

Mullaitivu Principals Association
Mullaitivu

Kandavalai Principals Association
Kilinochchi

16 August 2006

To:
United Nations Children's Fund
Geneva Regional Office
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

Subject: Aerial bombing of the Vallipunam school camp on 14 August 2006

Our two associations strongly condemn the attack by the Sri Lankan air force fighter jets on more than 500 Advanced Level (A/L) female students who were taking part in a residential school camp in Vallipunam. The camp was intended to teach first aid and other disaster management skills.

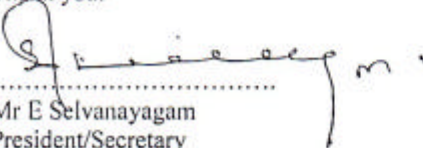
Realizing the urgent need for such training in view of the war situation and acceding to the request from many school development boards in our areas and also listening to the wishes of the students, we, together with several other organizations, co-ordinated the Vallipunam residential school camp as a pilot project. We obtained funding from CWDR and support from the Kilinochchi St John's Ambulance to draw up the program and to provide trainers. Staff and trainers for the school camp were brought together by our associations. We drew up the ten-day program and time schedule. We chose the former Senchcholai complex as a suitable quiet and central location. We started the course on 11 August 2006.

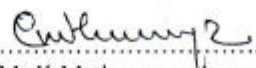
The residential course progressed to its fourth day, when on 14 August at 7:00am the students were getting ready for the day's program when four Sri Lankan government Kfir jets started showering the area with bombs. Many were killed and injured. When we arrived at the camp location, what we saw was hard to describe. We carried out all the necessary arrangements to transport the injured to the hospitals with help of neighbors in the area.

This is not the first time the Sri Lankan armed forces have carried out attacks on Tamil students. The Sri Lankan government has recently increased the tempo of attack on Tamil educational institutions. We hope the international community will not continue to be just an observer when tragedies like the Vallipunam school camp attack are carried out. Your organization with focus on child rights and child development must take immediate steps to stop all attacks by the Sri Lankan armed forces on Tamil educational institutions and Tamil students.

We appeal to you to ensure that our students will be able to have a decent learning environment without having to face such dangers.

Thank you.


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Mr E Selvanayagam
President/Secretary
Mullaitivu Principals Assoc.


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Mr K Mathuranayagam
President/Secretary
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