



**THE EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA
TO BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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Ambassador Aryasinha says PTGTE latest ruse to perpetuate terrorist struggle, and urges Europe not to provide it any political or symbolic support

Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU Ravinatha Aryasinha said the LTTE's initiative to forming a so called "Provisional Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam" (PTGTE), with "country working groups" at national and regional levels in western countries was a ruse to perpetuate its terrorist struggle, and has urged the European governments not to provide any political or symbolic support towards these moves. Ambassador Aryasinha observed that these bodies constituted through pseudo elections and comprising largely of known LTTE members/activists, was being used by many Tamils who have entered western countries illegally, and who would in the normal course of events be sent back home given the restoration of normalcy in Sri Lanka, to keep the pot boiling and to seek to remain relevant in countries where they have sought asylum.

Ambassador Aryasinha made these observations when he addressed the "2010 Diplomatic Security Conference on the Terrorism Situation and Trends in the EU" held at the Colonial Palace in Brussels on 11 May 2010, where the findings of Europol's EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TESAT) 2010 was discussed. The Conference, attended by politicians, diplomats, academics, and members of the law enforcement and criminal justice community, was co-hosted by the European Corporate Security Association (ECSA) and the Belgian Foreign Ministry.

The detailed intervention made by Ambassador Aryasinha follows:

"Sri Lanka's story in fighting terrorism is instructive to this forum for two reasons. The phenomenal success of the ground battle with the LTTE is well known and that was won decisively exactly a year ago. But what we often pay little attention to, is the fact that the LTTE was not just a terrorist force, but also a very efficient network which spanned the globe and could fool a lot of people. Their organization was diversified, the assets were scattered, and they operated through numerous front organizations and operatives. Therefore, while their leaders may be gone and their central command disrupted, we must not lose sight of the fact that they still have a lot of money, expertise and contacts, particularly in your part of the world.

When I was asked at a Seminar on the LTTE organized by Europol in December 2008, as to what will happen if the LTTE was defeated in Sri Lanka, I remarked "it is then that your problem will begin": and in a sense that has come to be true. Since 18 May 2009 there has not

been a single bullet fired in Sri Lanka on account of terrorism. But when I look around in your part of the world, over the past few months, I see arrests and convictions of LTTE activists taking place at regular intervals. Mention has already been made in the Europol's TESAT 2010 Report of the conviction of a former LTTE leader in the UK, and the November 2009 action by a Paris court banning the CCTF and convicting of 21 LTTE activists for upto 7 years – which Eurojust says was the most significant judicial action related to terrorist financing that has taken place in Europe. Additionally, it must be noted that in March 2010 Germany arrested 7 and since then 2 others for pro-LTTE activity, while in April 2010 the Netherlands arrested 7 for the same reason. Additionally, we are aware that counter terrorism action has been taken against LTTE activists in Denmark, Italy and Norway. It is anyone's guess where the next arrests would be, but there sure will be, because those of you familiar with the terrain know that what we have seen so far is merely the tip of an iceberg concerning the LTTE and its operations in Europe.

Lest it is glossed over, a point I want to emphasise is that none of these persons arrested so far carried name boards saying LTTE, but each and every one of them belonged to prominent front organizations which were integrally linked to the LTTE - be they the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO/ORT), the Coordinating Committee of Tamils in France (CCTF/TCC), the Tamil Youth Organization (TYO), the Tamil Women's Organization (TVO), the Tamil Arts and Cultural Organization (TKCO), the United Tamil Organization in the UK and the British Tamil Association (BTA). The failure to have acted against these front organizations earlier, could prove to be a costly mistake.

In the past, when we cautioned western governments of the threat the LTTE and its front organizations posed and asked for their help to solve the problem, it fell on deaf ears. We were given many excuses as to why you couldn't act. In an address at an Eurojust Tactical Meeting on the "LTTE Front Organizations" a little over an year ago (31 March 2009) I focused on this lacuna as being rooted in 3 "false dichotomies" I detected in Europe's "Fight Against Terrorism" : whether terrorist groups/individuals were merely under investigation or had been convicted, the threat posed as judged by law enforcement agencies as opposed to politicians interested in vote blocks, and pitting countering terrorism against protection of freedom of expression.

I am glad to see that Europe is now more actively trying to grapple with these issues. Today, at least from a Sri Lankan stand point I could safely say that you are more vigilant, picking up more suspects, dismantling cells, and are asking for the help of our intelligence operatives in trying to understand the modus operandi of the LTTE. Though somewhat late, these no doubt are important steps.

But even as you do so, beyond the fund raising that continues unabated, there remain many threats looming in your part of the world as the pro-LTTE Tamil factions are rapidly adjusting to stay below your radar. There is the mushrooming of the Madrassa type 'Tamil Cholai' schools that glorify terrorism and martyrdom– students of which were recently convicted in Norway for vandalizing the Sri Lanka Embassy. There is much activity connected with cyber terror going on. And the latest ruse being used to continue LTTE activity through other means is the LTTE's initiative to form a "Provisional Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam" (PTGTE), with country working groups at national and regional levels in western countries. The latter is particularly sinister, for these bodies constituted through pseudo elections, and comprising largely of known LTTE members or activists who seek to perpetuate the terrorist struggle, is a means by which large numbers of

Tamils who have entered your countries illegally and who in the normal course of events are likely to be sent back home given the restoration of normalcy in Sri Lanka, to keep the pot boiling and to seek to remain relevant in countries where they have sought asylum.

Now whether your countries choose to allow such persons to exploit your liberal systems is a question which you have to answer. But I'd dare to say it would be in your enlightened self interest to make a concerted effort to isolate from the rest of the respected Sri Lankan Tamil expatriate community, the pro- LTTE elements who have the propensity to cause harm in your societies, possibly joining together with like minded international terrorists. Sri Lanka's plea is that the EU and its member countries proscribe all LTTE front organizations, maintain strict vigil over their activities, continue to bring to justice those violating the law and not provide any political or symbolic support to their abuse of your systems using various pretenses.

So as the only non-European speaker invited to join this panel, I wish to salute the ladies and gentlemen who are trying to grapple with the problem of terrorism in Europe and wish them success in their endeavours. Coming from a country which knows how difficult the challenge is, and has also proved that it can be overcome, I want to assure you that the Government of Sri Lanka which over the years has acquired considerable experience in this field, stands ready and willing to share its knowledge and expertise with the rest of the international community and that you can count on us in your fight against terrorism.”

Embassy of Sri Lanka
Brussels

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