

**"We strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security."**

**Cf. 2005 World Summit Resolution 60/1 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly**

## **The Terrorists' War against Sri Lanka**



***"There can be no argument that terror in all its manifestations must be fought relentlessly and globally. Gone are the days when a country affected by terror, as my country has been for two decades, can be told by the international community. 'We are sorry about what's happening in your land but there is nothing we can do to help because we have no laws to combat terror'."***

**Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar, Former Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, At the Fifty-Sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York.**

## **Preface**

An increasing number of democratically elected governments including that of Sri Lanka are facing the challenge of terrorism. It grips the world today with its ability to strike at places and times of its choice, with the intent to cause maximum destruction to life and property. The United Nations has identified terrorism as a threat to good governance, the international order and the stability of all states. It is now a global problem and needs a global solution.

For the past three decades, Sri Lanka and its people have suffered the curse of terrorism at the hands of one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations: the ruthless Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, better known as the LTTE or Tamil Tigers. Over the past decades, people of Sri Lanka were compelled to survive in an environment of Tiger initiated war and terror. Oftentimes, their fundamental human rights have been violated but more often than not, their pleas went unheard.

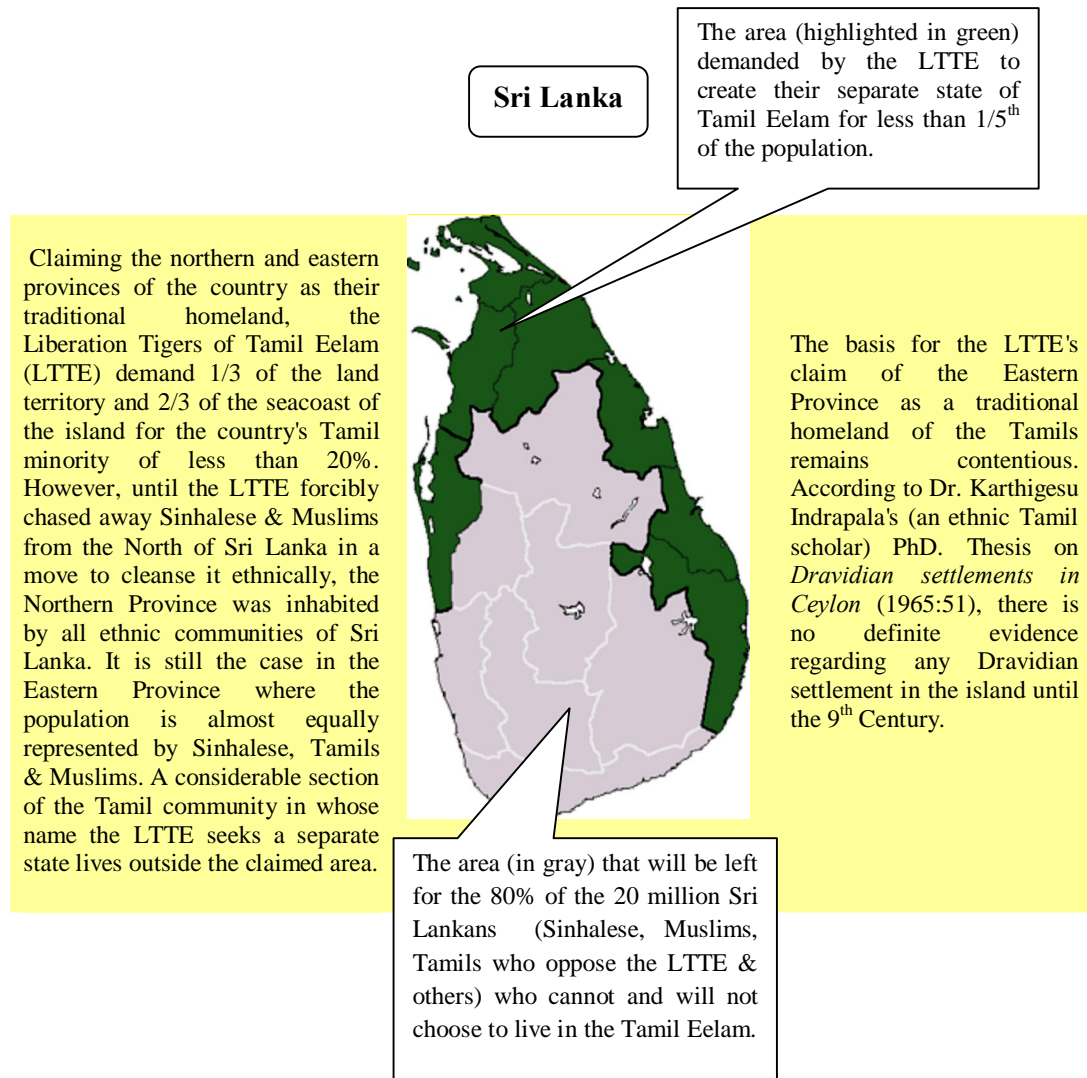
In this document, we present briefly the true nature of the LTTE terrorism that the Sri Lankans have been grappling with for years and the relentless attempts the successive governments made to bring about a negotiated solution to it.

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## Foreword

*"...The whole problem here is not between the Tamil people and the Sinhala people or the Muslim people. They still live very much in harmony and don't forget a very large number of Tamil people live in the Western Province and the Central province and elsewhere, they get on perfectly well with their brothers & sisters of other communities. This is not a people's problem at all. It's not a civil war..."*

-Late Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar,<sup>1</sup>Former Minister of Foreign Affairs:BBC's "Hardtalk"



<sup>1</sup> The Former Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar was just one among many internationally renowned Tamil intellectuals who were mercilessly killed by the LTTE, the so-called liberators of the Tamil people. Mr. Kadirgamar fought tirelessly in the international arena to liberate his country and his people from the iron grip of the ruthless LTTE terrorists. He was killed because of his because his open criticism of the atrocities of the LTTE.

## **The LTTE in brief**

*(For further information, please see the appendix 'The LTTE in Brief')*

- Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), commonly known as the Tamil Tigers, is a terrorist organization that has been waging a violent secessionist campaign against the Sri Lankan State since the 1970s. Headed by the ruthless Velupillai Prabhakaran, Tigers fight for a separate Tamil state called the Tamil Eelam in the north and east of Sri Lanka.
- The LTTE initially operated in cooperation with other Tamil militant groups but later broke away from them and hunted them down. It thus consolidated their position as the main militant group fighting for the cause of Tamil Eelam.
- Though the LTTE claims to carry out a number of civilian functions in the north of the island, especially the regions lying around the cities of Kilinochchi and Mulathivu, it is the Sri Lankan government which supplies commodities to people in the LTTE held areas and pays many civil servants working there.
- The LTTE is notorious for conscripting child soldiers. According to UNICEF, the LTTE is known to be the world's worst perpetrator of child soldier recruitment and has recruited, since 2001, a total number of 5,794 child soldiers. It also has a large number of female recruits who are often used as suicide bombers. Recruits in the LTTE are instructed to be prepared to die for the cause, and are issued with a cyanide capsule to be swallowed in the case of capture.
- Prabhakaran is known to be a dictatorial leader who does not tolerate dissent. He openly suppresses all who oppose his ideas. In March 2004, in the biggest show of dissent from within the organization a senior LTTE commander named Colonel Karuna broke away from the group and formed his own political party (TMVP) amid allegations that the northern commanders were overlooking the needs of the eastern Tamils.
- International experts have long suspected the existence of connections between the LTTE and other internationally designated terrorist organizations including al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Security experts on international terrorism have designated the LTTE as the mastermind that sets the pattern for organizations like al-Qaeda to pursue. Based on close comparisons, they have claimed that al-Qaeda has copied most of its terror tactics from the LTTE.

*(Please see the appendix 'The LTTE in Brief' for more details)*

- The LTTE is labeled as a terrorist organization because it does not have respect for human rights and because it does not adhere to the standards of conduct expected of a resistance movement or what might be called "freedom fighters". The LTTE kills innocent civilians, recruits child soldiers, has been responsible for assassination of political figures and non-military officials, and extensively uses suicide bombers.

- The LTTE has attacked non-military targets including commuter trains and buses, farming villages, temples and mosques resulting in thousands of civilian deaths (including children, women, and religious priests). It has also attacked convoys of foreign diplomats.


*(Please see the appendix 'The LTTE in Brief' for more details)*

- The LTTE has long been accused of carrying out assassinations of political rivals and opponents, be they Sinhalese or Tamils, living in Sri Lanka or abroad. They have killed one Sri Lankan President and wounded another in the eye.
- One of their most famous victims was the former Indian premier Rajeev Gandhi. Indian courts have issued international warrants to arrest both Velupillai Prabhakaran and its intelligence chief Pottu Amman in connection with the killing of Rajeev Gandhi.
- The LTTE's alleged victims have included unarmed Tamil politicians and civilian moderates who sought a peaceful solution to the Sri Lankan crisis.



Neelan  
Tiruchelvam

- The LTTE has frequently used suicide bombers as a tactic. They pioneered the use of concealed suicide bomb vests, which are now used by many other organizations worldwide. According to Jane's Information Group, between 1980 and 2000 LTTE had carried out a total of 168 suicide attacks on civilians and military targets. The number of suicide attacks easily exceeded the combined total of Hezbollah and Hamas suicide attacks conducted out during the same period.

-  The LTTE has been blamed for forcibly removing (or "ethnically cleansing") Sinhalese and Muslim inhabitants from areas under its control, including the use of violence against those who refuse to leave. Most notably, the LTTE forcibly expelled the entire Muslim population of Jaffna with two hours notice in 1990. The LTTE are also accused of organizing massacres of Sinhala villagers who settled in the north-east under the dry lands policy.

- The LTTE have executed prisoners of war in spite of a declaration by the LTTE in 1988 that it would abide by the Geneva Conventions. Notably, the LTTE massacred most of the 400 to 600 police officers captured after their surrender to the LTTE in 1990. The LTTE also executed 200 Sri Lankan soldiers captured during an attack on the Pooneryn army camp, and hundreds of soldiers who had surrendered during the attack on the Mulaitivu army camp.
- The LTTE's need for resources is mostly fulfilled by the Tamils who reside outside Sri Lanka. There are charges that the LTTE coerces Tamil expatriates to give it money, by threatening the safety of their relatives or property in areas of Sri Lanka under its control.

*(Please see the appendix 'The LTTE in Brief' for more details).*

- One factor that has benefited the LTTE greatly has been its sophisticated international support network. A significant portion of the funding obtained by the LTTE is obtained through criminal activities, involving sea piracy, human smuggling, drug trafficking and gunrunning. LTTE has also been accused of other crimes such as social security fraud, counterfeit currency trading, satellite piracy, credit card fraud, passport forgery, pilferage of Tsunami donations and organized crimes in a number of countries.

*(Please see the appendix 'The LTTE in Brief' for more details).*

- The LTTE operates within two separate levels in their activities in the North America and Europe. The Tiger operatives are engaged in propaganda and lobbying aspects, as well as coordinating a myriad of fronts and charities to raise cash for the war. The Western countries are the main territory for fund raising activities of the LTTE.
- As of May, 2007 at least 32 countries have listed the LTTE as a terrorist organization.
- Canada does not grant residency to LTTE members on the grounds that they have participated in crimes against humanity.
- The UN has also passed Resolution 1373, asking member countries to identify and limit activities of any organization that carries out terrorist activities. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan also suggested that the LTTE should face travel curbs and other penalties such as arms embargoes and financial restrictions.

## War and Peace

Seeing the grave damage that the conflict has been causing the country and its people (Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and other ethnic groups alike), successive Sri Lankan governments from 1985 tried to come to a negotiated settlement with the LTTE & other Tamil political parties. They were well aware of the fact that an eventual military victory over the Tamil terrorists will not remedy the cause of the conflict. On many an occasion, the international community helped bring the LTTE to the negotiating table. However, due to the LTTE's uncompromising stand and the obvious lack of commitment to a peaceful solution, all peace talks held so far have yielded almost no convincing result.

### Peace attempts made by the Government of Sri Lanka (1985-2006)

(For more information, please see the appendix 'Peace attempts made by the Government of Sri Lanka (1985-2006)')

Thimpu talks



- **July 1985: First ever peace talks**

-The first-ever peace talks between the Sri Lankan government, Tamil militants and Tamil political parties were held in Thimpu. The militant Tamil groups urged the government to accept the right to self-determination and the recognition of the north and east as the traditional Tamil homeland. The government rejected these demands.

- **July 1987: Peace accord with India**



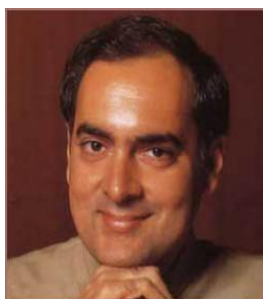
J. R. Jayewardene

-The then Indian Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi and Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayewardene signed the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord in Colombo. Apart from the LTTE, several other militant groups demobilized, formed democratic political parties and entered the mainstream to secure their aspirations. The LTTE however resisted disarmament attempts by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF)



IPKF

and it resulted in the death of 1500 Indian soldiers and an eventual withdrawal of the IPKF in 1990.



Rajeev Gandhi

-The LTTE assassinated Indian Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi by a suicide attack on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1991.

- **April 1989 - June 1990: Direct communication with the LTTE**

-The government engaged in direct communications with the LTTE leadership in seeking a peaceful settlement for the conflict.

- **February 1990: Peace talks with President Premadasa-Failure**

-Formal peace talks between the government and the LTTE commenced at the Colombo Hilton but failed due to mutual distrust and accusations that both sides arming themselves while talking peace. President Premadasa, who took the initiative to solve the issue of north and east through negotiations in 1990s, was also assassinated by an LTTE suicide bomber in 01<sup>st</sup> May 1993.



Ranasinghe Premadasa



Chandrika Kumaratunga

- **October 1994: Peace talks with President Kumaratunga**

-Newly elected President Chandrika Kumaratunga, initiated peace talks with the LTTE. However, this effort did not bear fruit either.

- **January 1995: Attempt at cessation of hostilities- Failure**

-The Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE agreed to a cessation of hostilities as a preliminary step to a government-initiated plan for peace negotiations. But, in April 1995, the LTTE unilaterally resumed hostilities with an attack on Trincomalee naval base in the east of the island and carried out an attempt to assassinate President Chandrika Kumaratunga.

-The government then adopted a policy of military engagement with the Tigers. Government forces liberated Jaffna from the LTTE control by mid-1995. An LTTE counteroffensive begun in October 1999 reversed most government gains. Heavy fighting continued until 2001.

- **December 2001: Unilateral cease-fires by both parties**

-Following the election of the new government, the LTTE and the government declared unilateral cease-fires.

- **February 2002: CFA through Norwegian mediation-not effective**

-The Government and the LTTE signed a Cease-fire Agreement (CFA) with Norwegian facilitation and peace talks began in December 2002. After three rounds, peace talks broke down on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2003 as the LTTE announced that they were suspending the talks due to their displeasure at the handling of some critical issues.

-The LTTE continued extortions both nationally and internationally and strengthened themselves militarily by smuggling in arms and ammunition, forcibly recruiting child soldiers, and engaging in the killings of members of rival Tamil and government intelligence agents.

- **8<sup>th</sup> April 2004: Offer to find a negotiated settlement-Rejected**

-The parliamentary election: victory for governing party People's Liberation Front with Mahinda Rajapakse appointed as Prime Minister. The new government expressed its desire to continue the peace process and to find a negotiated settlement to the conflict.

-Split between the northern and eastern wings of the LTTE due to the defection by the eastern commander of the LTTE (Col. Karuna) and 5,000 of his eastern cadres. The breakaway group later formed a political party known as the TMVP & is hoping to contest in future elections.

-Meanwhile, the LTTE continued to kill political opponents and government intelligence officers. They accused the government of supporting paramilitary groups against them: i.e. Karuna group.

-The cease-fire largely held through this turmoil, although the situation was complicated.

### **26<sup>th</sup> December 2004: Tsunami**

-The Indian Ocean tsunami hit Sri Lanka, killing more than 30,000 people, and leaving many hundreds more homeless. Aid poured in from around the world, but disagreements arose over the modalities of aid distribution in the LTTE controlled areas.

- **24<sup>th</sup> June 2005: P-TOMS agreement- ineffective**

The government and the LTTE agreed on the Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS), but it was denounced by the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and the JVP. However, immediately following the tsunami there was a marked decrease in violence in the North.



Lakshman Kadirgamar

### **12<sup>th</sup> August 2005: Assassination of the Foreign minister**

-An LTTE sniper assassinated Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar who was an ethnic Tamil.

- **November 2005: President Rajapakse's invitation for unconditional peace talks-Ignored by LTTE**



Mahinda Rajapakse

- Presidential election: the LTTE enforced a voting prohibition in areas under its control. The newly elected president Mahinda Rajapakse offered to hold unconditional peace talks with the LTTE.

-The LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran stated in his annual address that the Tigers would "renew their struggle" in 2006 and days after, a new round of violence erupted.

-Beginning in **December 2005:**

Increased guerilla activity in the north-east including claymore attacks (which killed 150 government troops), clashes between the Sea Tigers and the Sri Lanka Navy, and the killings of sympathizers of the government.

-The co-chairs of the Tokyo Donor conference called on both parties to return to the negotiating table.

- **7<sup>th</sup> February 2006: Agreement on peace talks**

-Both parties agreed to have new talks in Geneva, Switzerland on 22<sup>nd</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> February.

- **10<sup>th</sup> April 2006: Postponement of talks and resumption of attacks by LTTE**



Peace Talks - Geneva 1

-The LTTE resumed attacks against the military and called for a postponement of the Geneva talks until 24<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

- **20<sup>th</sup> April 2006: LTTE officially quit peace talks**

-The LTTE officially pulled out of peace talks indefinitely and continued their attacks in the north and the east.

- **23<sup>rd</sup> April 2006:**

-Six Sinhalese rice farmers were massacred by the LTTE.

- **25<sup>th</sup> April 2006:**

- The attempted assassination of the commander of the Sri Lanka Army, Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka by a pregnant LTTE Black Tiger suicide bomber.

-For the first time since the 2001 cease-fire, the Sri Lanka Air Force carried out aerial assaults on rebel positions in the north-eastern part of the island.

- **29<sup>th</sup> May 2006: Proscription of the LTTE by the EU**

-The European Union proscribed the LTTE. It resulted in the freezing of LTTE assets in EU member states.

- **8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June 2006:**

-Further peace talks were scheduled in Oslo, Norway, but were canceled when the LTTE refused to meet directly with the government delegation claiming its fighters were not been allowed safe passage to travel to the talks. They demanded that the SLMM remove any monitors from EU-member states. Norwegian mediator Erik Solheim told journalists that the LTTE should take direct responsibility for the collapse of the talks.

- **15<sup>th</sup> June 2006:**

-The massacre of Kebithigollewa: The LTTE attacked a bus killing at least 64 Sinhalese civilians, which included mostly children.



- **21 July 2006:**

-The LTTE closed the sluice gates of the Mavil Aru reservoir and cut the water supply to 15,000 villagers in the Government controlled areas.

The massacre of  
Kebithigollewa

- **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2006**

-The LTTE attacked Muttur and then moved in gaining control of some parts of the town. The military retaliated.

- **6<sup>th</sup> August 2006:**

-17 persons working for the international French charity Action Against Hunger (ACF) in Muttur were found executed.

- **12<sup>th</sup> August 2006:**

-Assassination of Mr. Kethesh Loganathan, a prominent and well respected Tamil Human rights and peace activist, the former deputy secretary General of the Peace Secretariat.



Kethesh Loganathan

### 14<sup>th</sup> August 2006:



-A claymore attack on the convoy carrying the Pakistani High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Bashir Wali Mohamed. Ambassador escaped unhurt but seven others were killed. The LTTE are strongly believed to have carried out the attack.

Claymore attack on the convoy carrying the Pakistani High Commissioner to Sri Lanka

### 15<sup>th</sup> August 2006:

-Following heavy fighting with the rebels, government troops gained full control of the Mavil Aru reservoir.



Sluice gate closure at Mavil Aru

### 17<sup>th</sup> August 2006:



-LTTE Sea Tiger cadres attacked the Dakshina naval base in the southern port city of Galle. The LTTE had intensified attacks targeting the naval base in Trincomalee.

LTTE Sea Tiger cadres attacked the Dakshina naval base

### 21<sup>st</sup> August 2006:

-In a speech on 21<sup>st</sup> August, the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse made clear that the government intentions were to neutralize the LTTE threat from Sampur, which is located near the strategic naval base of Trincomalee.

### 28<sup>th</sup> August 2006:

-The Sri Lankan military launched an assault on the LTTE camps in Sampur and the adjoining Kaddaiparichchan and Thoppor areas to retake the territory.

-LTTE declared that if the offensive continued, the cease-fire would be officially over.

### • 28-29 October 2006:

-Despite these incidents, both parties agreed to unconditionally attend peace talks in Geneva on 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> October. However, the peace talks broke down due to disagreements over the reopening of the key A9 highway, which is the link between Jaffna and government, controlled areas in the south.



Peace Talks - Geneva 2

-The government decided to drive out the LTTE out of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka and to free the 35,000 civilians who were used as human shields in the areas controlled by the LTTE.

-LTTE cadres carried out two bus bombings in the south of the country killing 21 civilians.

### January 2007:

-After months of heavy fighting, Vakarai, one of the eastern strongholds of the LTTE was liberated by the government troops.

-Tamil Tiger rebels launched their first-ever air attack, which targeted the Katunayake Air Force base adjacent to Bandaranike International Air Port by the end of January 2007.

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2007:**

-LTTE killed six Sinhalese tsunami aid workers in the eastern district of Batticaloa.

**2<sup>nd</sup> April 2007:**

-Suspected LTTE cadres set off a bomb aboard a civilian bus in Ampara killing 17 people including children.

**11<sup>th</sup> July 2007:**

-The Army's capture of the last eastern stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam at Thoppigala.

## After peace talks...

*"I have to take a moment here to congratulate the Government on its continued restraint, despite the recent provocative actions by the LTTE (...) There can be a role for the LTTE in future development of Sri Lanka, but only if it returns to the peace table, renounces terrorism in word and deed and become a responsible participant in Sri Lanka's future, And this will lead to a better life for the Tamils and all Sri Lankans in the North and East (...) Through our military training and assistance programs, including efforts to help with counterterrorism activities and block illegal financial transactions, we are helping to shape the ability of the Sri Lankan Government to protect*

**Peace and Prosperity: US Policy Goals in Sri Lanka: Address delivered by Ambassador Jeffrey Lunstead to the American Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka, January 9, 2006**

*"The Sri Lankan government itself, under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapakse, has reiterated the government's commitment "maximum devolution" for the Tamil community (...) If there is to be any progress to be made towards peace in Sri Lanka, then there has to be an end to terrorism. This is in the hands of Tamil Tigers. And the Tigers' ability to exist rests, in turn, on its financing. Simply putting legislation in place to curb this money won't do the trick. Only taught international action will reduce Tigers ability to sustain its campaign of violence and bring it back to the negotiating table. The People of Sri Lanka deserve no less..."*

***Stop the Tigers- Geoffrey Van Orden,  
The Wall Street Journal Europe, July 25 2006***

*"All hopes that the tigers can now be persuaded to continue to restraint or look for ways to resume the talks mediated by Norway now seem unrealistic. There was probably never any serious intention by the Tigers' leader Velupillai Prabhakaran to abandon violence or enter a dialogue that could have led to a political solution on the Island that would have marginalized the –cult like influence of this malign figure"*

***Tiger Terror-Times on  
line October 19, 2006***

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*"Reaffirming that acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, threatening territorial integrity, security of States and destabilizing legitimately constituted Governments, and that the international community should take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism."*

**United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** adopted by the General Assembly on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006



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