human rights bodies and Member States. As in the situation in Lebanon, it is not sufficient for human rights bodies, Member States of the United Nations, or High Contracting Parties of the Geneva Conventions to remain silent. Failure to act when on notice by the ICRC, the UNHCR and UNICEF as well as numerous NGOs would itself constitute a violation of the duties of human rights bodies, and would indicate that the attempts to reform UN action on human rights have failed.

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