

SRI LANKA

**THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT MUST ANNOUNCE
IT'S PROPOSALS FOR DEVOLUTION**

**THE STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR
DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE (CDJ) IN SRI LANKA**

The CDJ wish to express its disappointment and regret at the break down of the peace talks and the decision of the LTTE leadership to resume armed hostilities.

In the immediate aftermath of the election of the Peoples' Alliance government, there was mass support amongst all communities for peace and devolution of power. In our view by unilateral resumption of armed attacks, the LTTE leadership has shown its disdain regarding the wishes and aspirations of ordinary people.

The decision of the PA government to hold secret bilateral talks with the LTTE was a profound error. The national question was not a private dispute between the LTTE leader and the President. It was also mistake to treat that the LTTE as the only tamil player in this dispute.

In devoting all its energies to persuade the LTTE to come into the peace process, the government neglected the one key task it had to fulfil - that was the announcement of its own proposals for peace and devolution. In failing to put forward it's own proposals, the PA government created the impression that it's policy was not qualitatively different from that of the UNP.

We are glad that the government has announced its determination to press ahead with its quest for peace. In our view the best course of pursuing peace is **firstly**, to announce its own proposal for devolution of power; **secondly**, to consult all parties affected by this problem; **thirdly**, to formulate a package of devolution acceptable to those living in the North and the East; and **finally**, to implement those proposals whether or not the LTTE agrees to participate in the devolved administration. Such a course of action would compel the LTTE to chose the path of peace and stability or the path of war and misery.

So far the people of all communities have been kept out of the peace process. It is only by bringing them into this process and by promoting the widest possible debate and discussion that Sri Lanka could combat war mongers and move forward to a lasting peace.

S.Kumar
Sunil Silva

for the Committee for Democracy
and Justice in Sri Lanka

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