

21 September 2012,
Mullaitivu

Memo from the Keppapulavu people to the International Community.

We the people of Keppapulavu of the Mullaitivu district displaced from our village for more than three years since the end of the war now, having lost all confidence in the Government of Sri Lanka's empty promises, write seeking your intervention to enable us to return to our homes,

Keppapulavu is a small village in the Divisional Secretariat Division of Maritimpattu in the Mullaitivu District consisting of roughly 350 families. We were displaced during the war and most of us, to date, live in the Anandakumaraswamy section of the Menik Farm camp in Chettykulum, Vavuniya and the rest of us live with host families mostly in Mullaitivu but also in other parts of the Northern Province. Those of us who live in camps are required to get passes from the Sri Lankan Armed Forces manning the Menik farm camp to travel outside of the camps. The inconvenience of the camps in Chettykulum are well known and we have been living in these camps for more than 40 months to date.

The military establishment and Governmental authorities have been as of recent times insisting that we 'resettle' elsewhere. We have steadfastly refused to resettle anywhere but in our native villages. Owing to our determined stance to return to our native village, governmental authorities have been using various covert and overt means of undue influence and pressure on us to take up on the offer of alternative lands. One such means of pressure recently exerted on us is the threat that the school operating within the Menik Farm Camp will be closed down soon. We fear that in the near future rations provided to us might also be cut off. Our situation is extremely dire in that we are struggling to even meet our daily existential needs.

We have no faith in the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission. We are also frustrated that we continue to linger in camps despite six months having passed since the passage of the Geneva Resolution. We believe that the Government of Sri Lanka does not have the willingness to resettle us in our native village. We understand that a huge military base has been built in our village and that the GOSL has no intention of resettling us in Keppapulavu. Hence we seek the urgent intervention of the international community to help us resettle in our native villages at the earliest opportunity.

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