



CANADIAN TAMIL CONGRESS ■ CONGRÈS TAMOUL CANADIEN

31 Progress Avenue, Suite #202, Scarborough M1P 4S6 T: 416-240-0078 F:416-240-1601 e-mail:info@ctconline.ca

For Immediate Release

November 3, 2008

CTC Endorses “Open Your Eyes for HART” Campaign

A coalition of Canadian non-profit organizations has launched a nation-wide campaign to raise awareness of the humanitarian crisis in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The Canadian Tamil Congress fully endorses the objectives of the Canadian Humanitarian Appeal for the Relief of Tamils (CanadianHART) “Open Your Eyes for HART” campaign which seeks to inform Canadians about the plight of more than 300,000 internally displaced peoples (IDPs), 40,000 of whom are children.

Over the past several months as the Sri Lankan government intensified its war against the Tamil people, civilians in the conflict areas have been forced to flee their homes and live in makeshift refugee camps. Adding fuel to the fire, the Sri Lankan government has restricted humanitarian aid from reaching civilians in LTTE controlled areas in the North and East and has recently ordered that all humanitarian aid workers vacate these areas. International non-governmental organizations, such as Amnesty International as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have expressed their concern over the safety of IDPs in the North and East.

"Food, shelter, clean water, sanitation and, above all, security remain the most urgent concerns for the tens of thousands of displaced civilians living in LTTE-controlled areas in the north of the country," said Anthony Dalziel, International Committee of the Red Cross deputy head of delegation in Sri Lanka in a statement issued October 13, 2008.

“Each passing day brings more suffering and hardships to the thousands of IDPs in the North and East,” says David Poopalapillai, national spokesperson for the Canadian Tamil Congress. “The CanadianHART campaign will hopefully shed some light into the deplorable situation of Tamil IDPs in the North and East of Sri Lanka and compel the Canadian government to take urgent action.”

The campaign calls upon the Canadian government to take a proactive role in preventing a humanitarian catastrophe in Sri Lanka by persuading the Government of Sri Lanka to immediately declare a cease-fire, allow the non-governmental organizations to access and provide for the immediate needs of the civilians in the war zone and to allow independent UN human rights monitoring.

To endorse the CanadianHART campaign or for more information about the campaign visit www.tamilIDPcrisis.org.

• Toronto	• Ottawa	• Montreal	• Vancouver	• Edmonton	• Winnipeg
(416) 240-0078	(613) 789-9371	(514) 898-8019	(778) 231-0074	(780) 660-1211	(204) 219-2018