

## CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT CONDEMNING ALL VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS

The month of November 2007 in Sri Lanka has been irrevocably scarred by acts of senseless brutality and violence that have led to the deaths of women, men and children throughout the country, including the attacks in Nugegoda, Iyankerni (Killinochchi), Pottuvil and Tissamaharama. These figures swell the numbers of dead, abducted and disappeared, which continue to rise, especially in the north and east of the country.

This situation reminds us once again of the crisis that we are facing, in which rampant impunity and lawlessness enable armed actors, especially the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, and the security forces of the government of Sri Lanka to launch indiscriminate attacks on ordinary civilians and citizens of Sri Lanka. Our environment has deteriorated to the point that nobody can leave home with the confidence that they will return. Armed actors like the State, the LTTE and Karuna group amongst others, claim to represent the civilian population but pay little attention to the security of those they claim to represent, and even target civilians as a part of their brutal war on terror. Sections of the armed forces, charged with the responsibility of protecting us, as civilians, and of protecting democratic principles and processes, are implicated in the violations of these rights and processes.

As civil society organizations we condemn these acts of violence in every part of the country, and extend our condolences and heartfelt sympathy to all who have lost a loved one.

We call on the Government and the LTTE, as well as other armed groups, to halt acts of violence and aggression. We call on all parties to respect and abide by international humanitarian law including the Geneva Conventions. We call on the Government and the LTTE to return to negotiations to end the conflict in Sri Lanka.

We also appeal to the international community, at both the state and non-government levels, to use their good offices to impress on all actors in the Sri Lankan conflict the imperative need to cease hostilities and return to the peace process.

As responsible members of Sri Lankan civil society, and as citizens who have always spoken out against all forms of violence and human rights violations, we call upon all Sri Lankans to condemn all acts of violence against civilians. We stand committed to extend our fullest support to all those who will uphold the sanctity of life, and facilitate a swift return to a viable peace process in Sri Lanka.

**Dated:** December 03 2007

**Signatories:**

Centre for Human Rights and Democracy

Centre for Policy Alternatives

Christian Alliance for Social Action

Citizen Committee for Forcibly Evicted Northern Muslims

Community Trust Fund

Equal Ground  
INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre  
International Centre for Ethnic Studies  
International Movement Against Discrimination and Racism  
Janasansadaya  
Law & Society Trust  
Mannar Women for Human Rights and Democracy  
Muslim Information Centre - Sri Lanka  
Muslim Women's Research and Action Forum  
Muttur People's Forum  
National Peace Council  
Rights Now Collective for Democracy