

## AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION OF TAMIL ASSOCIATIONS INC.

PO Box 382, Mawson, ACT 2607, Australia

E-mail: [chair.afta@gmail.com](mailto:chair.afta@gmail.com)

**Media Release**

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### *A Call for Urgent Action to Prevent Genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka*

The Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations (AFTA), the peak body representing the Tamil Australians of Sri Lankan descent in Australia, would like to condemn in the strongest possible terms the genocidal attacks carried out by the Sri Lankan security forces on the Tamil citizens of that country.

While we were celebrating Australia day in the country of our refuge on Monday, our Tamil brethren left behind in the northern region of Sri Lanka were subjected to the most inhumane artillery barrage at a place called Udaiyaarkaddu, in the battle zone in the Wanni area. Udaiyaarkaddu was declared by the Sri Lankan Security Forces (SLSF) a few days back as one of the few "Civilian Safety Zones".

According to reports from the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO), the only NGO still left behind in this area to help these people; in the last 48 hours over 300 civilians who were awaiting relief and medical assistance within this "Safety Zone" have been killed. Further, several hundreds are bleeding to death and several thousands living in the surrounding areas are injured due to multi-barrel artillery and mortar shelling by the SLSF.

As independent media is prohibited into these areas by the Sri Lankan authorities, the only pictures available are those sent electronically by TRO and other local groups to the Tamil Diaspora TV in Europe, the EURO TV. These could be watched at the following links and one needs patience to watch this as every Tamil in the Diaspora around the globe is trying to watch these:

<http://www.eurotvlive.com/script/viewVideo.asp?videoid=55694947551-09126214655963936977814387734924348884345631265884052750773086310262317387719544506759982573466075541398498>

<http://www.eurotvlive.com/script/viewVideo.asp?videoid=36115815487-09126213539680906686566034737115901811975825813844005060431652661932395972055247012595883487992215928240639>

<http://www.eurotvlive.com/script/viewVideo.asp?videoid=25671593395-0912621705262012922703997197556999554563259427594525570307419736427363206022767753685421274223777643011196>

TRO Wanni is making an **URGENT APPEAL** to the people of Tamil Nadu, the Government of India, the Royal Norwegian Government, the international community, international humanitarian organizations and the United Nations for the immediate delivery of medical supplies and medical teams to the hospitals in the Wanni.

All the civilians were forced to remain in underground bunkers for more than 5 hours on the 26th, according to initial reports from the medical sources housed in the outskirts of Mullaitivu district. The makeshift hospital there was in total disarray as 10 patients were killed and four ambulances were damaged. When doctors called for help

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**Member Associations:** Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney, Auckland and Wellington

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from the ICRC, they could not provide any assistance as they were also forced to remain in bunkers for their own safety. In the 9 days prior to this, in similar shelling of other "Civilian Safety Zones" more than 100 civilians were killed and several people lost their limbs.

For too long, the Sri Lankan Government has been engaged in gross human rights violations as condemned by leading Human Rights Organizations. As a consequence, Sri Lanka even lost its seat in the UN Human Rights Council. On 9 December 2008, New York based Genocide Prevention Project listed Sri Lanka as one of the eight "Red Alert" countries where genocide is underway or at grave risk of breaking out. Sri Lanka expelled all the UN agencies and other aid agencies from the conflict zone to deny any independent witnesses to this Genocide.

AFTA is concerned and perturbed by the silence maintained about this human tragedy by the same International Community that successfully persuaded Israel to stop the bombardment in the Gaza strip through effective and intense diplomacy at UN Security Council level.

AFTA appeals to the Australian Government in particular and the International Community in general to condemn this inhumane act by the SLSF, raise this matter at the UN and arrange for immediate medical supplies and personnel. We also urge that a UN monitoring mission be despatched immediately to that area to prevent further atrocities which will culminate in the total genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

### **Media inquiries:**

**Sydney: Dr. Victor Rajakulendran 0402 484 209**

**Melbourne: Mr. S. Mahendrarajah 0401 993 712**

**Canberra: Dr. Raga Ragavan 0402 387 920**