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B6-0074/2009 }  
B6-0077/2009 }  
B6-0080/2009 }  
B6-0088/2009 } RC1

## JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- Geoffrey Van Orden, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Marco Cappato, Jelko Kacin and Marios Matsakis, on behalf of the ALDE Group
- Jan Tadeusz Masiel, Ryszard Czarnecki, Adam Bielan and Ewa Tomaszewska, on behalf of the UEN Group
- Jean Lambert, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- PPE-DE (B6-0074/2009)
- ALDE (B6-0077/2009)
- Verts/ALE (B6-0080/2009)
- UEN (B6-0088/2009)

on Sri Lanka

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PE420.301v01-00}  
PE420.304v01-00}  
PE420.307v01-00}  
PE420.315v01-00} RC1

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## European Parliament resolution on Sri Lanka

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Sri Lanka of 18 May 2000<sup>1</sup>, 14 March 2002<sup>2</sup> and 20 November 2003<sup>3</sup>, its resolution of 13 January 2005<sup>4</sup> on the tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean and its resolution of 18 May 2006<sup>5</sup> on the situation in Sri Lanka,
  - having regard to the decision of the Council of the European Union of 29 May 2006 formally to proscribe the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE),<sup>6</sup>
  - having regard to the statement of the Presidency of the European Union of 17 August 2006 on Sri Lanka,
  - having regard to the Tokyo Declaration on the Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka of 10 June 2003, which linked donor support to progress in the peace process,
  - having regard to the Ceasefire Agreement signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE which entered into force on 23 February 2002,
  - having regard to the Oslo Declaration of December 2002, in which the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE agreed to explore a solution based on a federal structure within a united Sri Lanka,
  - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, since the beginning of the government's military offensive in October 2008, the LTTE has retreated into the northern area, forcing civilians deeper into territory they control and leaving hundreds dead and some 250 000 civilians caught in deadly crossfire between the Sri Lankan army and the separatist LTTE in the Mullaitivu region,
- B. whereas Sri Lanka has been afflicted by the armed insurgency of the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) and the government's response for some 25 years, causing over 70 000 deaths,
- C. whereas the civilian population in the liberated areas is in need of humanitarian assistance and, while government agencies have now been able to respond to their needs, many thousands of civilians in the areas of continuing conflict are still exposed to great danger and remain deprived of the basic necessities of life,
- D. whereas there is great concern about the shelling of a hospital and a compound sheltering UN national staff inside a safety zone, which killed and wounded many civilians,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 59, 23.2.2001, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 47 E, 27.2.2003, p. 613.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 87 E, 7.4.2004, p. 527.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 247 E, 6. 10.2005, p. 147.

<sup>5</sup> Texts Adopted , P6\_TA(2006)0227.

<sup>6</sup> Council Decision 2006/379/EC of 29 May 2006 implementing Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001 on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism and repealing Decision 2005/930/EC (OJ L 144, 31.5.2006, p. 21).

- E. whereas, according to Amnesty International, both government forces and the LTTE have been violating the laws of war by displacing civilians and preventing them from escaping to safety,
  - F. whereas the International Press Freedom Mission to Sri Lanka notes three trends in connection with reporting on the conflict: lack of press access and independent information flow in the conflict zone, assaults on and intimidation of journalists covering the conflict, and self-censorship by the media,
  - G. whereas since the beginning of 2009, the killing of a senior editor, Lasantha Wickramatunga, and the attack on the facilities of a popular independent TV channel have led to a paralysis of the media community,
  - H. whereas at least 14 journalists have been killed and many more abducted or arrested since 2006 and whereas Reporters Without Borders ranked Sri Lanka 165<sup>th</sup> out of 173 countries in its 2008 press freedom index,
  - I. recalling the primacy of respect for human rights and humanitarian norms by all parties to the conflict, not only as an immediate response to the worsening situation but as a fundamental building block in a just and enduring resolution of the conflict,
  - J. whereas the Tokyo Co-Chairs (Norway, Japan, the US and the EU) have called jointly on the LTTE to discuss with the Government of Sri Lanka the modalities for ending hostilities, including the laying down of arms, renunciation of violence, acceptance of the Government of Sri Lanka's offer of amnesty, and participation as a political party in a process to achieve a just and lasting political solution,
  - K. whereas the Tokyo Co-Chairs have called jointly on the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE to declare a temporary non-fire period to allow for evacuation of the sick and wounded and provision of aid to civilians,
1. Believes that the recent development may constitute a turning point in the crisis in Sri Lanka, endorses the statement by the Tokyo Co-Chairs and hopes that peace and stability will soon prevail in the country;
  2. Believes that a military victory over the LTTE will not obviate the need to find a political solution in order to ensure a lasting peace;
  3. Calls on the government and the LTTE to abide by the rules of war, to minimise harm to civilians during military operations and immediately to allow the thousands of civilians trapped in the conflict zone safe passage and access to humanitarian aid;
  4. Welcomes the Sri Lankan government's pledge to ensure full, open and transparent investigations into all alleged violations of media freedom in order also to address the culture of impunity and indifference over killings and attacks on journalists in Sri Lanka;
  5. Emphasises the need for international monitors to assess the humanitarian needs of a quarter of a million people trapped in the Wanni region and to ensure proper distribution of food and other humanitarian assistance, particularly as the fighting comes closer to the trapped civilian

population;

6. Reiterates its condemnation of the appalling abuse of children constituted by the recruitment of child soldiers, which is a war crime, and calls on all rebel groups to stop this practice, to release those whom they are holding and to make a declaration of principle that they will not recruit any children in the future;
7. Urges the Government to give urgent attention to the clearance of land-mines, the presence of which may present a serious obstacle to rehabilitation and economic regeneration; calls on the Sri Lankan Government in this connection to take the very positive step of acceding to the Ottawa Treaty (The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction);
8. Welcomes the commitment of the Sri Lankan Government to substantive provincial devolution, which will enable predominantly Tamil, as well as other, areas to exercise greater control over their administration within a united country; calls on the Government to bring about its rapid implementation, thus ensuring that all citizens of Sri Lanka have equal rights;
9. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Governments of the Member States to redouble their efforts to help bring a stable and just peace to Sri Lanka and to restore security and prosperity;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Government of Norway and the other Co-Chairs of the Tokyo Donor Conference, the President and Government of Sri Lanka, and the other parties to the conflict.