

# TAMIL ACTION FRONT, NEW ZEALAND

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## URGENT MEDIA RELEASE

We are constrained to seek a clarification from those few who are waxing eloquently on the need to study and gain from the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa vis-à-vis the LLRC recommendations of Sri Lanka.

Reconciliation has a pre-requisite of the party that inflicted some wrong having to accept the same and repenting for it and, agreeing to work on an agenda, for preventing a repetition of such wrongs in the future and, building further on peace for development. Peace cannot be built on development, when the bruises of harm remain unhealed and more so when such development does not have the affected people as the beneficiaries – making them labourers, coolies and underdogs in the development process, will only worsen and infest the wounds of harm inflicted. Any thinking devoid of this stark fact is a wasteful exercise.

The South African experience is unique. Through a protracted process, including violence, it was finally agreed that the British colonial masters will abdicate the reins of power and allow the South Africans to rule their country. In any struggle for equality violence becomes an inseparable component. Even in the Indian struggle despite Mahathma Gandhiji's non violence that was uppermost, violence was inextricably entwined. Even the 1948 UN Charter on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in its preamble says:

***“Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,”***

Here, **revolt** does not mean marching through the streets with their hands tied behind and mouths tied with black clothes. Revolt, as the term implies, does not reject violence altogether and it is not violence altogether, either. It is the dark side of history that the post 9/11 situation revisionism by George Bush Jr. plunged the world into a chaotic situation costing millions of lives. The world, now repents for it and, has begun to think on evaluating contextualised situations

In South Africa, with the transfer of power from the Colonial Masters to the people of South Africa, the elected leader of South Africa, the respected Nelson Mandela, the living Mahathma said that what South Africa fought against was oppression, tyranny, subjugation, discrimination and all the side effects of all these sins against humanity. He said the new regime will halt all that and, forgive the perpetrators and usher in an era of mutual respect and understanding and make way to eventuate peace for the development of the country. As everyone knows repentance and forgiveness must go hand in hand in deeds, not words, to eventuate reconciliation and peace so fundamental for development. He shunned any revengeful act or retaliatory action. He forgave and forgot when he became the ruler .

Let us not forget what Gothabaya Rajapakse, the defence Secretary told the Officers in the higher echelons of all the Security Services on 15 June 2009 at Kilinochchi. He said that he had structured the Security Forces deployment in the North and East of Sri Lanka so that all future administration of the North and East will be as if under a State of Emergency i.e. absence of Civilian rule or rule conditioned and controlled by Armed Services. There is a video clipping of this address in Sinhala. This is what is happening now.

We see Governor Chandrasiri withdrawing funds allocated to local bodies controlled by TNA and usurping Northern Provincial Council funds allotted for even education for the benefit of militarization. We see Haturusinghe displaying himself as a Chandiya , using his military position. We see young Tamil girls and boys starved of employment and socio economic mobility being recruited under the gorgeous banner of Civil Defence Brigade (to convince the gullible in the international community and the State invitees – journalists and politicians from abroad who are treated with ALL that they NEED who thereafter issue statements that Sri Lanka is a paradise). These youths are employed as garden labourers and cleaners in the houses, camps and usurped farmlands in Vanni and elsewhere. They are paid SLR 18,000.00. This is a big amount. It plainly explains how much is being spent on militarisation. On the other hand people who were either one time LTTE Cadres or supporters are being hauled up, they say over 3000, for what they say, compulsory Army rehabilitation. Some of them have severed their connections

with the LTTE long time ago and are now married with children to look after – a brutal separation of the young ones who need tender care – a violation of the UN protocols on Children’s rights.

We saw only just a few days ago Army rowdyism at the Dhurga Amman Temple and how an irritated Haturusinghe reacted, even accusing eye witness MPs and journalists. We saw how during the last Local Government election campaign days Army rowdyism was let loose at a meeting of the TNA in Alaveddy. We saw how these Army Intelligence men crept into a Peaceful demonstration in Nelliady sometime back and waved Tiger Flags with intent to disturb the peace. We saw how the Zonal Director of Education Sivalingam was slain allegedly by Army Intelligence personnel because he did not allow his students to sing the National Anthem in Sinhala at a Government function.. At the 65th Independence Celebrations in Trincomalie on 4 February 2013, President Rajapakse did not include singing of the National anthem in Tamil which was started in 1948 and was in force until the Rajapakse Brigade took over the regime in Sri Lanka. He also ruled out power devolution to Tamils or regions. He said there will only be one and only one regime Now Army men in uniforms were sent to Schools in Vanni by the Governor or with his blessings to teach Sinhala. It has been stopped when the civil society protested.

The Rajapakse Brigade was able to dance according to their whims and fancies with the total blessings of the Sonia Gandhi Regime in India. The knowledgeability of the Sonia Gandhi regime was exposed when the then Foreign Affairs Minister Mr. S M Krishna speaking on the Sri Lankan issue in Parliament in June 2012 referred to the Tamils of Sri Lanka as “*people of Indian origin resident in Sri Lanka.*” It is a sad reflection of the composition of the bureaucrats in the Indian Ministry of Foreign affairs. How can they find a reasonable solution? They remained silent as enthusing spectators of the trampling and sweeping under the carpet, of both the Indo-Lanka Agreement of 1987 (an International Agreement) and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka made thereunder, by the Rajapakse Brigade. These were achieved by the late Rajiv Gandhiji (though inadequate) on whom an assassination attempt was made by the Sri Lankan Government. He braved the situation as a true Indian and escaped unhurt. It was that Indianness that gave him that courage. Sonia Congress has been taken for a ride by the Rajapakse Brigade and India has now woken up to a no win situation. Nothing is more apt in this situation than the Editorial comment of the **THE HINDU**, Chennai dated 22 February 2013.

*“It took three years for the Rajapaksa government, which first spoke of “zero civilian casualties” to accept that some civilians died, though how many and in what circumstances are still contentious issues. It undertook to implement the recommendations, as advised by the 2012 HRC resolution, of its own [Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission](#), but a “national action plan” towards this end displayed on the government website gives no sign of progress. New Delhi, which worked to tone down the language of last year’s resolution before casting its vote for it, will need to chalk out a more well thought out response to the new photographs than its initial reaction that their “authenticity” needs to be established. Reactions from political parties in Tamil Nadu, and the State government’s decision to cancel the [July Asian athletics meet](#) to avoid hosting Sri Lankan participants indicate that the issue is set to take a toll on the traditionally good ties between people of both countries. Quickly and confidently, before the situation deteriorates, India needs to chart a course that can convince its own people and the international community that it is on the side of what is right and just in this matter, while impressing on Colombo that the issue will not fade away just by stout denial, as it seems to hope”*

Incidentally it may be recalled that THE HINDU was the Indian mouthpiece of the Sinhala regime until recently.

It is clear that it was the new rulers to whom the powers of governance was totally transferred in South Africa who forgave the oppressor and gave equality without revenge. In Sri Lanka, the perpetrator of the brutal Vanni massacre continues without abatement or remorse the genocidal policies against the Tamils – now more virulently through a dangerous policy of destroying the territoriality of the Tamils.

The defense Secretary has called for a referendum on whether the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment is a necessity at all or whether it needs to be trimmed. Incidentally the Divigemuna Law has reduced the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to zero and it was the then Chief Justice’s rejection of this Law, as it was in the Bill form, that enraged the Rajapakse Brigade and led to her uncivilized removal from Office. India was no more than an amused on looker. Will Gothabaya agree to an UN sponsored and monitored referendum on whether the Tamils wish to stay within a regime of religious and racial fanatics? Or even a referendum on the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment? And the amendment that withdrew the number of terms one can be a President? Will he carry out these three referendums as well?

India's continuance of its petting and patting of the Rajapakse Brigade, if not Sinhala regimes, will in no way neutralize the anti Indian venom running through their veins with their blood. Sonia Gandhi regime's policy has successfully created a satellite Chinese State on its southern tip. Sonia Gandhi regime cannot undo this or dislodge the attendant dangers to India's security and the loss of power balance in South Asia and the Indian Ocean. **K M Panikkar's** dream about **India and the Indian Ocean** has been shattered at least by M K Narayan, Shiva Shankar Menon, and Nirupama Menon.

This is the reality. Will those protagonists of the South African experience please explain to the Tamil diaspora at least what they mean – what is it that is so significant for the Tamils to emulate?

Yours Sincerely,

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Co-ordinator.