



CANADIAN TAMIL CONGRESS ■ CONGRÈS TAMOUL CANADIEN

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Tamil Canadians Join Call for Emergency Debate on Sri Lanka

Ottawa- Tamil Canadians are disappointed by today's decision in the House of Commons to reject requests by several members of parliament for an emergency debate on Sri Lanka while thousands protested outside. A similar request by NDP leader Jack Layton for a debate was also denied last week. The Canadian Tamil Congress calls on the Speaker to allow the emergency debate to occur immediately.

"The situation is dire. Help is desperately needed for the 300,000 people who are confined in camps and not allowed to leave," said David Poopalapillai, spokesperson for the Canadian Tamil Congress. "They do not have adequate access to medicine, water, and food due to the restrictions placed on humanitarian aid groups."

"While we thank the Canadian government for its efforts during the UN Human Rights Council Special Session on Sri Lanka, more action is needed."

The Canadian Tamil Congress calls on Canada to put more international pressure on the Sri Lankan government to:

- (1) Allow unfettered access to the international media, humanitarian workers, local and international non-governmental organizations, local and international media, and United Nations bodies, including, UNICEF, UNHCR, World Health Organization and the World Food Programme;
- (2) Hand over jurisdiction for all Internment Camps to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- (3) Allow the return of Civilians to their homes immediately with the assistance of NGOs.

The Canadian Tamil Congress also thanks all members of parliament who have raised the topic in the House of Commons and brought awareness to the plight of innocent civilians.

For more information, contact Canadian Tamil Congress (416) 240 0078.

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