



*High Commissioner*

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

HCL/POL/35

4 May 2010

Dr. Rachel Joyce  
Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Harrow West  
Harrow West Conservative Association  
10 Village Way  
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Dear Dr. Joyce

I refer to a statement issued by your goodself as a Conservative Party candidate for Harrow West, which was posted on Tamilnet on Tuesday, 27 April 2010 identifying Tamils as victims of genocide. You have spelt out the definition of genocide as found in Article 2 of the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Having read the said article, I thought I might seek to dispel from your mind certain misconceptions that have entertained as a result of the disinformation process disseminated by the LTTE activists here. Sri Lanka and Britain have enjoyed very healthy bilateral relations starting from 1796. Articulation of matters that are unsubstantiated and not supported by real evidence tends to cause an erosion of the bilateral relations that have existed for such a long time.

I appreciate that you are seeking the support of the Tamil people in your quest for elected office. But that is no reason for you to seek to discredit the Sri Lanka Government and cause a strain on bilateral relations that have existed over the years. I would urge you to check the accuracy of the representations made to you by the LTTE activists, who perhaps have never been to Sri Lanka, before going public. You have stated that since independence, acts perpetrated by the Government of Sri Lanka on the Tamils, includes the burning down of the Jaffna Library, refusal to act on the Vaddukodai Resolution, disappearance of Tamil individuals, refusal to allow Tamil to be an official language and firing on so called safe zones, moving Sinhalese into Tamil traditional areas and the use of concentration camps for the internally displaced Tamils, should be classified as genocide. Let me explain.

As regards the burning down of the Jaffna Library, it is an act of vandalism caused by unruly elements and the Government has apologised for such misconduct. What your constituents have not told you is the fact that the Library has been restored to its original splendour by the Government at great expense and commitment. As a matter of fact this High Commission has sent out to various agencies here, asking for help to replenish the Library, which would be used for the benefit of the people of Jaffna.

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You then refer to the failure of the Government to act on the Vaddukodai resolution. Vaddukodai resolution is a political exercise of Tamil United Liberation Front, a political party and there is no obligation to act on such a resolution. For example, as a Conservative, would you adopt policies of a political establishment opposed to your political policy. I am surprised that you have sought to indict the Sri Lanka Government for the failure for its implementation. If you did not know, the Vaddukodai Resolution sowed the initial seeds of separatism and discord, and it is the effects of this resolution that has brought about the destruction and mayhem in Sri Lanka. Nevertheless, all the issues that were incorporated in the said resolution had now been addressed by the Government of Sri Lanka. The Vaddukodai resolution is now a thing of the past with no validity.

You have mentioned about the disappearance of Tamil individuals. When Peace Talks were resumed in Geneva, the Inspector General of Police tabled a list of the so called disappearances which demonstrated the fact that the names that the LTTE claimed to have disappeared, either did not exist or had joined the LTTE or migrated to other parts of the country. This is again part of the disinformation campaign the LTTE placed in motion and many in the Western world were duped by such inaccuracies.

You also refer to the refusal of the Sri Lanka Government to allow Tamil to be the official language of Sri Lanka. Little did you know that the Tamil language received constitutional status in the Constitution of 1978 and thereafter in 1983 was elevated as an official language by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. Your constituents have misled you into the belief that the Tamil language is not an official language of Sri Lanka.

You have then mentioned the relocation of Tamils and moving of Sinhalese into traditional Tamil areas. Please try to understand that there are no traditional areas in Sri Lanka and it is a unitary state where all communities can live. As a matter of fact more than 50% of the population in Colombo are Tamils. It is the Tamils living in UK who have acquired British citizenship, who are pushing the homeland theory. The clamour for separatism on the basis of the homeland theory is being pushed by the expatriate LTTE while the Tamil people living in Sri Lanka, both in the North and Eastern provinces have rejected the homeland theory of the hardliners at the recent General Election.

You also mention of the use of concentration style camps for the internally displaced Tamils. I think you are totally oblivious of the ground situation. When the war was raging with all its intensity, the LTTE pushed the Tamil civilians to be used as human shields. They were in fact moved from the western coast right up to the eastern coast and when fighting capabilities of the LTTE was waning, those Tamil people escaped from the LTTE stranglehold and the Sri Lanka Government accommodated those fleeing people in welfare villages, which you call concentration camps. The LTTE fired at the fleeing Tamils and your constituents have not told you that. You ought not to place reliance on what your constituents seek to tell you without checking the facts before going public. The Government spent as much as Rs.5 million a day feeding, clothing and also looking after the medical needs of those who escaped. As of today, 202,000 people have been resettled in their habitats and once demining is complete in an area of 250 sq. kms, the remaining civilians would be relocated. Did you know that people still live in makeshift homes in Cumbria after the floods and they are yet to be resettled in their homes and so are the victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. I am sure that your constituents have not told you that the Sri Lanka Government, out of a total of 277 schools that were destroyed by the LTTE in the North, have already restored 144 of them and school life has resumed. Every child has been provided with a set of uniforms, text books, 25% of the necessary furniture has been provided, nutrition programmes have been initiated, free transport has been provided for teachers who travel to their schools. When the people were resettled, the Sri Lanka Government provided a Rs.25,000/- cash grant for each resettled family, 6 months of dry rations, basic food items, corrugated roofing sheets, cement and agricultural equipment as a starter package for resettlement. Transportation from the welfare centres to their habitats were provided. Farmers were provided seed paddy, fertilizer and other cash crops. The Sri

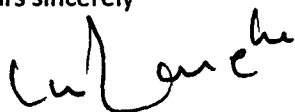
Lanka Government has built 18 bridges destroyed by the LTTE upto now. A road network of 2130 kms are in the process of being re-laid. The Sri Lanka Government has recovered nearly 150,000 land minds and this is being done with the assistance of the international community. All this is just a fraction of what the Government has been doing for the benefit of the Tamil people. From the 11,000 LTTE combatants, mainly child soldiers are being rehabilitated at the expense of the Sri Lanka Government, and are periodically being handed over to their parents. Recently nearly 1200 ex-combatants were handed over to their parents and schooling has commenced. Is this the conduct of a Government which you accuse of having committed genocide?

You have accused the Sri Lanka Government of firing on the so called 'no fire zones'. Perhaps you have not had access to the reports of the UN and other agencies, who were operating in the 'no fire zone', according to which reports the LTTE fired from within the civilians in the no fire zone into Army front lines.

I believe that those comments attributed to you have been made due to the misinformation supplied to you. But I am confident you value the truth rather than disinformation and sensationalism.

If you are elected to the House of Commons on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May, I would be happy to meet you to enlighten you what the Sri Lanka Government has done and how much the expatriate Tamils living in the UK, Canada and Australia have contributed to perpetuate the war which raged for nearly 30 years that took a heavy toll in Sri Lanka, both in terms of persons and property.

Yours sincerely



Justice Nihal Jayasinghe  
High Commissioner