

Sri Lanka Elections: Acknowledge candidates who express their positions in word and deed and elect them! TGTE

JAFFNA, SRI LANKA, July 24, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ --

The Sri Lankan Parliamentary elections are scheduled for August 17 of this year. Since the elections are to be held in the Tamil homeland as well, the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) wishes to clarify to the Tamil people our views on the kind of representatives they should elect. We bring through this memorandum the outcome of discussions held by the TGTE at Cabinet and Parliament level on this subject.

The presence of Tamil members in the Sri Lankan Parliament will in no way transform the Sinhala Buddhist racist characteristics of the Sri Lankan State. The Tamil people know very well that the same Parliament of Sri Lanka has continued to be the core of unbridled power for Sinhala racism. It is in this Parliament that the legislation which helps entrench Sinhala Buddhist hegemony and laws that are meant to destroy the wellbeing of the Tamil people have been enacted. Given such a historical context, there are those who question the very purpose of contesting in these elections and becoming elected as members of such a Parliament.

Moreover, having to abide by an oath of acceptance of the 6th Amendment which criminalizes the Tamil people's freedom of expression, prior to contesting in these parliamentary elections, is seen as a fundamental contradiction by many.

The TGTE is resolute in its position that the 6th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution should be repealed in order for the Tamils to freely debate and determine their political future as a people. Nevertheless, we are of the opinion that it is essential for the Tamils to participate in this parliamentary election for strategic reasons. Since the international community holds it as a norm that people's representatives are elected through a ballot, it is imperative that the Tamil people elect their representatives but only those who are capable of leading the Tamil national liberation struggle further forward.

The present election is the first General Election to follow the Presidential election of January 8th. Since this one follows closely on the heels of the change of regime, there are those who consider this as a continuation of the same change. On the contrary, it has been the policy of those who came into power after the regime change to consider the Tamil national question within the framework of a unitary state, and to narrow down the international investigation against Tamil genocide towards a domestic investigation.

Under these circumstances, it should be clear to all of us that, irrespective of

which Sinhala political party wins leadership at these elections, all governments will be committed to protecting Sinhala Buddhist majoritarianism. Tamil leaders should not immerse themselves in such fantasies as reaching solutions to fulfill political aspirations of the Tamil people before the end of 2016. Neither should they be spreading false hopes among the Tamil people.

The Tamil people should remain vigilant and resolute about winning their rights. There should be no room for not only any Sinhala leaders but also Tamil leaders to deceive us. It is paramount that people's representatives are chosen at these elections based on their truthfulness and fidelity. We believe that our people will take into consideration that there will be a price to be paid later for every wrong choice made now.

The TGTE is not going to suggest which party people should vote for at this parliamentary election.

Following the elections, the stage will be set for the Tamil nation to intensify its struggle to win Tamil rights along a political and diplomatic path. There will be a need to fiercely resist the efforts to water down the scope of the international investigation against Tamil genocide into a domestic process.

Such

a struggle will call for the united effort of all Tamils, those from the Eelam Tamil homeland, the Diaspora, those from Tamil Nadu and indeed the world Tamils. Therefore it is necessary to elect this time only those who will work sincerely for the rights of the Tamil people. The policies and positions put forward by all candidates at these elections should be carefully scrutinized by the electors. The coherence between their words and their deeds should be intensely observed.

We wish to place before our people a few policy considerations in relation to the present election and we request that these be taken into account when electing their representatives:

1. Any political solution must be based on the Thimphu Principles. We welcome the way the Chief Minister of the Northern Provincial Council (NPC), Justice Vigneswaran, underscored this position recently.
2. Any political solution for the Tamil National question should be reached by means of a referendum among Eelam Tamils in the homeland and in the Diaspora.
3. There should be the absolute resolve to conduct an international investigation into Tamil genocide. As a reflection of this position, there must be public acknowledgement and corresponding actions in relation to the Genocide resolution passed by the NPC. In the event of a recommendation that allows for a mechanism of investigation according to Sri Lankan laws, but with participation of international experts, such an investigation must be treated as a domestic process and rejected outright.
4. An international protection mechanism must be set up in order to stop the on-going structural genocide of the Eelam Tamil nation by the instruments of the Sinhala Buddhist State, and to enable the involvement without fear of Diaspora Tamils in the development activities within the Tamil homeland.
5. The Sri Lankan military must be withdrawn from the Tamil homeland.

At this crucial juncture, we call upon our people to identify those candidates who accept and abide by these five positions in relation to the Tamil Nation loyally and truthfully and to elect them as your representatives at the next elections. The thirst of Tamils is for Tamil Eelam.

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