

**EU-US INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LTTE**  
**9<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2008**  
**EUROPOL**  
**The Hague**

**Time to Act:**  
**The LTTE, its Front Organizations, and the**  
**Challenge to Europe**

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# **Time to Act :**

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## **Introduction**

To the best of my understanding, this is the first time such a wide-ranging international group of experts have chosen to devote an entire two days to discuss with EU member states and other 3<sup>rd</sup> affected countries, the ramifications of the activities of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Sri Lanka appreciates being invited to be part of this process.

Co-sponsored by the US Government and the French Presidency, that the Europol chose to devote this seminar to the LTTE, underlines the seriousness with which the law enforcement and criminal justice communities in these countries are watching developments relating to the activities of the LTTE, something that is heartening to note, for a country like Sri Lanka which is bleeding, due to long years of international apathy to terrorism.

Today we speak in the back-drop of the Mumbai terrorist outrage which world leaders have closed ranks to denounce with one voice, and has been widely described as “India’s 9/11”. Coming from a country like Sri Lanka, which has seen too many 9/11’s occur within too short a time period, at the outset I cannot but overemphasise three truisms related to terrorism which this august gathering and the states they represent should remain conscious of;

1. That terrorism is a global challenge and one should not ignore the problem in the misguided notion that it is somebody else’s problem and would not affect you.
2. That terrorism comes in many shapes and forms and we should not be deceived or engage in semantic debates on either the justifications offered by terrorist front organizations and apologists/sympathisers, which act for, on behalf of or at the behest of terrorist organizations.
3. That if we are to succeed in defending our countries and all countries from the terrorist menace, we must necessarily have to stay ahead of the terrorists – whether it be in intelligence gathering, law enforcement, criminal justice or information dissemination.

Conscious that at least for some participants here, this might be the first foray into the complex developments in Sri Lanka and to the role of the terrorist group the LTTE, I have prepared a detailed text that covers the trajectory of the issue under discussion from a broader politico-military perspective. I have also had circulated a publication and also a set of more recent clippings, which provide you an update on the stark challenge Sri Lanka faces.

My presentation to you today will focus not only on the LTTE, but particularly the dynamics of its numerous front organizations, regarding which I respectfully posit that the government of Sri Lanka believes sufficient attention is not being paid at present in Europe.

### **1. Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka is an island state in the Indian Ocean located off the southern tip of India, in the pathway of international sea lines that connect the East and the West. Sri Lanka is a democracy and has a multiethnic, multi-religious population of 20 million people who have enjoyed Universal Adult Franchise since 1931. At the last comprehensive island-wide census taken in 1981, the population stood at 74% Sinhalese, 13% Sri Lankan Tamil, 7% Moor/Muslim and 5% Tamils of Indian descent and 1% other communities. A large majority of the Sri Lankan Tamil population (approximately 54%) live outside the Northern and Eastern provinces, while a further 1 million now live abroad.

## **2. Origins and trajectory of LTTE terrorism**

The LTTE's genesis could be traced to 1974 when Velupillai Prabhakaran formed the Tamil New Tigers (TNT), at a time many other Tamil youth groups also took to arms. However following Indian mediation in 1987 and the agreement of the Indo- Sri Lanka Accord which granted significant powers to the Tamil speaking areas of Sri Lanka, while all other terrorist groups joined the political mainstream, the LTTE stubbornly persisted with its terrorist tactics demanding a separate 'Tamil Eelam' a mono-ethnic state for the Tamils in an area which covers over 28.7% of the landmass and 60% of the coastal belt of the country. From 1987-1990 it fought the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) and ever since has engaged the Sri Lankan security forces in armed combat.

The aims and objectives of the LTTE.

- a. The Strategic Aim of the LTTE is to gain absolute control over the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, in order to establish a "traditional homeland" exclusively for Tamil people with self-determination and autonomy. They say "the thirst of the Tamil Tigers is Tamil Eelam" (a separate state).
- b. The Political Aim of the LTTE : Politically the LTTE makes every effort to establish a separate administration system in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, which includes the authority to have its own Armed Forces, Police, Judicial, Economic and Political system for the Tamils. This in short is a blue print of a separate state.
- c. The Military Aim of the LTTE : The military strategy of the LTTE is to formulate a standing force comprising land, sea and air forces, in order to act in the interest of the LTTE Leader to achieve its strategic objective, namely the establishment of 'Tamil Eelam.'

### **Organizational Chart of the LTTE**

The LTTE leadership is organized along a two-tier structure: a military wing and a subordinate political wing. Overseeing both is a central governing committee, headed by the LTTE chief, Velupillai Prabhakaran. This body has the responsibility for directing and controlling following subdivisions; namely, Sea Tiger wing (headed by Soosai), Air wing, (headed by Kennedy), Military wing (headed by Banu and Theepan), a highly secretive intelligence wing (headed by Pottu Amman), and a political office (headed by Nadesan).

The central governing committee also has an International Secretariat (headed by Castro), which is in charge of the outfit's global network and its international propaganda and fund raising operations. These operations are the lifeblood of the LTTE and are mainly coordinated by the LTTE's front organizations, most prominently the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) and the Tamil Coordinating Committee (TCC).

### **Atrocities committed by the LTTE**

The LTTE's ruthlessness and violence is largely unparalleled by any other terrorist organization and since the inception of its struggle, the LTTE has left behind a trail of atrocities.

Most significantly, The LTTE is the only organization to have assassinated two national leaders in two different countries. In May 1991, the LTTE assassinated Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India and in 1993, the LTTE assassinated Ranasinghe Premadasa, the President of Sri Lanka. The LTTE also made an abortive attempt to take the life of President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga in December 1999. Besides the killing of Sinhalese and Muslim politicians, the largest segment of the LTTE's assassinations have been directed against the Tamil community itself, where nearly two generations of moderate Tamil politicians and academics of Sri Lanka including former Opposition Leader A. Amirthalingam, Tamil intellectual and constitutional expert Dr. Neelan Thiruchelvam, Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, the Deputy Secretary General of the Government Peace Secretariat Ketheeshwaran Loganathan (who incidentally was a member of the Tamil delegation to the very first round of talks the GOSL had with Tamil militants in Thimpu, Bhutan in 1985), and successive Mayors of Jaffna Ms. Sarojini Yogeswaran and Mr. Pon Sivapalan. Their only fault appears to have been the refusal to yield to the tyranny of the LTTE and abandon the democratic path. Today the Tamil community of Sri Lanka has been left bereft of moderate and democratic leaders due to the methodical process of elimination adopted by the LTTE during the past three decades.

It has also engaged, *inter alia*, in indiscriminate attacks against civilian populations or individual civilians, among its some 70,000 victims largely innocent women and children. It has conscripted children into its fighting cadre and forced them to engage in armed activities. The last estimate by UNICEF before the current round of fighting was 5,700. In an attempt to establish mono-ethnic regions the LTTE has engaged in ethnic cleansing when in October 1990, with two days notice, the LTTE decided to evict approximately 75,000 Muslim people from Jaffna, and Mannar (these Muslims now numbering about 100,000 are housed in 162 refugee camps in several districts). The same year, 1990, they deployed Chlorine gas weapons in Kiran in the Batticaloa District. In July 2006 by closing the sluice gates of Mavil Aru, the LTTE used water as a weapon of war, an abominable practice outlawed by international humanitarian law. The LTTE had also succeeded in destroying many religious, economic and military infrastructure facilities in the country including the Central Bank in 1996, with far reaching consequences. Its July 2001 attack on Colombo Airport was one of the most destructive acts of terrorism in aviation history- destroying or damaging 26 aircraft, half of the national airline's commercial planes and a quarter of the air-force fleet.

## **GOSL's response to LTTE terrorism**

### ***i. Sri Lanka's legislative responses to LTTE violence and the definition & criminalization of Terrorism***

Viewed in the back drop that the international community is yet to arrive at a consensus regarding the definition of 'terrorism', and the debate that continues as to when 'liberation' (which is lawful) ends and 'terrorism' (which should be unlawful) begins, the challenge faced by Sri Lanka's legislative and criminal justice systems in dealing with the growing phenomenon of LTTE terrorism merits attention. Even as states debate as to whether a 'State' could be held liable for perpetrating terrorism, or whether only 'Non State Actors' could be held accountable for terrorism, certain terrorist activities such as hostage taking, terrorist funding, terrorist bombings, have been defined in international law and criminalized.

- In line with this approach adopted by the international community and in keeping with the security situation that prevailed in the late 1970s, the Government of Sri Lanka through Parliament defined and criminalized certain specified terrorist activities, without venturing into defining ‘Terrorism’.
- During the initial stages, legislative measures were incorporated into Regulations promulgated under the Public Security Ordinance (commonly referred to as Emergency Regulations) which were enacted by the President and subsequently ratified by the Parliament. These regulations and the impact created by their promulgation enabled the Security Forces and the Police to deal with the emergency of politically motivated acts of violence unleashed by separatist armed militants, whom Sri Lanka identified right from the beginning as ‘Terrorists’. In the face of the ascendance of the LTTE, in 1978, the Proscription of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Act was enacted. It proscribed the LTTE as an organization, and criminalized becoming a member of the LTTE and aiding and abetting it. This law was later repealed to facilitate peace negotiations with the LTTE.
- In 1979, the Prevention of Terrorism Act was enacted. This law did not define ‘terrorism’. It criminalized a range of terrorist activities such as (a) assassinations and murder, (b) possession, manufacture, importation, transportation, and use of explosives and weapons, (c) causing mischief to government property, etc

Though Sri Lanka continued to face the brunt of brutal terrorism for over 25 years, Sri Lanka had not defined or criminalized terrorism until the end of 2006.

- On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006, the President of Sri Lanka acting in terms of the Public Security Ordinance, issued a proclamation proscribing terrorism. This proclamation (published in the government gazette) is referred to as the *Emergency (Proscription of Terrorism and Specified Terrorist Activities) Regulations 2006*. These regulations contain a definition of terrorism, and make engaging in terrorism an offence punishable with 10 – 20 years imprisonment. Here ‘Terrorism’ is defined as any unlawful conduct which :
  - (a) Involves the use of violence, force, coercion, intimidation, threats, duress, or
  - (b) Threatens or endangers national security, or
  - (c) Intimidates a civilian population or a group thereof, or
  - (d) Disrupts or threatens public order, the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the community, or
  - (e) Causing destruction or damage to property, or
  - (f) Endangering a person’s life, other than that of the person committing the act, or
  - (g) Creating a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public, or
  - (h) is designed to interfere with or disrupt an electronic system, and which unlawful conduct is aimed at or is committed with the object of threatening or endangering the territorial integrity or sovereignty of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka or that of any other recognized sovereign nation, or any other political or governmental change, or compelling the government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to do or abstain from doing any act, and includes any other unlawful activity which advocates or propagates such unlawful conduct.

This definition was developed having considered the definition of ‘terrorism’ as developed by several other countries. Violation of this prohibition is an offence and carries penal sanction.

## **ii. *Setting up of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) in Sri Lanka***

Consistent with its international obligations in the field of money laundering and terrorist financing, particularly in the context of Security Council Resolution 1373 dealing, inter-alia, with Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention on the Suppression of

Financing of Terrorism and in keeping with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental body, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), with a view to counter measures against Money Laundering (ML) covering the criminal justice system and law enforcement, the financial system, and international co-operation, in 2005/2006 Sri Lanka promulgated three acts. They are; the Convention on the Suppression of terrorist Financing Act No. 25 of 2005, the Prevention of Money Laundering (PMLA) Act No. 5 of 2006 and the Financial Transaction Reporting (FTRA) Act No. 6 of 2006.

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) is a key component set up under the FTRA, to deter criminals from using Sri Lanka and its Financial Institutions for money laundering and Terrorist Financing activity and thus mitigating the risk of the country being exposed to volatile economic and financial conditions the FIU is vested with certain powers that include the power to receive reports of “institutions” to instruct enforcement agencies to take appropriate measures based on the information or reports received by the FIU and conduct examinations of “institutions” if need be. The supervisory authorities and auditors of institutions are also required to co-operate with the FIU to effectively combat money laundering and terrorist financing in Sri Lanka. The unit has played an important part in assisting foreign governments in prosecution against activities of the LTTE and its front organizations.

**iii. *Legislative and judicial remedies are available even to terrorist suspects.*** The Constitution of Sri Lanka guarantees freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (article 11), equal protection of the law ( article 12), prohibition of retroactive penal legislation, due process including freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and punishment, presumption of innocence and proof beyond reasonable doubt, and fair trial ( article 13). These fundamental rights are justiciable, through a process of fundamental rights applications to the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka (article 126) and the constitution also guarantees the availability of the writ of Habeas Corpus in terms of persons who allege illegal detention in the High Court and the Court of Appeal.

**iv. *Sri Lanka has actively participated in the UN deliberations on developing counter-terrorism measures both within the region and at the global level.*** Since 1997, as Vice Chair of the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism, Sri Lanka played an important role in the drafting of the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and since 2000, Dr. Rohan Perera, until recently the Legal Advisor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, continues to chair this committee and is playing a pivotal role in the ongoing delicate negotiations of a Comprehensive Convention on the Elimination of Terrorism.

Thus it is clear that Sri Lanka has played its role as a responsible member of the international community in helping to deal with this growing global menace. What we ask of the world today, is merely that they too act with similar responsibility in accordance with their proclaimed pledges to curb all acts of terrorism.

## **Efforts at talks with the LTTE**

While seeking to curb the rise of terrorism, successive governments of Sri Lanka have upheld that the present conflict in Sri Lanka must be resolved through political means, and have done so, negotiating with the LTTE in 1985, 1986/87, 1989-90, 1994-95, 2002-2003 and 2006 to no avail. These periods have been used by the LTTE to merely re-arm and re-group and to resume hostilities at a time of their choosing. For instance, the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), during the period between 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2002 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2007, had ruled that the

Government armed forces had committed 351 violations of the CFA while the LTTE had committed 3,830 violations. The Ceasefire Agreement which in any event was non-operational and defunct since mid July 2006, was terminated by Sri Lanka on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2008.

As President Mahinda Rajapaksa stated at the 63rd session of the UNGA on 24th September 2008 the “Government has always been ready to address the causes of these issues and effectively implement political and constitutional solutions to meet the aspirations and rights of all communities. What the Government would not, and could not do is to let an illegal and armed terrorist group, the LTTE, to hold a fraction of our population, a part of the Tamil community, hostage to such terror in the Northern part of Sri Lanka and deny those people their democratic rights and free elections...”

Greater engagement among the political parties in Sri Lanka was made possible through the on going All Party Representatives Committee (APRC), which comprises all democratic political parties including non-LTTE Tamil parties, which were willing to work towards a democratic and honourable settlement. The current Government continues its quest to evolve a consensus to finding a lasting solution to the political aspects of the problem, through this body.

## **Restoration of normalcy in the East**

Following the LTTE walking away from the negotiating table in early 2006 unleashing a spate of attacks on military and civilian targets, at the time it cut off water supplies to the Eastern region of Sri Lanka through blocking of ‘Mavil Aru’ in July 2006, the Government of Sri Lanka launched operations to ‘flush out’ the LTTE from the Eastern Province.

Having successfully cleared the LTTE out of the Eastern province by July 2007, as a first step, in line with the interim recommendations of the APRC, the Government has been able to restore normalcy in the Eastern Province, in a clear message that terrorism can be defeated with coordinated political will. Today, the Government has embarked on a programme to bring about sustainable development in the area, in order to revive the socio economic activity in the province. Local government elections were held in March 2008 followed by provincial council elections in May 2008, and civilian administration has been re-established. Thus the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka could serve as a model in post conflict development, that is worthy of emulation in other situations as well.

## **Clearing the North of the LTTE**

Subsequently, a concerted military campaign has been launched by the Government to clear the LTTE out of the areas they currently dominate in parts of the Northern Province. The Government is on the verge of regaining the so-called capital of the LTTE, Killinochchi, and move on to clear the rest of the LTTE dominated areas with utmost caution, in order to avoid any civilian casualties, and conscious that many are being held against their will as human shields by the LTTE and prevented from leaving those areas into government secured areas. In the interim, the Sri Lankan forces have succeeded in opening a land route to the Jaffna peninsula along the Western coast, a feat achieved after 18 years.

The Sri Lanka Government's expectation is that these operations will end the LTTE's conventional fighting capability, and open up space for democracy to prevail in the Northern Province as well. President Mahinda Rajapaksa has made clear that the LTTE too is welcome to join in the development effort of the region, provided they lay down their arms, and join the democratic process.

Sri Lanka's successes should give other democracies hope, that terrorism can be fought and overcome, with the support and assistance of the international community.

## **3. Global Assessment of the LTTE**

The Sri Lanka Government's assessment of the LTTE is widely shared within the intelligence, law enforcement and criminal justice communities across the world. Even as Sri Lanka appears to be gaining the upper hand in its battle against the LTTE on the ground, there are many who continue to fear that the international tentacles and reach of the group does not augur well.

- The US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in its 10 January 2007 special report has described the LTTE as "among the most dangerous and deadly extremists in the world".
- Dr. Magnus Ranstorp, Chief Scientist at the Centre for Asymmetric Threat Studies at the Swedish National Defence College has described the LTTE as "probably the most sophisticated terrorist organization in the world".
- Dr. Gerard Chaliand, Former Director, European Center for the Study of Conflicts reminds us that "no peace seems possible with V. Prabhakaran as we have seen from the peace process of 2002-2005 which was but a tactical truce".
- Most recently, The US Pacific Joint Command (PACOM) Admiral Timothy Keating while commending Sri Lankan military for its recent successes against the LTTE, has told New York correspondents on 6 November 2008, "We are hopeful that the LTTE would be a decreasingly important factor of much less reach than they are and have been in the past".

## **4. Why is the LTTE a global challenge?**

Even as their strength on the ground in Sri Lanka recedes, the continuing international concern about the LTTE stems due to several factors that could serve as 'copycat models' for other international terrorist groups.

### a) Suicide bomb technology

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), have been one of the pioneers of suicide bomb technology with the most effective suicide capability in the world and is indisputably the most efficient and brutal terrorist organization ever to utilize suicide terrorists for the advancement of its struggle to establish a separate state in Sri Lanka. 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 carried out during the same period. As at today the LTTE has carried out more than 200 suicide attacks both at the sea and on land during the period between 1987 and 2008. LTTE declared that from November 27, 1982 to November 20, 2008 a total of 274 male suicide bombers and 104 female suicide bombers have died in the fight to carve out a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka. Until the Iraq War the LTTE was said to have been responsible for more than 2/3 of all suicide attacks carried out. It is particularly noted for having mastered the use of suicide jackets with C – 4 explosives, long before the Al-Qaeda movement.

### b) Global Network

Since the mid-1980s the LTTE boasted of having developed a unique global network and at its peak maintained political/propaganda offices and cells in some 54 countries. Headquartered in London until 2001, this vast international network was tasked with disseminating propaganda, fund raising, resource management and procuring weapons. It was able to mobilize the 1 million strong diaspora in this task. Its global network has also helped the LTTE's involvement in narcotics smuggling and human trafficking.

The LTTE's reliance on heroin smuggling had its roots in the early 1980s, after the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the fundamentalist revolution in Iran disrupted the opium-smuggling routes used by many Pakistan –based drug barons. Originally concentrated in Bombay, its tentacles have spread all over Europe and into the Golden Triangle. The US Department of State confirms this when it noted in April 2001 that “information obtained since the mid-1980s indicates that some Tamil communities in Europe are also involved in narcotics smuggling” It added that ‘Tamils historically have served as drug couriers moving narcotics into Europe. According to UK intelligence, more than 4,000 Tamils have been jailed throughout the world for narcotics-trafficking offences. This figure includes Paris based former LTTE spokesman Velumailiyum Manoharan, who was fined 120,000 French Francs and sentenced to a two year prison term in March 1985, after being found in possession of heroin. Trafficking in narcotics also provides a major source of funds for the procurement of arms. The LTTE's one-time drug couriers have now formed into trafficking groups located in THAILAND, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND, ITALY and FRANCE. They have also made contact with drug dealers and criminal syndicates in these countries.

The earliest known case of human trafficking involving the LTTE was in 1986, when 155 Tamils were smuggled into Canadian waters from West Germany and then set adrift in lifeboats. After the end of the cold war the operations became more widespread, with France, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, as well African countries being used as conduits. More recently, attention has centred increasingly on the use of some Southeast Asian nations, such as Cambodia, Laos, Singapore and Thailand, as transit points and gateways to the West. According to INTERPOL, “many of those who risk the journey become victims of international crime syndicates. Having being part of the illegal trade and indebted to the smugglers, scores of Tamil

youths find themselves becoming messenger boys, agents and couriers for the European operations of the LTTE”. In more recent years, the LTTE involvement in human smuggling was reported with the seizure of MV COSMO, a small vessel mainly with a Sri Lankan crew at the THAI Port of SONGKHALA and the arrest of 49 Sri Lankans at an apartment located at PATAYA, on the Southern border of THAILAND in November 2005. Some of those arrested were to be dispatched either to EUROPE or AUSTRALIA. It is reported that they had each paid a sum of approximately US \$ 10,000 to their agents, from which the agents have paid approximately US \$ 2,500 to the LTTE.

#### c) Arms and explosives procurement

The first instance of procuring arms and ammunition by LTTE was reported when the LTTE sought the assistance of Tamil Nadu to procure arms and ammunition in 1983. Following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, former PM of India, LTTE abandoned activities in Tamil Nadu and started establishing bases in South East Asian countries and commenced operations in the Middle East, newly independent countries of Soviet block and Western Countries.

The tracing of the path of the explosives and devices that were used in the January 1996 Central Bank bomb explosion which killed just under 100 persons and injured over 1400 and was regarded the ‘worst terrorist atrocities in 1996’ by the US State Department, is instructive in this regard. Money for the purchase came from contributions of the Tamil Canadian diaspora, laundered through accounts held by a Canadian of Sri Lankan origin: the advance was paid through Europe, 10 tons of RDX and 50 tons of TNT was imported from the Ukraine, shipped through the Black sea port of Nicolaev, and the final payment was made through bank accounts in Singapore.

#### d) Maritime Capability

Besides the LTTE’s establishment of a naval combat unit known as the ‘Sea Tigers’, the LTTE is the only terrorist organisation in the world that maintains a shipping network connecting the countries from east to west for the purpose of both commercial and military interest.

Sailing across the oceans under the flags of different countries it can reach any country in the world not only to smuggle arms and ammunition to Sri Lanka but also drugs and human cargo. LTTE uses the sea route from Eastern Europe, and around the Horn of Africa or through the Suez to Sri Lanka. Although the sources of weapons supply vary, quite often there are established routes that are being used by the LTTE. Most of the items procured are being transported through their Shipping network with maximum security. From 1983, the LTTE is estimated to have approx 25 vessels registered under different names carrying different flags. Alongside traditional trading activity, these vessels are being used for transportation of arms and ammunition in the pretext of tankers/cargo delivery/fishing. Through this network the LTTE has established a presence in the arms black-market.

Concern in intelligence quarters was also raised with the arrest on 9 April 2000 of Lankan born Norwegian citizen Christy Reginald Lawrence in Phuket, Thailand and the discovery of a half built mini-submarine, which was intended for sabotage missions by the LTTE in Sri Lanka.

The LTTE had carried out ten suicide attacks on Sri Lanka Navy vessels with the use of explosive laden boats before the Al Qaeda attacked ‘USS Cole’ in Yemen in October 2000. In fact the Al-Qaeda attack on the 'USS Cole' was a copycat of *all LTTE suicide attacks on SL Naval vessels since 1990 where they used similar Modus Operandi*. In a 19 March 2003

interview with the BBC Sea Tigers' Chief Soosai was to state, " I think in Yemen they used our strategy of targeting the hull in their suicide attack to blow up an American ship 'USS Cole' - this is exactly what we used to do."

The LTTE has also engaged in acts of sea piracy. Vessels flying Philippine, Greek, Indonesian, Panamanian, Belize, Chinese, Jordanian, Cambodian and Indian flags have been at the receiving end of the LTTE's terror. The Sea Tigers have hijacked several vessels in waters outside Sri Lanka including the *Irish Mona* (in August 1995), *Princess Wave* (in August 1995), *Athena* (in August 1996), *Misen* (in July 1997), *Morana Bong* (in July 1997), *MV Cordiality* (in Sept 1997) and *Princess Kash* (in August 1998). When the LTTE captured the *MV Cordiality* near the port of Trincomalee , they killed all five Chinese crew members on board. The *MV Sik Yang*, a 2,818-ton Malaysian-flag cargo ship which sailed from Tuticorin, India on May 25, 1999 was reported missing in waters near Sri Lanka. The ship with a cargo of bagged salt was due at the Malaysian port of Malacca on May 31. The fate of the ship's crew of 63 is unknown. It is suspected that the vessel was hijacked by the LTTE, the crew thrown overboard, and is now been used as a phantom vessel. In December 2006 Jordanian ship, *MV Farah III* that ran aground near rebel-controlled territory off the island's coast, accused the Tamil Tigers of forcing them to abandon the vessel which was carrying 14,000 tonnes of Indian rice, and risking their lives.

In recent years the Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) has been able to destroy more than 10 LTTE vessels in the high seas. These include MV HORIZON attacked & destroyed on 14 Feb 1996 in the sea off MULAITHIVU on detection of unloading Arms & Ammunition for the LTTE, MV KOIMARI exploded during an exchange of fire with SLNS SAYURA on 10 March 2002 in the sea off MULAITHIVU, the destruction of two LTTE arms /explosive smuggling ships by the SLN on 18 Mar 2007 in the sea off South East of ARUGAMBAY, destruction of 03 LTTE ships loaded with military hardware on 11 Sep 2007 in the sea off (600 nautical miles) South East DONDRA and destruction of an LTTE military hardware ship named MATSUSHIMA on 07 Oct 2007 in the sea off DONDRA POINT.

#### e) Rudimentary Air capability.

The LTTE is the only non-state group in the world to have a manned aerial attack capability. The Air Tigers ('Vaana Puligal' in Tamil) have launched nine bombing raids on various targets in Sri Lanka. However, the LTTE's air wing has done more to enhance the group's profile than inflict real damage on the Sri Lankan military. The Air Tigers have acquired their first aircraft in 1998. The LTTE expanded its air wing during the ceasefire period (2002-2006) to include fixed wing aircraft to train pilots and also used the cover of the ceasefire and lifting of restrictions to transport hardware to build a runway. The presence of the Z-143 was confirmed on 26 March 2007 when the Air Tigers launched their first raid on the Katunayake airbase that adjoins Colombo's international airport. LTTE has at least four such aircraft. The most recent attack was on 28 October, 2008 when damage was caused to a power station in the outskirts of Colombo.

In November 2008 Jane's Intelligence Review revealed that analysis of high resolution commercially available satellite imagery "has allowed Jane's Intelligence Review to verify that the LTTE have constructed two 1000 metre paved runways between 2002 and 2007: one of which is currently being extended to 2000 metres." It further noted that "these airstrips are unnecessarily long for the light aircraft that the LTTE uses for aerial attacks and are probably intended to handle larger cargo planes delivering weapons shipments."

At the time of the initial LTTE air attacks in April 2007, the Indian Defence Minister A.K. Anthony is on record as stating that the Indian Navy has decided to install radars at the coastal areas of Rameswaram, Thondi, Jagathapattanam, Mallipattnam, Kodyakkari, Thopputhurai and Nagapattinam.

#### f) Cyber terror

The Patterns of Global Terrorism Report 1997 identified the LTTE as being responsible for the first known attack by a “terrorist group” on a target country’s computer system, when in August 1997 a group calling itself “Internet Black Tigers” claimed responsibility for “suicide e-mail bombings” aimed at disrupting the electronic information network/communications systems used by Sri Lanka’s Missions abroad. This brazen act of ‘information warfare’ paralysed the communication systems of most of Sri Lanka’s overseas missions. At the time the US said the incident “did cause us to sit up and take notice” because it was the first of its kind involving a group branded as a terrorist organization by Washington, and was a possible “portent of worse things to come”.

Further, R.E. Kendall, Secretary General of the Interpol addressing the 14<sup>th</sup> symposium on International Terrorism held in Colombo in September 1999, revealed that the LTTE was among the major terrorist organizations which have websites used not only for propaganda, communications and recruitment, but also for fund raising.

#### g) Links to other terrorist groups

The LTTE leader’s instructions to its offices overseas in 2003 included the need to establish and develop relationships with “other liberation movements” which is suggestive of its continuing desire to maintain linkages with these groups. There is also published research, which highlights such linkages with other terrorist organizations such as United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the Afghan Mujahidin, the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), Abu Sayaf, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and possibly to the Al-Qaeda. There is also the element of the LTTE contributing to copy-cat terrorism through its suicide bomb technology, acts of maritime terrorism, and nascent air strike capability.

- Most of the LTTE senior leaders have received specialised training in countries like Lebanon, Libya in the late 80s and since then the LTTE maintains close contacts with groups that have similar interests.

- It has been suggested that the LTTE established linkages with the Mujahidin in Afghanistan as far back as 1987, and in 2001 an LTTE delegation travelled to Kabul shortly before 9/11.

- However the LTTE was cautious in maintaining contacts with these militants following 9/11 attacks for obvious reasons.

- India's National Security Adviser M K Narayanan in a speech at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Munich Conference on Security Policy on 11 February, 2007 has said that both Jihadi movements and the LTTE were relying heavily on funds from trafficking in narcotics.

- The London based International Institute for Strategic Studies in its publication ‘Military Balance 2007’ goes further and refers to commercial links between the LTTE and the Al-Qaeda.

These actions have rightfully alarmed the intelligence communities across the world, because given its global outcome through the network of offices, operatives and vessels, the possibility that the LTTE could offer its services as mercenaries to other groups, should not be discounted.

## **5. How has the world responded to the rise of the LTTE?**

### **- Proscription and its limitations**

The response of the international community to the threat posed by LTTE terrorists was dismal. It would be fair to say that it was only following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, that appropriate note was taken of the risk posed by this group outside Sri Lanka. While India banned the LTTE in May 1992 following the assassination, it was not until the mid-1990s and a spate of international terrorist incidents, and particularly the LTTE's attack on the Central Bank in January 1996, that the world began to respond to the LTTE phenomenon.

- India proscribed the LTTE on 14 May 1992 following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.
- Soon after the Indian proscription, Malaysia banned the activity of the LTTE in the country.
- The US listed the LTTE as a FTO on 8 Oct. 1997
- UK, where the headquarters of the LTTE was housed at the time, proscribed the LTTE on 28 Feb 2001
- UNSC listed the LTTE in UNSC Resolution 1612 (2005) for Child Conscription
- Canada proscribed the LTTE on 8 April 2006.
- The 27 member European Union proscribed the LTTE on 29 May 2006
- In Australia where LTTE assets are effectively frozen in accordance with the listing of the LTTE under UN arrangements, proscribing the LTTE under domestic law is “currently under consideration by the Attorney General” according to a statement made by the Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith on 13 October 2008.

The unfortunate lack of a consensus on the danger constituted by the LTTE, is amplified by the mere fact that although the atrocities of the group were well known since the early 1980s, from India which first proscribed it in 1992, to Australia which is presently contemplating whether to ban the LTTE, it has taken almost two decades.

So while I often hear it being said in Brussels, “but we have banned the LTTE”, my response is that “there is no LTTE around to be affected by your ban”. Particularly in Europe, the listing only results in the freezing of the assets of such organizations and their overt activity.

The truth is that while the proscriptions in the West have clearly had a psychological bearing on the group, they have had little tangible effect on the actual LTTE operations and there is no knowledge of any funds frozen following the listing of the LTTE in Europe.

Today the LTTE, albeit under cover, operates within Europe as brazenly as ever. This poses a huge collective challenge to all of us, if we are seriously interested in combating international terrorism. It is apparent that certain member states of the EU clearly lack the political will to take decisive action against the LTTE and its numerous fronts operating quite openly on its soil.

## **6. How has the LTTE adapted to the “post- proscription phase” in the West?**

The reality we must accept is that by the time the UK, the EU and Canada had decided to take seriously the threat posed by the LTTE and proscribed the group, the LTTE’s propaganda and fund raising activities had already shifted its operations and coordination activities to various front organizations, thus effectively making the proscriptions toothless.

The mushrooming of such front organizations, in the post-proscription phase in particular, has enabled the LTTE to carry out its fund raising and propaganda taking cover under pseudo-religious, cultural, sports and humanitarian associations. The LTTE’s propaganda has succeeded in popularizing these front organizations and portraying them as community associations involving the Tamil diaspora widely spread out in key western countries. These front organizations form an integral part of the LTTE’s international network, and working through the diaspora enables its networking and lobbying campaigns with other terrorist groups and foreign governments respectively.

Key LTTE front organizations currently operating in western countries on behalf of the LTTE, thus cleverly circumventing the legal provisions against terrorist financing which are at present largely in force against the LTTE, include the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO), White Pigeon, the World Tamil Movement (WTM), the Tamil Coordinating Committee (TCC), the British Tamil Association(BTA) and the British Tamil Forum(BTF), Tamil Youth Organization (TYO), and International Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (ITRO).

The LTTE runs a highly sophisticated and intricate international web, coordinated under the direct supervision of the LTTE leadership in Wannai. All operational/ administrative functions of its front organizations directly come under the supervision of Veerakathy Manivannam @ Castro who is the Head of LTTE’s ‘International Secretariat’, based in Wannai in Sri Lanka. It encompasses the whole gamut of activities ranging from seemingly innocuous pursuits, such as the promotion of Tamil culture to raising funds ostensibly to support charities and humanitarian relief in Sri Lanka, and has cleverly exploited modern technology to finance its terror campaign.

It is important to note that all such LTTE front organizations form an integral part of the LTTE network / overseas infrastructure. The front organizations particularly the TRO, TCC, WTM and others act for or on behalf of or at the behest of the LTTE.

Here it must be noted that front organizations were not a new phenomenon of the LTTE. The LTTE have been forming front organizations since the mid eighties in order to surreptitiously collect funds for their military agenda. Initially, monies were collected mainly from the Indian mainland. However, the relevance of these organizations have grown in leaps and bounds since following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi the LTTE was forced out of India. Subsequently, the LTTE made their bases in western capitals.

Ironically, the Interim Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Assassination of Shri Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, headed by Justice Jain, Former Chief Justice Delhi High Court refers to a threat assessment prepared in May 1989 when the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was proposing to visit Paris, where caution was drawn to the activities of the Tamil Coordinating Committee (TCC), with an estimated membership of 4000, which was identified by Indian intelligence as an LTTE front operating in Europe, and particularly France, where an increasing level of activity of the LTTE was noted.

Following the US proscription of the LTTE in 1997, and particularly that of the UK in 2001, the operational maneuverability of the group was severely restricted.

A certain naiveté on the part of the authorities concerned where these front organizations have mushroomed, has helped them to flourish. The LTTE has managed to hoodwink the local authorities to the point that they have for a long time been duped to the real motive and the hand of the LTTE behind their pseudo sports, cultural, economic, humanitarian or religious organizations.

### Main LTTE front organizations

#### i) TRO.

Ostensibly the TRO deals with “humanitarian action” and collects money to help the Tamil people in the North of Sri Lanka.

At present, LTTE maintains TRO offices in France, Belgium, UK, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Malaysia, South Africa and in the yet to be cleared areas of the Wanni in Sri Lanka. It is believed to maintain accounts in all of the operating countries.

“LTTE Insiders” working in top coordination positions in the TRO, clearly indicate the direct control the LTTE exercises over the TRO.

- It is noteworthy that Lawrence Thilakar the former leader of the LTTE International Secretariat in Paris and LTTE Central Committee member, was subsequently appointed and served as the as the TRO’s Planning / Program Officer under his pseudonym Lawrence Christie. Thilakar’s leadership role in the LTTE’s organizational hierarchy and his international experience on behalf of the LTTE, places him, as the TRO Planning/Program Officer, in a unique position to plan and coordinate the TRO activities to meet the fundraising demands of the LTTE.

- Dr. Jeyarajan Maheswaran, alias Jay Maheswaran, the International Coordinator for the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization, participated in the GOSL-LTTE peace talks from 16 September 2002- March 2003 as a “Rehabilitation and Development Expert” and negotiator of the LTTE delegation. Thereafter, Dr. Maheswaran acted as the Economic Advisor to the LTTE during discussions with the country head of the World Bank (WB) and representatives of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in July 2005.

The pseudo-charity nature of the TRO was first detected in the UK, when in 2000 the UK Charity Commission froze their assets and halted their operation in London pending investigation. The assets were later released, but the group delisted as a charity. The Statement resulting from the conclusion of an inquiry carried out on the TRO under Section 8 of the Charities Act 1993 (Great Britain), as reported by Burah Hathy, who was employed to review the TRO’s operating system with emphasis on financial transactions, states, in Article 11 of its text, that while financial record keeping is adequate, “... the results of the review suggest that the TRO SL liaised with the LTTE in determining where funds could be applied”. It also found that once funds had been received by TRO SL, they were used for a variety of projects which appeared to be generally humanitarian, but not .... in line with the Charity’s objects”.

The group immediately transformed themselves into a new organization 'White Pigeon' transferred over US Dollars 5 million to the White Pigeon. When that was also found out by the Charity Commissioner, they floated the International TRO (ITRO).

The catastrophic aftermath of the tsunami of 26 December 2004 was cynically manipulated by the LTTE, through particularly the TRO, to generate huge amounts of funds to its accounts in Kilinochchi. Post tsunami, the TRO/SL was in receipt of 10% of total remittances received by the organisation in Sri Lanka, that is out of 40 Billion Rupees received 400 Million Rupees was received by the group, which is 4 Million US Dollars. At the time GOSL suspended their operations, what GOSL was able to freeze was only 56 Million Rupees. Though these monies were purportedly collected for reconstruction activity in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan security forces which by July 2007 cleared the Eastern Province and in recent months most of the areas of the Wannu, have not found any evidence of such reconstruction. It is clear that whatever funds were received by the TRO, instead went into the construction of bunkers and fortifications for the LTTE, besides the large sums known to have been used for the purchase of weapons ( LTTE weapons worth Rs. 686 million was recovered in the recent Eastern operations) to engage in its terrorist activity.

#### ii) White Pigeon

Their role is said to be rehabilitation of those deemed to be disabled by landmines and war activities or any other reason in Sri Lanka. Dr. N. Sathyamoorthy began White Pigeon in the UK and is the Chairman of the organisation. He is also said to be the chairman of TRO in UK at the time UK authorities commenced an inquiry into its activities. UK Charity Commission launched a formal inquiry into the activities of White Pigeon on 6 January 2006, which is continuing.

#### iii) TCC/CCTF/WTCC/WTM

These organizations take a leading role in promoting LTTE interest amongst the Diaspora community in the West/Europe through coordinating most of LTTE sponsored calendar events in the guise of promoting Tamil culture, welfare and education that spread throughout the year. The LTTE Leadership in Wannu appoints the Head of TCC/CCTF/WTCC/WTM offices and usually the person appointed comes either from a militant background or is a close associate of the Wannu leadership.

These front organizations operate in many West/European countries under different names. In Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Belgium the organization as known as the Tamil Coordinating Committee (TCC; in France as the Coordinating Committee of Tamils-France (CCTF); in the USA as the World Tamil Coordinating Committee(WTCC), in Canada as the World Tamil Movement (WTM) and in Switzerland as the World Tamil Coordinating Committee (WTCC).

It is noted that when the LTTE was not a banned organization in Europe, TCC members did not hide their true identity as LTTE representatives. V Manoharan, former head of LTTE in Paris, was also the head of CCTF during 2001. V. Manoharan was also nabbed for smuggling illicit drugs into Paris in 1986 and has served a term in French custody together with seven other Sri Lankan Tamils and a Muslim on this drug charge.

#### iv) British Tamil Association (BTA)

The British Tamil Association (BTA) has been responsible for many of the political and propaganda events in the UK since the proscription of the LTTE in that country in 2001. Its head Mr. Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar alias Shanthan, who headed Eelam House until the LTTE was proscribed in the UK, is regarded the de-facto leader of LTTE in London.

The activities of the BTA receded following the arrest of Shanthan in June 2007 for holding pro- LTTE propaganda events and for involvement in procurements for the LTTE of a range of non-military goods, which were nevertheless being used in military activities.

#### v) British Tamil Forum (BTF)

The British Tamils' Forum (BTF) is a key front umbrella organization of the LTTE, formed in the United Kingdom in 2006, with the prime aim of mustering the support of Tamil community and local Politicians for the Eelam cause. The motive of this later action is to attempt to influence the political thinking of the British government in favour of LTTE interests and gain access to voter lists and target Tamil residents for extortion. Through this process the forum has gained a certain recognition and appraisal from several Politicians and prominent figures in public life.

In its official website the forum states its aim as being to "highlight the humanitarian crises and human rights violations perpetrated by the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL), and to advance the Tamil national cause through democratic means". Dominic Whiteman, Editor of *Westminster Journal*, observes that the banning of the LTTE in the UK in 2001 resulted in only one change in their course of action. They changed the name of their secretariat and fronts - and now continue to operate "business as usual".

Mass fund raising and propaganda events such as Pongu Tamil, Black July, Photo Exhibitions in London have been organized by the BTF in coordination with other LTTE front organizations such as Tamil Youth Organization (TYO), voicing strong support for self determination in the proposed state of Tamil Eelam since 2006. According to the Evening Standard published in the UK on 04 April 2008, at a meeting organised by the BTF, at the Excel Centre, Docklands, on 27 November 2007, a video message from the Tamil Tigers' leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, praising suicide bombing was played and a collection was taken for Tamil Tiger "martyrs". It further states that this meeting is the subject of a police anti-terror investigation. At present, prominent LTTE supporters, (Tamil Labour councillors) Daya Ida Kadar, Miss Elizabeth Mann with the backing of certain local politicians play an active role in organizing LTTE events in UK under the BTF banner. The BTF's involvement with European Parliamentarians such as MEP Robert Evans, has also been exposed in recent times.

#### vi. Tamil Youth Organization (TYO)

This organization which has approximately 12 branches worldwide (Norway, Australia, France, UK, USA, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Italy, Malaysia, Sweden Germany, Denmark) claims to bring together Tamil youth. However, it too has been engaged in a series of propaganda activities and has largely taken over the organizational aspects of public events for the LTTE in the UK, holding fund raising events and seeking to galvanise the youth.

The President of TYO, UK Goldan Lambert (holding a French passport) was arrested by the Counter Terrorism Command on 21/06/07 under the UK Anti Terrorism Act for being associated with the BTA in organizing the Black July rally in Hyde Park on 25/11/06 and was formally charged in the Central Criminal Court, London under section 11, Sub sections 1 and 3 of the Anti Terrorism Act of 2000. The case is in progress.

#### vii. International Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (ITRO)

This organization was registered as a company on 23 August 2005 in UK, shortly after the de-listing of the TRO as a charity. It has been suggested that the intention was to project the image that TRO continued to function through another name. Registering as a company with Companies House is a new trend for LTTE fronts to avoid scrutiny. The Companies House which is the registry of companies has no mandate to investigate companies accused of links with terrorist groups etc.

One of the trustees of TRO, UK, N. Sathyamoorthy is a director of ITRO, which shows the clear link between the two. Significantly, another director of ITRO, Nagarajah Narendran, an Australian citizen, is involved with TRO Australia. In a letter to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Australia, which was published in the pro LTTE website Tamilnet on 29/11/95 Nagarajah Narendran had clarified that "ITRO London is the representative body of TRO overseas branches".

Following numerous actions taken against the TRO branches worldwide, ITRO has maintained a low profile and is not visible in its activities. However, it remains a properly constituted channel for future LTTE transactions.

#### **a) Fund raising**

Jane's Intelligence Review of 1 August 2007, which notes that unlike the decentralised jihadist movement, the LTTE is a centralised, hierarchical organisation commanded and controlled by its founding leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, notes "the Tamil Tigers generate an estimated US\$ 200 to 300 million per year" and that "the profit margin of its operating budget would likely be the envy of any multinational corporation". At present, most of the funds raised from abroad have been reserved for the purposes of procurement of arms and high tech military hardware.

LTTE has regularized its fundraising process in order to ensure the continuous inflow of funds to meet ever-increasing expenditure of the organization particularly to procure arms. The collection from expatriate Tamil Communities in European countries has been identified as one of the major sources of income of the LTTE. Almost in every country particularly in Europe there are Tamil communities, Front organisations or groups that are sympathetic to the Eelam cause and these groups are actively engaged in collecting funds through various means showing that the funds are being utilised for the rehabilitation of Tamils in the North and East. An example is the TRO. It is a known fact that most of the funds collected by the TRO organisation in the pretext of initiating a number of humanitarian projects such as the Foster Parents' scheme for children are being utilised to strengthen the LTTE's military capability and also to expand its international network.

The LTTE collects these funds either through voluntary contributions or through means of extortion, intimidation, threat and even violence. Those who refuse to contribute are told that their relatives in Sri Lanka "cannot be given any guarantee about their safety." An example of

the above can be quoted, where a Tamil national who holds Danish citizenship had been harassed by LTTE when he visited JAFFNA in mid 2004, simply because he had refused to co-operate with the LTTE's financial demands in Denmark.

In its March 2006 report, 'Funding the Final War: LTTE Intimidation and Extortion in the Tamil Diaspora', the Human Rights Watch (HRW) cites a Tamil Community activist in Toronto as saying: "Ninety percent of people, even if they don't support the LTTE, they are scared. The killing doesn't just happen back home in Sri Lanka. It happens in Paris, in Canada. They burned the library, (The TamilResourceCenter, burned by arson in Toronto in May 1994.) they broke the legs of DBS Jeyaraj. They tried to stop the CTBC radio from organizing. A journalist was killed in Paris. The threat is not only in Sri Lanka. It's everywhere, all over the world. ... Many Tamils live in Canada or Europe fear for the safety of family members still living in Sri Lanka in areas under LTTE-control. Since the beginning of the ceasefire in 2002, more than 200 people, mostly Tamils, have been killed in Sri Lanka, apparently for political reasons. Most of the killings were attributed to the Tigers...The Tamil Tigers also identify Tamils from the West who return to Sri Lanka to visit family members, and systematically pressure them for funds when they arrive in LTTE- controlled territory in the north of Sri Lanka. The assessed "rate" is often \$1, £1, or €1 per day for the length of time they have lived in the West. Individuals who have lived abroad for years may be asked for thousands of dollars and told they may not leave until they produce the requested amount. In some cases, the LTTE confiscates their passports until the money is paid."

TCC offices in Europe also operate a registration process of Tamil families by systematically registering and assigning a unique PIN number for each family and individual for illegal taxation and monitoring of their movements into Sri Lanka. The mechanism is used to extract funds – through threats and intimidation and other such coercive action – to sustain regular finances of the LTTE. The collection of personal data and use of such data for illegal purposes in itself violates European Council Directives on Personal Property.

Apart from its activities in Europe relating to human smuggling, drug trafficking, gun running and organized crime, the LTTE fronted petrol sheds help boost its revenue through credit card frauds perpetrated by them. LTTE agents sentenced in April 2007 are known to have skimmed credit cards for over 5.3 million Norwegian Kroners. The main criminal got 5 and half years in prison and the other 15-18 months. The cards used in this case had information skimmed from petrol sheds in England and Canada. More recently, the large credit card fraud perpetrated in London cost the British public almost 30 million Sterling Pounds. Here the LTTE had lent money to asylum seekers to set up petrol sheds and then force them to use skimming machines through intimidation. About 200 independently owned petrol sheds are currently being investigated. They skimmed data from credit and debit cards, which are transferred into bogus cards which are then used to rob millions of Pounds. Card details cloned in Britain have been used to obtain funds in Thailand where the LTTE terrorist group is also active.

In addition, there are seemingly legitimate activities for funds generation carried out through numerous front organizations and entities like NGOs and business establishments, such as gas stations, printing presses, super markets, video parlours, jewellery shops, phone card companies, TV/radio stations. etc. There are also collections from Sports & cultural events. The continued dependency of the LTTE for funds from overseas to continue its terror campaign in Sri Lanka and the continuing appeal for such funds from the expatriate Tamil community was demonstrated once again two weeks ago, when in the annual Martyr's Day speech on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008, LTTE Leader Prabhakaran observed:

*“I would request them (Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora) from my heart to strengthen the hands of our freedom movement and continue to extend their contributions and help.”*

The opportunity in EU countries for Front Organizations to engage in fund raising, serves to strengthen the LTTE - a proscribed terrorist organization in the EU.

### **b) Money Laundering**

The LTTE often use un-traceable, document-less transactions to move monies from one country to another. At present, the LTTE is extensively using this system as one of its main means of smuggling money to Switzerland from other European countries and thereafter from Switzerland to Singapore for onward transfers. It needs to be emphasized that collection of money in the EU countries are transferred and sometimes hand-carried to Switzerland, from where they are transferred to destinations such as Singapore for disbursement of procurement, as it has no legal restriction on monies leaving or entering the country.

The difficulties experienced in cooperating with some states has been a major obstacle in curbing money laundering by the LTTE and its front organizations, which has been a contributory factor in the prolongation of the conflict in Sri Lanka.

### **c) Tamil Cholai Schools (Tamil Blossoming Schools)**

There are more than 300 Tamil schools functioning in Europe under different names, receiving host government funding, but are directly or indirectly administered by the LTTE. As per records approximately 20,000 Tamil students between the ages of 4 and 21 years are studying Tamil language, Sri Lankan (‘Tamil Eelam’) history, music and dancing, local languages...etc in these schools. LTTE is making use of these schools extensively not only to inculcate Tamil extremist nationalist sentiments and hatred towards Sinhalese in the minds of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Tamils but also to promote LTTE interest and raise funds for the organization in a well organized manner. In addition, children of these schools are being forced to participate in protest campaigns/propaganda events organized by the LTTE and its front organization operations in Europe.

In some of the Scandinavian countries, the LTTE has made significant investments in Mother Tongue Schools (Tamil Cholai Schools). In Denmark, the TCC operates 28 Mother Tongue Schools. In fact the head of TCC in Denmark Arul Thilainadarasa was elected to the Herning City Council which provided funding for several of these Mother Tongue Schools. Approximately 6500 students and 950 teachers of 130 Thamilalayam schools in Germany have been instructed by the LTTE to launch a month long propaganda campaign, where children will be made to wear a colour photograph of a crying child in the Wannu on the chest pocket of the school uniform. The aim is to draw the sympathy of the local community to the LTTE cause, whilst creating a conducive environment to raise funds for the organization. In his recent Martyrs’ Day speech, the younger generation of Tamils nurtured through such Tamil Cholai Schools, were a particular focus of the LTTE leader when he observed; “I would also take this opportunity to express my affection and my praise to our Tamil youth living outside our homeland for the prominent and committed role they play in actively contributing towards the liberation of our nation.”

The latitude given in Europe for the continuance of such institutions, would serve the same purpose, the dreaded ‘Madrasas’ provide to the Jihadist movement.

#### **d) LTTE Owned Satellite TV/ Radio and internet net work**

LTTE propaganda machinery in Europe can be defined as the live wire between the LTTE and the Tamil Diaspora and also its link to the International community. To this end, the LTTE uses every possible means to propagate its interests throughout Europe, both through electronic and print media, the former being the most effective. Prior to year 2007 LTTE dominated the Tamil electronic media in Europe whilst preventing the existence /emergence of any Tamil TV/radio that was neutral or harmful to its cause.

In April 2007 it became clear that the LTTE was illegally using an INTELSAT transponder to propaganda radio and TV programmes. This access obtained by LTTE through 'INTELSAT 12' to broadcast the LTTE's so-called state television channel, National Television of Tamil Eelam (NTT), which was transmitted for more than 08 years, were ceased by 'INTELSAT ', the largest US based satellite provider in the world in April 2007. Following a French court order, the transmissions of the Tamil Television Network (TTN), the LTTE owned satellite television station that had been functioning for over a decade from Paris was also ceased in May 2007.

At the beginning of 2008, the LTTE recommenced NTT broadcasts through Hong Kong based Asia Sat with the help of a third party but that too was ceased in August 2008. Subsequently LTTE elements based in Switzerland have made several unsuccessful attempts to commence "Euro TV" through Milan in Italy.

Tharisanam TV, which was engaged in promoting LTTE interest through Israeli based company Satlink Communications too was ceased in July 2008 following the intervention of Israeli authorities.

The LTTE exploits the Internet to the maximum in its propaganda work and maintains/sponsors a large number of sites in different languages. Since the mid-1990's the Internet has also been used to raise funds for the LTTE and to glorify terrorism. In more recent times, following the restrictions placed on certain LTTE owned/sponsored satellite audiovisual channels, the LTTE has used the Internet as a method to circumvent these restrictions. Channels which are forced to cease transmissions due to links to terrorism, (i.e. National Television of Tamil Eelam(NTT), Voice of Tigers (VoT), Euro Television) continue to be webcast on the internet.

In September 2008, LTTE managed to register a Satellite channel named "GTV" through UK based OFCOM (OFCOM is the regulatory authority not the sat provider) and at present this station is extensively engaged in carrying out LTTE propaganda in Europe and Middle East and it is expected to expand the coverage to Canada and US in the coming months.

#### **e) Criminality and mafia involvement**

"Tamil mafia works hand-in-glove with the Tamil Tigers in their campaign to extort money from unwilling Tamil citizens in France and the mafia gangs keep a percentage and pass on the ransom collection to Tamil Tigers".

In the latest best-selling book on criminal gangs in France titled '*Mafias Gangs et Cartels: La criminalite internationale en France*' (Mafias, Gangs and Cartels – International criminality in France), French author and criminologue Jérôme Pierrat, describes the fund raising activities of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) active collaboration with Tamil

criminal gangs like Mukkapola, Minnale, Viluthu and Vennila. He reveals the underworld activities of the Tamils in France and their close links with the LTTE. It is to be noted that the same situation exists in most of the countries in the West where the Tamil Diaspora is significant.

He also notes that "... the Tamil gangs are said to be involved in racketeering, burglaries and other exploitation of illegal immigrants or shopkeepers, as well as drug trafficking and possessing stolen goods. But the biggest worry for the intelligence services is the link some of them have with the French wing of the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Sri Lankan separatist guerrilla. The "Tigers" indeed had the monopoly of "mafia-like practices" within the community until the gangs appeared, with racketeering at the top of the list." It is further noted that "if the money collected by the TRO was transiting through the account of the association in the Barclay's bank in Paris, the cash was undoubtedly going straight to Switzerland and its banks, as it may be guessed from the seizure made on smugglers at borders. In February 2004, the customs officers of Ottmarsheim in the Haut-Rhin department arrested two men aged 44 and 35 together with a woman and two children carrying 200.000 euros in cash in their car. One of them acknowledged he already conveyed 5.4 million euros to a bank in Zurich during six trips he made in 2003."

#### **f) International telephone network**

The LTTE's international telephone network (Eg. Gnanam International Telephone Cards in the Europe,) is a further front which contributes towards the LTTE. Voice calls taken through this system are converted into data packets and transmitted out of the country through an internet protocol and reconverted in the receiving country into voice and thereafter inserted into the national telephone system. While undermining national regulatory systems, this unlawful system also prevents revenue to legitimate licence holders who operate international telephone gateways.

#### **g) Propaganda, glorification & martyrdom**

Only two weeks ago the LTTE concluded "Maveerar Naal" - the Martyrs' Day, the week-long commemorations internationally organized by the LTTE from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November, which, besides commemorating the cadres who have died in fighting for the LTTE, celebrates the birthday of LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran which falls on 26<sup>th</sup> November, and culminates with a speech by the LTTE leader on November 27<sup>th</sup> which is broadcast at these rallies. The speech is used by the LTTE leader to speak directly to the diaspora and encourage them to contribute money to the "cause" and thus has high propaganda value.

While organized under the names of LTTE front organizations such as the TRO and the TCC in most of Europe where the LTTE is listed as a terrorist organisation the posters advertising the parallel Martyrs' Day celebration in Switzerland, where the LTTE is not a proscribed organization, the LTTE's logo and name are clearly indicated on the bottom right hand corner as being the organiser of the event. This proves beyond doubt the LTTE's control behind the organization of Martyrs' Day across Europe and in other parts of the world, and that the advertisements of the event have been carefully crafted in such a way as to circumvent domestic regulations.

Besides the considerable propaganda value such events generate, these events are primarily used to raise funds for the LTTE by its proxies, particularly aimed at bolstering the morale of the diaspora and enhancing its depleting military capability, particularly in the face of its recent military setbacks in northern Sri Lanka

Such events which will serve as a blatant glorification of terrorism, where the cadres of an internationally recognized terrorist organization are being venerated and portrayed as an example of ‘martyrdom’, runs counter to the expressed policy of the EU to denounce such acts by terrorist organizations. It was vital that the EU come to an early determination as to where the right of freedom of expression ends and the European Council’s recently sanctioned regulations to curb terrorist related acts of glorification of terrorism and martyrdom begins.

## **7. How the world has reacted to the activities of the LTTE and its front organizations in recent times.**

a) The earliest action against an LTTE front organization was taken in the **U.K.**, when in October 2000 (even before the LTTE was eventually proscribed in the UK in February 2001), an investigation was launched into the activities of the **TRO** in UK, and the organization was subsequently removed from the register of charities by the UK Charity Commission on 10 August 2005. One of the findings of the report was that “TRO Sri Lanka liaised with the LTTE in determining where funds could be applied” and also that “the trustees of TRO/UK exercised little or no control over the application of funds in Sri Lanka and failed to demonstrate a clear audit trail relating to expenditure. They also failed to provide the commission with any explanation as to the provenance of some of the funds received from the US and Canada.”

Although the TRO was de-listed from the charitable organizations list in the UK, it continues to collect funds within the UK, through “White Pigeon”, another front organization of the LTTE. (It is noteworthy that subsequently both the TRO and White Pigeon were proscribed in the US in 2007.)

Notwithstanding the de-listing of the TRO, numerous LTTE front organizations continue to operate in the UK to carry forward the activities done by these organizations for the LTTE. These include; ITRO, BTA, BTF.

Of these the BTA has been in the spotlight of investigation since the June 2007 arrest (and release on conditional bail) and subsequent April 2008 re-arrest by the British authorities of BTA Chief Mr. Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar alias A.C.Shanthan, who until the proscription of the LTTE in the UK in 2001, was the head of Eelam House, the LTTE’s International Secretariat which was located in London. Mr. Chrishanthakumar and three others belonging to LTTE front organizations who assisted him, have been formally charged in the UK Central Criminal Court under section 15 and 22 of the UK Terrorism Act 2000 and the case is pending.

b) In **Sri Lanka**, on the basis of discrepancies in the collections abroad and receipt of funds in Sri Lanka, as well as disbursement in Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the 2004 Tsunami, an investigation on the TRO was begun. Following investigations into financial transactions by the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Central Bank established under anti money laundering legislation, FIU suspended all TRO accounts in Sri Lanka on 28 August 2006.

Immediately on the heels of the freezing of assets of the TRO in the United States on 15 November 2007 the Government of Sri Lanka on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2007 proscribed the LTTE front organization – the TRO – in Sri Lanka and appealed to international community to follow the processes initiated in the United States to curtail LTTE’s terrorist financing.

A sum of approximately Rupees 71 million which was lying to the credit of the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO) at the time the funds of the TRO were frozen in Sri Lanka, has now been forfeited by the State. The TRO accounts were suspended in Sri Lanka in terms of the provisions of the Financial Transactions Reporting Act and the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing Act in August 2006. Such suspension was carried out on the grounds that large sums of money received by the TRO from time to time from international non-governmental organizations, individuals, foreign entities and TRO branches in several foreign locations, purporting to be funds for humanitarian projects in Sri Lanka, were, according to intelligence reports, mainly used to finance terrorist activities, and that the money, securities or credits which were lying to its credit were being used or intended to be used for such purposes.

Investigations are in progress to trace and forfeit any further funds and assets belonging to the TRO. Accordingly, the general public is cautioned that they should not have any financial transactions or any other links with the TRO, or with any of its offices, since any involvement including any financial connection with a proscribed organization, is a criminal offence.

c) In the US, on 15 November 2007, in terms of Executive Order 13224 the U.S. Government designated the Tamils Rehabilitation Organization (TRO) as a terrorist entity and froze the assets of the TRO in the US. It is now listed in the SDN list of the US Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) under the US Department of Treasury. In this regard, US government statements noted inter-alia:

- The TRO was acting “as a front to facilitate fundraising” and provide other support for the Tamil Tigers
- “Passed off its operations as charitable when in fact it was raising money for a designated terrorist organization responsible for heinous acts of terrorism”
- TRO is “the conduit of funds from the United States to the (Tamil Tigers) in Sri Lanka”
- Involved in the purchase of “munitions, equipment, communications devices and other technology” for the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka”
- “The LTTE oversees the activities of the TRO and LTTE linked organizations in Sri Lanka and abroad. Directives issued by the LTTE suggest that the LTTE-affiliated branch representatives are expected to coordinate their efforts with the respective TRO representatives in their locations and report on all activity to the LTTE”

As revealed in the US investigation, the TRO engages in procurement of military arms, equipment, communication devices, etc. which activities point to its critical terrorist linkage with the terrorist group – the LTTE, and are also indicative of engagement in terrorism including aiding and abetting.

The proscription of the TRO in the US, was preceded by an FBI investigation of the activities of TRO/USA and its transactions and the arrest during the period 2006-2007 in various parts of the US and in Guam, of 17 activists for raising funds, money laundering to purchase military equipment including surface to air missiles, night vision devices, AK-47s and to bribe state department officials to remove the LTTE from the foreign terrorist organization list and to purchase classified intelligence concerning the LTTE and to influence at least one US Congressman. Most important among them was the arrest on 25 April 2007 in Queens of the head of the World Tamil Coordinating Committee (WTCC), Karunakaran Kandasamy (alleged to be the LTTE in-charge in the US), on charges of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization. The group headed by him reportedly operated in the US "drawing on America's financial resources and technological advances to further its war of terror in Sri Lanka and elsewhere". A FBI raid on Kandasamy's office in Queens has

revealed evidence that he had raised millions of dollars for the Tamil Tigers through the WTCC. Already 4 of these persons have been tried and convicted, while the others are due to stand trial shortly.

d) In **Canada**, on 13 June 2008, the Government proscribed the Toronto-based front organization of the LTTE, the **World Tamil Movement (WTM)**, under the Anti-Terrorism Act of Canada. The directive issued by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions advised banks and insurance companies to notify the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) or Canadian Security Intelligence Service if they held any accounts linked to the WTM. The LTTE is entrenched in Canada and a 58-page RCMP document refers to the WTM as "the Canadian arm of the LTTE".

Documents emerging from the investigations into the WTM have established, inter alia that the WTM is a foreign branch of the LTTE and that the WTM received direct instructions, through an 'operational manual' dated 28 July 2003, from the LTTE Leader Prabhakaran, inter alia, on raising funds for the LTTE. The manual found, also instructed that the younger generation should be taken in for the "freedom battle".

RCMP counterterrorism investigators and Canada Revenue Agency charity regulators also accuse the TRO in Canada of having ties to the LTTE. It notes, "We believe that there are

reasonable grounds for concern that TRO (Canada) operates for purposes that conflict with Canadian public policy". The head of Canada's charities directorate wrote in a letter to the group. "More specifically, there appears to be reason to conclude that TRO (Canada) may be functioning as part of a support network for the terrorist organization Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam." Whether to designate the TRO a terrorist "entity" under the Anti-Terrorism Act, is believed to be currently under consideration in Canada.

e) In **France**, 21 activists belonging to LTTE front organizations including Nadarajah Mathinthiran, in-Charge of the Coordination Committee of Tamils in France" (CCTF) were arrested in April, May and September 2007. They continue to be under arrest/on bail and are due to stand trial shortly "for criminal conspiracy with a view to perpetrate acts of terrorism, financing of terrorist enterprise and extortion". It has been established that **TRO-France** alone has raised 7.2 million Euro during 2006 for the LTTE (where each Tamil family was forced to pay 2000 Euros per year and shopkeepers were made to pay 6000 Euros).

f) In **Australia**, having been arrested on 1 May 2007, on 13 Sept 2007, 3 persons, Aruran Vinayagamoorthy, Sivarajah Yathavan, and Arumugam Rajeevan were charged for using Tamil Coordinating Committee (TCC) in Melbourne to raise funds for the LTTE. Mr. J. Jeyakumar, head of LTTE in Australia/New Zealand and also a prominent member of TCC was accused for the same charges, died while the investigations continued. When they reportedly appeared for the start of their committal hearing at Melbourne Magistrates' Court. Mark Dean S.C, the Commonwealth prosecutor, told the court that US \$1.9 million was deposited in a bank account for the TCC between 2001 and 2005. He alleged that US \$1.2 million of that money was withdrawn in cash and was used to purchase electronic equipment and other items for the LTTE. He said money provided to the LTTE was collected under the guise of donations for charitable projects and included money raised after the 2004 tsunami. They have been charged for collecting funds and providing material support to the LTTE.

The Attorney General's Department of Sri Lanka assisted the Australian Federal Police (AFP) by coordinating the connected investigations in Sri Lanka and provided evidence to establish that (a) the LTTE is a terrorist organization & (b) certain items procured by the suspects had been subsequently used by the LTTE to commit acts of terrorism. In late 2007, a committal proceeding was held in a Magistrates Court of Melbourne and the Magistrate held that there existed a prima-facie case against the defendants. The Defendants now stand trial on Indictment in the Supreme Court of the State of Victoria. As the LTTE had not been proscribed in a timely manner in Australia, now the prosecution has to go through a detailed process of presenting admissible evidence to establish that the LTTE is in fact a terrorist organization.

g) In **Denmark**, TRO-Denmark has had its assets amounting to DKK 52,000 (over 7,000 Euros) frozen for supporting the LTTE. The action was taken 5 days after the US proscription of the TRO. The TRO has been forced to close down their offices in Denmark in July 2008 due to the lack of money to pay rent and the number of members has fallen dramatically since the allegations against the organisation. TRO-Denmark, which appealed the conviction early through Municipal Court and High Court without success, is now before the Supreme Court.

h) In **Italy**, on 19 June 2008, Italian police arrested 28 Sri Lankan suspected LTTE sympathisers for providing funding for the group. The suspects were arrested from 9 cities including Rome, Genoa, Bologna, Naples and Palermo at the end of a two-year investigation. According to Naples police all suspects are Sri Lankan citizens and extorted money from their fellow nationals in the various cities and sent it home to finance the LTTE. The investigations are continuing.

## **8. Danger of not taking action**

### **Sri Lanka's efforts to defeat terrorism could be wasted**

At a time Sri Lanka is engaged in the difficult task of putting an end to terrorism in the North of the country, it is vital to also end the capacity of the LTTE and its front organizations to raise funds and engage in propaganda in western countries. Else the sacrifices being made on the ground would be wasted and the capacity to sustain the conflict will be revived.

### **No community insulated from the LTTE and its Front Organization activity**

Countries of high intensity LTTE activities – their law enforcement and monitoring agencies, need to interdict the networks of the LTTE and its front organizations. They should do so not merely in terms of its international obligations to help in the fight against terrorism wherever it takes place, but also because today these terrorist front organizations are getting engrained into and are exploiting the body politic of many of these countries, abusing their grant of asylum and corrupting and criminalizing their respective societies.

### **Ramifications abroad of an LTTE defeat in Sri Lanka**

Abroad, the situation is likely to get worse in a scenario where the conventional fighting capacity of the LTTE is defeated. In such a case, the pressure on the diaspora would be intensified by the LTTE. Networked and trained as they are, in order to survive, members of the LTTE are likely to be forced into engaging/prolonging clandestine businesses or engage in criminal activities as mercenaries.

## **9. What more should be done in Europe ?**

### *a) List TRO and other front organizations or add as a.k.a.*

Through Council Decision 2006/379/EC of 29 May 2006 the EC applied EC Regulation No. 2580/2001 on specific measures directed against groups and entities with a view to combating terrorism to the LTTE. Despite this stricture it is clear that the LTTE through its front organizations continue to engage in terrorist financing making a mockery of the EU listing of the LTTE.

With a view to addressing this continuing trend, Sri Lanka presented in June 2008 a comprehensive dossier to the EU on the TRO and other key LTTE front organization operations in Europe and elsewhere. This dossier was further supplemented with information on continuing appeals being made by the LTTE through the front organizations to the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora for enhanced financing through numerous propaganda campaigns and other means.

All our countries are obligated to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1373. Additionally all parties to the UN Convention on Terrorist Financing are required to take specific measures against fund raising activities of terrorist groups. The US and Canadian proscriptions of the TRO and the WTM respectively, provide a plethora of evidence that underlines the culpability of LTTE front organizations. It is necessary, that the EU address this phenomena in an effective manner.

### *b) Greater vigilance*

It is of paramount importance that greater vigilance is exercised by law enforcement and intelligence agencies in EU countries on the varying methods adopted by particularly LTTE front organizations.

In this context, it is vital that the finance generating and arms procurement networks of the LTTE, which has a global reach and exploits Tamil Diaspora presence, is arrested in all parts of the world, simultaneously. Doing so piece meal within states or leaving lag time in action taken between states, will only allow the LTTE and its front organizations to move their operations to avoid detection.

### *c) Modalities for Intelligence cooperation.*

It is critical that we identify the clandestine net work in place across the globe, involved in arms procurement and money laundering and other illegal operations. This is not something the Government of Sri Lanka can do on European soil, but must necessarily be initiated by the respective governments themselves.

### *d) Modalities for criminal justice field cooperation*

Understanding each others criminal justice systems relating to terrorism, building of formal and informal contacts/enhanced interaction between relevant authorities, cooperation among prosecutorial authorities, exchange of information on a pro-active basis between relevant entities, cooperation between Financial Intelligence Units (FIU) in the respective jurisdictions and entering into Mutual Legal Assistance arrangements in criminal matters are some of the means through which this objective can be addressed.

## **10. Conclusion**

The network of the LTTE and its front organizations transcends the national borders both within the European Union, as well as outside. We have seen sufficient evidence in the prosecutions such as those carried out in the US, Canada and Australia, that the operations of front organizations are an integral part of the LTTE. Taking concerted action against all entities who act for, or on behalf of, or at the behest of terrorist organizations, is an obligation all our countries have voluntarily undertaken under the numerous UN conventions on terrorism, which we have signed and ratified. Doing so has also cast on us, the obligation to implement these provisions equally, to all terrorist entities across the globe.

Sri Lanka calls upon the European Union and other European countries to honor its pledges in this regard with respect to the LTTE and its numerous front organizations operating in their respective countries. It is indeed, time to act.

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