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Congrès Tamoul Canadien
"The unified voice of Canadian Tamils"

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For Immediate Release

November 3, 2009

HUMAN CIRCLE OF HOPE FORMED TO UNLOCK SRILANKAN CAMPS

Toronto, Ontario — A human circle of hope will be formed around the Sri Lankan Consulate on November 21, 2009 to demand the release of more than 250,000 civilians confined in Sri Lanka's internment camps.

In late May, the Sri Lankan government made a commitment to the international community that it would release the bulk of camp detainees in 180 days. November 21 marks the end of that 180-day pledge and still, the vast majority of the displaced people, including tens of thousands of children, have not been released from the camps.

Many Canadians of various backgrounds will gather to form the circle of hope from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. and call for the camps to be unlocked. The event will be organized by Canadians Concerned About Sri Lanka, of which the Canadian Tamil Congress is a member. Tamil Canadians are urged to take a stance against the continuing internment of more than a quarter million displaced civilians, who are being held in violation of international law.

"These people have a basic right to freedom, and to imprison them in these modern-day internment camps when they have done nothing wrong, is inhumane and violates international law," said David Poopalapillai, National Spokesperson for the Canadian Tamil Congress. "These Tamils civilians, along with their children, have a right to be treated with basic dignity."

Last month, Amnesty International called for the camps to be unlocked, noting that authorities were failing to deliver basic services. The organization reported camps remained overcrowded and lacked basic sanitation facilities.

Canadians Concerned about Sri Lanka is a broad coalition of community, labour and academics who have come together in June 2009 in response to the humanitarian crisis. The group hopes to press the Canadian government and International bodies to pressure the Sri Lankan government to treat all its citizens equally and in a just manner.

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