



August 19, 2009

First Commemoration of World Humanitarian Day

This year, on August 19th, the international community will pay tribute to the brave humanitarian workers who devote their time and energy to come to the rescue of innocent victims of war and natural catastrophes across the world. (2009 Sergio Vieira de Mello Foundation.)

August 19th has been designated by the United Nations as “World Humanitarian Day” to honor all humanitarian and associated personnel who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty and in the promotion of the humanitarian cause. USTPAC wishes to remember and honor the 105 humanitarian workers who have been killed by the Sri Lankan government since 2005.

On this World Humanitarian Day, USTPAC wishes to especially honor the men and women of the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO) who have served the Tamil community, often at great risk to themselves, under extreme and violent conditions. We remember with sorrow all 28 who have given their lives in the service of their people since 2005.

USTPAC wishes to remember and mourn the 17 aid workers from Action Contre La Faim (ACF) found brutally murdered, allegedly lined up and shot in the back, by the Sri Lankan Government’s military forces in 2007.

USTPAC honors the brave doctors and medical workers who served their people selflessly under dangerous circumstances and are now incarcerated by the Sri Lankan government for that service.

USTPAC also thanks the International Red Cross who evacuated injured Tamil civilians during government artillery attacks and gave lifesaving aid in the detention camps, until the Government of Sri Lanka recently curtailed their services.

USTPAC wishes to remember the 300,000 innocent Tamils, who have been displaced numerous times over the last 15 years and who continue to struggle with no freedom of movement in nazi-era-like concentration camps operated by the Government of Sri Lanka’s military forces. Even worse, the remaining 3+ million Tamils in Sri Lanka live in a virtual prison in perpetual fear under the control of the Government of Sri Lanka’s military forces.

USTPAC pleads for President Obama and Secretary Clinton to urge the United Nations to demand that the Government of Sri Lanka open the concentration camps to UNHCR monitors and to help support the Tamil civilians. Many organizations, including specifically Medecin Sans Frontiers (MSF), have stated that they *“have the capacity to scale up activities and provide medical and mental health care for the people inside the camps. But so far, the authorities have not accepted this proposal for assistance.”*

On this very first “World Humanitarian Day,” it is sad that the Tamils in Sri Lanka face this genocidal onslaught. USTPAC asks for your support – **please call your Congressman and Senator and request them to urge President Obama and Secretary Clinton to immediately act to free the detained Tamils on this special day.**

Over the past 50+ years, Tamils in Sri Lanka, have been subjugated as second class citizens, without fundamental civil rights and equal justice, and have been subjected to state-sponsored oppression, violence, torture, kidnappings -- and now nazi-style concentration camps -- by the Sinhalese-dominated Government of Sri Lanka.

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