

Operational Meeting

August 25th 2006

Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations

AGENDA

- 1. Feedback and Updates**
 - Humanitarian Staff Support Group**
 - Development Partners meeting**
 - Information Update**
 - IDP statistics**

- 2. Introduction of the UN Special Envoy for Tsunami's NGO Impact Initiative by Deputy Special Envoy Eric Schwartz - Discussion of key issues in context of current situation for humanitarian agencies in Sri Lanka**

- 3. Security Guidelines and implementation**
 - Questionnaire on Operational Meeting**

- 4. Announcements / AOB**

CONSORTIUM OF

CHA

HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES

Humanitarian Staff support group

Development Partners Meeting -Aug 15

- Access to areas by the ICRC and other designated INGO's/NGO's engaged in Humanitarian work at all times
- Access to remove bodies of dead and move injured for treatment access to distribute essential drugs, food and other designated items that can be freely moved
- Agree safe zones like temples/churches/Kovils and Mosques that will not be attacked at any time
- Minimum Civilian rights to be safeguarded at all times especially children and women
- Allow telecommunications and other communication modes to be open and maintained at all times recognizing that family members and relatives in Sri Lanka and overseas have to know of the safety or otherwise of their loved ones

- There must be open at all times lines of communications to contact persons and positions of responsibility on both sides to whom violations can be reported and appealed for assistance and facilitation can be made by citizens and NGO's
- Development Infrastructure supported by the IFI's like A9 must be also spared by both sides
- The CFA conditionality must be the minimum position to which both parties must be pressurized to honour
- Clear agreement of documentation and permits and approvals for NGO operations in affected areas must be reached , communicated and honoured
- At all times the civilians must have the right to move out of conflict areas and at no times should there be a siege on towns/villages restricting the free movement of willing civilians

- All humanitarian negatives on citizens must be subjected to independent enquiry, publication of findings, action against perpetrators and prevention of repeat in the future
- The Government and LTTE be pressurized via an offer of a development dividend by way of aid held back being released if full CFA implementation is immediately honoured in letter and spirit

Information Update

- **Human Rights Watch**
- **Sri Lanka: Warring Sides Must Let Aid Reach Civilians
Government and Tamil Tigers Must Respect International
Humanitarian Law**
- Under international humanitarian law, parties to a conflict are required to provide for the basic necessities of the civilian population under their control. They are obliged to allow and assist impartial humanitarian agencies to supply food, medical supplies and other essentials to civilians at risk. The belligerent parties must consent to allowing relief operations to take place, and may not refuse such consent on arbitrary grounds. They can take steps to control the content and delivery of humanitarian aid, such as to ensure that consignments do not include weapons. However, deliberately impeding relief supplies is prohibited.

- Amid heavy fighting in the peninsula, there are serious concerns that civilians will not be protected from harm, Human Rights Watch said. International humanitarian law requires parties to a conflict to take all necessary precautions to protect civilians against the dangers resulting from armed hostilities. They must to the extent feasible avoid locating military forces near civilians and remove civilians from the vicinity of military objectives. It is unlawful to prevent civilians from leaving areas close to military targets.
- Human Rights Watch also expressed concern that sufficient humanitarian assistance has not reached conflict areas in the eastern districts of Trincomalee and Batticaloa, where thousands of displaced persons fled fighting earlier this month. According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, at least 170,000 Sri Lankans have fled their homes in the north and east since the fighting in the country intensified.

- Local and international aid organizations have increasingly been the target of threats, harassment and violence that hinders their ability to assist the population. The possibility that international organizations might permanently depart contested areas in the north and east has fueled fears among civilians for their safety. Recent incidents include:
- The execution-style murder of 17 Sri Lankan members of the international aid agency Action Against Hunger (Action Contre la Faim) on August 4 following fighting in Muttur in Trincomalee district ;
the blocking and harassment of several aid convoys to internally displaced persons by local authorities in Trincomalee district and other areas in August;
grenade attacks by unidentified persons on the offices of three international organizations on May 21 in Muttur;

- Threats seemingly made by the Tamil Tigers against women aid workers in several eastern towns in April.
Government officials and various political parties have contributed to an atmosphere of hostility against nongovernmental organizations by politically motivated criticism of aid agencies for delays in projects for victims of the 2004 tsunami.
- Human Rights Watch has called for an international human rights monitoring mission to Sri Lanka under the auspices of the United Nations to publicly report on violations of international law by all sides. An international monitoring presence could help deter abuses, provide systematic documentation of rights violations, and address the problem of impunity that has resulted in cycles of violence and reprisal in Sri Lanka

TRO Situation Report 22 Aug

IDP Statistics

**Introduction of the UN Special Envoy for Tsunami' s
NGO Impact Initiative by Deputy Special Envoy- Eric
Schwartz**

**Discussion of key issues in context of current situation
for humanitarian agencies in Sri Lanka**

Questionnaire on Operational Meeting

Security Guidelines and implementation

- Travel Security and Vehicle Safety
- Planning your Journey
- Action at Check Points and Road Blocks – Personal Safety
- React to Small Arms Fire
- React to Indirect Fire (Artillery and Mortar)

- React to Aerial Attack
- Action on Detection of Mines
- First Aid
- Information and Contacts

Incident Report – 18 August to 24 August 2006

Districts	Incidents	Killed	Wounded	Abducted/Missing
• Ampara	01	-	-	-
• Batticaloa	10	05	02	-
• Colombo	01	-	-	-
• Jaffna	10	05	03	01
• Mannar	02	-	-	-
• Trincomalee	06	04	-	-
• Vavuniya	07	02	03	-
• Total	37	16	165	01
• Assassinations	-	14		
• Claymore Attacks	-	03		
• Hand Grenades	-	03		

CONSORTIUM OF

CHA

HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES

Announcements / AOB

Operational meeting - venue change

The next operational meeting on Friday September 1 at 8.15 am will be held at the Nagorodaya Centre, 155 A Dr Danister De Silva Mawatha, Colombo 8 (Opposite Welikada prison)