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urgent Press statement
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Sri Lanka: Military Annexation Of Sampur – A Complete Collapse Of CFA?

The International Federation of Tamils (IFT) expresses its strong disappointment at the failure of the International Community (IC) to take appropriate action to arrest the precarious situation prevailing in Sri Lanka. This was caused by the recent military action of the State Armed Forces, culminating in the annexation of Sampur in the Trincomalee district. The annexation is a deliberate violation of the line of divide as clearly provided and agreed in the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA), with the possibility of causing a complete collapse, unless urgent measures are taken by the IC to arrest the situation and rectify the wrong done.

IFT points out that the LTTE, on its part, is likely to count this as a release from its obligation to abide by the Agreement. Although the Facilitators, SLMM, the EU and Co-Chairs stand ignored, insulted and defiled by the action of Sri Lanka, the International Community has neither condemned nor taken any action against the perpetrator.

The collapse of the CFA was not only gradual but also was coolly orchestrated. Since April this year, aerial bombardment of Tamil civilian settlements, defying UN stipulations, was conducted. Taking IC's silence as complicity, aerial bombardment gathered momentum, destroying village after village. Mavilaru water dispute, was on the point of being amicably settled by the LTTE and the SLMM when the State armed forces commenced attack on LTTE controlled area, causing heavy displacement and killing with impunity. The IC's silence, was again misconstrued as complicity and the State took bold to wage war.

IFT wishes to point out to the IC comprising the EU, Co-Chairs, Peace Facilitator and the SLMM, that it failed in its duty to take action against Sri Lanka from the start when it commenced its aerial bombardment of civilian targets in the LTTE controlled areas, violating the CFA. It is the lackadaisical attitude of the IC that encouraged Sri Lanka to commit a heinous crime against the Tamil nation and given courage to the perpetrator to break the CFA, gradually leading it to its collapse as seen today.

IFT also wishes to point out that the SLMM committed to monitoring CFA violations was more involved in monitoring humanitarian violations than the task it was assigned for. In no case of CFA violations, was the SLMM bold enough to name State as the perpetrator. It always adopted a safe path by calling both parties to adhere to the rule, thus allowing the state transgressor to violate with impunity.

It would be inappropriate if we do not point out that the EU ban, criminalizing the LTTE and the Tamils, was the primary as well as the remote cause for the collapse of the CFA, as was rightly pointed out by the outgoing Head of the SLMM, Ulf Henricssen and the Norwegian Special Peace Envoy, John Hanson Bauer.

Finally, the IFT reiterates its condemnation of the arbitrary annexation of Sampur and calls upon the IC to take right and fair action to bring Sri Lanka to book and save the CFA from collapse.

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