

# Sumanthiran is visiting US to support Sri Lankan Government : Tamils for Obama

WASHINGTON , DC, USA, June 12, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Mr. M.A. Sumanthiran is visiting Washington DC to support Sri Lankan Government said two main Tamil groups in the United States Tamils for Obama and American Tamil Forum.

He is going to speak at a non- official body at the US Congress along with Sri Lankan Ambassador to US Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam. If history is of any guide, instead of speaking up for the Tamils, Mr. Sumanthiran is going to play a second fiddle to the Sri Lankan Ambassador and as usual will be a cheer leader for the Sri Lankan Government. He will do some lip-service on Tamil issues to show his "Tamil credentials".

It is believed that Mr. Sumanthiran was very active in the current Prime Minister's political party United National Party (UNP), before joining Tamil National Alliance (TNA) during former President Mahinda Rajapakse's time. But he still maintain close ties to the UNP. Even though he is currently with TNA his views and actions are all geared towards helping and protecting the Sri Lankan Government.

The non- official body that invited Mr. Sumanthiran is called "Congressional Caucus on Ethnic and Religious Freedom in Sri Lanka". This group has no influence or standing in the US Congress or with the US Government. It's run by a junior Member of Congress and occasionally one other senior member shows up for short time.

It is believed that Mr. Sumanthiran used this group to get himself invited to come to Washington DC to meet other policy makers to convey them the message that the new Government's actions are helpful to Tamils and support Sri Lankan Government actions, especially about implementation of UN Human Rights Council Resolution on war crimes committed against Tamils by the Sri Lankan Security forces.

As before, no one can expect Sumanthiran speaking up for serious issues facing Tamils like:

- 1) Large scale military presence in Tamil areas.
- 2) Continuing abuses including abductions and rape by the Sri Lankan security forces.
- 3) Plight of thousands of disappeared (Sri Lankan Prime Minister said they are all dead.
- 4) Total rejection of foreign judges in the war crimes investigations by the President and Prime Minister.
- 5) Plight of 90,000 Tamil war widows, North-East merger and equal respect for all religions in the new Constitution.
- 6) Continued imprisonment of Tamil political prisoners.
- 7) Military occupying large areas of Tamil's lands, resulting in large number of Tamils living in displaced camps for over 30 years.

Even though Mr. Sumanthiran is supposed to be invited by this non-official body of the Congress, when Tamil's for Obama inquired, it was revealed that this group did not pay for his flight ticket or hotel accommodation.

Sumanthiran's airfare is believed to be paid by a Pro-Sri Lankan government group called USTPAC. It

is USTPAC that secretly met Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Mangala Samarawera about four months ago in Washington DC and are currently making frequent trips to Sri Lanka to meet senior Government Cabinet Ministers, despite the suffering of Tamils.

Tamils for Obama

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