



Tamil Solidarity:

For the rights of workers & all oppressed people in Sri Lanka

இலங்கையில் ஒடுக்கப்படும் அனைவரது
உரிமைகளுக்கும் போராடும் -தமிழ் ஒருங்கமைப்பு

Trade union resolution in support of Tamil Solidarity

ON 18 May 2009, the Sri Lankan government declared victory after nearly 30 years of war against the Tamil-speaking people in the north and east of Sri Lanka. In the final months of that conflict, more than 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, hundreds of thousands were rounded up into detention camps without adequate food, drinking water, shelter, sanitation or medical supplies. The government claimed the camps were to identify and isolate guerrilla fighters, but independent aid and humanitarian agencies, and journalists were refused entry. Reports smuggled out by Channel 4 and other reputable sources gave witness to the horrific conditions and brutal treatment meted out in the camps to people of all ages, from the youngest children to the most elderly men and women.

The government now claims that people are being released but, again, this hides the truth. Secret detention camps holding tens of thousands of people are still operational. And the north and east of Sri Lanka has been transformed into militarised zones.

On top of this, Tamil-speaking refugees have found their way blocked to countries such as Australia, and the UK government's special envoy to Sri Lanka, Des Browne, has stated that Sri Lanka is safe for Tamil refugees to return to. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan government is using what it calls its own 'war on terror' to clamp down on democratic rights throughout the island. This has led to harsh restrictions on trade union activity and the right to protest, assembly and strike – the most basic democratic rights for workers and poor people. Journalists and political activists are harassed and threatened – some have been killed or disappeared by shadowy gangs.

In response to this, 'Tamil Solidarity: for the rights of workers and all oppressed people in Sri Lanka' was set up in Tamil Nadu, India, early this year (originally called Stop the Slaughter of Tamils). Its aim is to raise awareness of the plight of the Tamil-speaking people and also to campaign for democratic and trade union rights for all working-class and poor people on the island whether they be Tamil, Sinhala, Upcountry people, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim or from other minorities.

This trade union therefore:

- Affirms its solidarity with the Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka and will do all it can to raise awareness among our members.
- Stands in solidarity with the workers and poor of Sri Lanka, regardless of their ethnic and religious background.
- Will do all it can to support independent trade unions in Sri Lanka.
- Encourages branches to invite a speaker from Tamil Solidarity to address meetings.
- Will publicise future campaigning activity of Tamil Solidarity, and other events organised by the Tamil community in defence of their rights.
- Agrees to affiliate to the campaign at a national level by sending £250 to Tamil Solidarity / or £50 at branch level.

Please make cheques payable to 'Tamil Solidarity'. Donations can be made online.

www.tamilsolidarity.org.uk ● info@tamilsolidarity.org