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May 8, 2009

H.E Mr. Yukio Takasu
Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
The Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations
866 UN Plaza, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10017

Dear Excellency:

Rally on Friday, May 8 at UN Mission

As we gather here today, we, the Tamil American community and our friends in the United States of America, join together in requesting your support to save the lives of our Tamil brethren in Sri Lanka. We stand together, united in our desire to see an end to the suffering of the people of Sri Lanka and yet recognize that the overwhelming burden of death, loss and suffering have been shouldered by Eelam Tamils.

We believe that no military solution can bring about a true resolution to this conflict and that when a state uses its military force against civilians, there is an international obligation to take action. We stand here today to affirm the friendship Eelam Tamils have towards Japan, and we call upon the Government of Japan to do all in its power to prevent military action against Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka. We also subscribe to the position of the Western nations such as the U.S., France, U.K. and Canada that an immediate unconditional cease-fire is a first and foremost step to address the urgent humanitarian catastrophe. Furthermore, we urge Japan to work toward a humanitarian intervention to save those in grave danger.

We thank Japan and its citizens for their assistance for the Tamil IDPs and are grateful for your generosity to those in need.

Background

Since Sri Lanka's independence in 1948, successive governments have adopted policies marginalizing Tamils politically, socially, culturally and economically. Riots and pogroms targeting the Tamil community over many years have also taken place, in which the Government of Sri Lanka was either complicit or neglected to take action. While Tamils took part in peaceful demonstrations modeling the civil disobedience of Mahatma

Gandhi, Tamil elected officials worked with the government to attain meaningful power-sharing agreements, efforts that ultimately have failed. Overall, the failure over 30 years to address the grievances of the Tamil community and find a lasting solution gave rise to Tamil militancy and, finally, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Current Situation

Since the Government of Sri Lanka formally withdrew from a 5 year ceasefire in January 2008, the island has been plunged into a wide array of human rights and humanitarian crises as a counter-insurgency campaign has been used as a cover for an attack on the entire Tamil population. To date, over 124,000 Tamils have been killed, 1 million have fled the country and hundreds of thousands are internally displaced. Every single Tamil on the island has been displaced at least once, with whole regions being ethnically cleansed. In predominantly Tamil areas, civilians have been subjected to indiscriminate attacks, including aerial bombardment of civilian populations and targeted assassinations, including the massacre of humanitarian workers, journalists, human rights advocates and politicians. Abductions, enforced “disappearances,” arbitrary arrests and detention, and suppression of the media contribute to a widespread culture of fear and insecurity. In the North, the humanitarian situation is especially grave at the moment, as the expulsion of humanitarian organizations in September 2008 have left thousands of IDPs, the majority of which are Tamil, without access to lifesaving assistance. Moreover, an embargo on basic food and medicine has left over thousands civilians suffering from malnutrition and insufficient medical care.

As we reach a crucial stage in the war where human rights organizations are labeling Sri Lanka as a country on high alert for genocide, we look to Japan for support in important international venues, especially the United Nations and multilateral financial institutions..

Sri Lanka's Failed Democracy

Sri Lanka as a democracy has not only failed to uphold the basic principles of democracy, but bears responsibility for the oppression and genocide of the Tamil community. If a political solution to the conflict is to be found, it is imperative that we see the war in its historical context. Whereas Japan was able to realize that decentralization is the only way to enhance her democracy, Sri Lanka has and continues to legalize and institutionalize a policy that incorporates the needs of the majority Sinhalese community before those of others. As history bears witness, the Government of Sri Lanka has been unable and unwilling to provide any form of autonomy to the Tamils, and the current President bears no exception to this claim.

Recommendations

- **We ask that Japan halt all non-essential aid to Sri Lanka**
- **We urge Japan to intervene on humanitarian grounds to initiate a ceasefire agreement and mediate peace talks.**
- **We urge Japan to facilitate the management of the camps in Vavuniya by U.N. agencies.**

- **We also urge Japan to ensure that international monitors are present at the screening points.**
- **We also urge Japan to ensure that civilians in Vavuniya camp who have relatives and friends outside the camp, be permitted to leave the camp.**

Sincerely,

[signature]

Director

Cc: H.E. Mr. Norihiro Okuda
H.E. Mr. Shigeki Sumi