

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada is convinced that a lasting peace in the northeast, which acknowledges the aspirations of Tamils, can only be achieved by negotiation and dialogue. Canada regularly calls on the protagonists in the conflict to strive towards a political settlement through the introduction of confidence building measures. To this end, Canada welcomes the establishment of the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission as a useful vehicle by which to develop and encourage the peace process.

Canada has established a direct linkage between human rights performance and development assistance spending. Country programs and priorities have been reviewed globally, and in the case of Sri Lanka this exercise has resulted in substantial adjustments. Government-to-government assistance has been scaled back dramatically, while support for social and economic development through non-governmental organizations has been enlarged. Overall aid expenditures have been pared substantially (reduced almost 75% since 1982-3), to a level of \$11.2 million last year. Every effort is being made to ensure that the current program reinforces broad Canadian foreign policy objectives.

Canada has also brought the issue of human rights violations in Sri Lanka to the attention of the Third Committee of the U.N. General Assembly. Canada took the lead in the negotiation of a strong Chairman's statement at last year's CHR. That statement committed Sri Lanka to implement the recommendations of the UN Working Group on Disappearances and to admitting the Group back to Sri Lanka by the end of the year to monitor and observe progress. The UN body has also encouraged the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the recommendations of Amnesty International.

As long as the civil war continues, Canada will not issue permits for the export of military equipment to the Sri Lankan armed forces. Nor, given the high levels of continuing violence and the apparent inability of either side to commence peace negotiations in good faith, is Canada in a position to propose or encourage the engagement of the international community in mediation efforts or peacekeeping operations.

In January, 1992 an eight member Canadian delegation, including three Members of Parliament, made an unofficial visit to Sri Lanka at the invitation of a group of local non-governmental organizations. The Government of Canada welcomed this event, as well as the opportunity to study and reply in detail to the delegation's report.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- Unofficial indications suggest that the report of the Working Group on Disappearances, while revealing a continued serious situation in Sri Lanka, may indicate improvements in the "statistics" as well as the attitude of Sri Lankan

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