

## INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT

### CALL FOR ACCESS TO THE POPULATIONS TRAPPED BY WAR AND RESPECT OF HUMANITARIAN AID WORKERS IN SRI LANKA

October 2006. 17 employees of humanitarian non governmental organisation (NGO) Action contre la Faim were deliberately massacred in Muttur (East Sri Lanka) on 4<sup>th</sup> of August, 2006. This act represents an escalation of violence targeting humanitarian actors, and as such is unprecedented in Sri Lanka. We are appalled by this war crime.

Over the several months in Sri Lanka, access to populations has been severely curtailed by parties to the conflict, thus violating International Humanitarian Law. Humanitarian organizations have been denied access to civilians affected by this conflict. As a result, approximately 200,000 displaced people do not receive regular or sufficient assistance.

Therefore, the under-signed humanitarian NGOs appeal:

- to the Government of Sri Lanka to undertake every measure to ensure that this war crime of Muttur does not stay unpunished, and thus guard against impunity, in close collaboration with declared international experts, so that those responsible for the massacre of the 17 humanitarian workers of Action Contre la Faim be identified and tried;
- to the parties to the conflict to respect International Humanitarian Law, including respect of humanitarian principles, in particular to facilitate unimpeded access to all victims and protection of all civilian populations;
- to the governments and the United Nations, in particular the members of the UN Security Council – but also the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Sri Lanka and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - to use all possible means of diplomatic pressure on all concerned parties to demand that they respect International Humanitarian Law.

#### Under-signed humanitarian NGOs:

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|--|---|
| 1. Action contre la Faim                                     | 17. Johanniter International Assistance       |
| 2. Acted   | 18. Lutheran World Federation - World Service |
| 3. ADRA-EU   | 19. Malteser International                    |
| 4. Architectes de l'urgence (*)                              | 20. Médecins du Monde                         |
| 5. Aide Médicale Internationale Foundation (*)               | 21. Médecins Sans Frontières (*)              |
| 6. Cooperazione e Sviluppo (CESVI)                           | 22. Mensajeros de la Paz (*)                  |
| 7. Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (CISP) | 23. Mission East                              |
| 8. Concern   | 24. Muslim Aid (*)                            |
| 9. DanChurchAid  | 25. Plan – UK                                 |
| 10. Diakonie Emergency Aid                                   | 26. PMU InterLife                             |
| 11. FinnChurchAid  | 27. Première Urgence                          |
| 12. German Agro Action                                       | 28. Save the Children – UK                    |
| 13. Health Unlimited   | 29. Solidarités                               |
| 14. Ingenieros Sin Fronteras (*)                             | 30. Solidaridad Internacional (*)             |
| 15. International Rescue Committee (IRC)                     | 31. Tearfund                                  |
| 16. Islamic Relief   | 32. Trocaire                                  |
|  | 33. World Vision                              |

Note: all signatories are member organisations of VOICE

- European network of Humanitarian NGOs - except where indicated by (\*)

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