



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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8 July 2005

### LKA100309.E

Sri Lanka: Reports of recruitment and extortion of Tamils in the Jaffna area by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), including the profile of those recruited and extorted; whether victims of such recruitment and/or extortion are able to seek assistance and/or protection from the police and/or other government authorities (December 2004-July 2005)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Reports of recruitment and extortion of Tamils in the Jaffna area by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) within the time period covered by this Response were scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

Several news articles reported on incidents of forcible child recruitment by the LTTE in Ampara and Batticaloa, following the 26 December 2004 tsunami (Refugees International 21 Mar. 2005; BBC 13 Jan. 2005; HRW 14 Jan. 2005; see also BBC 26 Jan. 2005; *Hindustan Times* 9 Apr. 2005). Agence France-Presse (AFP) reported in January 2005 that, according to information obtained by Human Rights Watch (HRW), the LTTE were "recruiting children in Trincomalee and Jaffna" (16 Jan. 2005). In regards to Jaffna, HRW reported that "independent human rights monitors documented LTTE recruitment of two 13-year old boys on January 3 [2005]" (14 Jan. 2005). It is relevant to note that Jaffna is comprised mostly of Tamils (*The Dallas Morning News* 1 Feb. 2005) and that the political office of the LTTE is based there (IPS 18 Feb. 2005).

The BBC reported that, according to figures provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 40 child soldiers were recruited by the LTTE within the first month following the tsunami (26 Jan. 2005). HRW believes that the LTTE was "taking advantage of children who have been orphaned or displaced by the tsunami" (4 Jan. 2005). The LTTE has denied these claims (BBC 26 Jan. 2005; *ibid.* 13 Jan. 2005; Refugees International 21 Mar. 2005; *The Dallas Morning News* 1 Feb. 2005).

Without references to location, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004* identified the LTTE as being responsible for extortion and the continued use and recruitment of children in 2004 (28 Feb. 2005). In May 2005, HRW reported that "[o]ngoing killings and abductions of Tamils throughout Sri Lanka have created a climate of fear among Tamils across the country" (24 May 2005). These killings and abductions seem to be of "outspoken members of the Tamil community" (HRW 24 May 2005).

The evidence available places responsibility for many of the killings on the

Tamil Tigers. Most victims were considered to be LTTE opponents and in many cases there is circumstantial evidence of LTTE involvement, such as threats from LTTE members or agents prior to a killing (ibid.).

In regards to the government's response to these killings and abductions, HRW reported that the response has not been "forceful" and that there have been only a "few investigations" and they were "ineffectual" (ibid.). As at May 2005, there were no prosecutions for these crimes (ibid.). The government, according to HRW, feels that "it can do little to protect even obvious targets" (ibid.).

Additional information on the protection offered to Tamils by the government, including its response to crimes already committed against Tamils, could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

#### References

Agence France-Presse (AFP). 16 January 2005. "Canada PM to Probe Reports of Recruiting of Child Soldiers in Sri Lanka." (Factiva)

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 26 January 2005. "Tamil Tigers 'Draft Child Troops'." <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4208371.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4208371.stm)> [Accessed 6 July 2005]

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Inter Press Service (IPS). 18 February 2005. Marwaan Macan-Markar. "Politics - Sri Lanka: Tigers Forming a Shadow 'Government'." (Factiva)

Refugees International. 21 March 2005. "Sri Lanka: LTTE Must Halt Recruitment of Child Soldiers." <<http://www.refintl.org/content/article/detail/5474/>> [Accessed 6 July 2005]

#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, including:** Amnesty International (AI), AsiaSource, *Asia Times*, European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI), *Freedom in the World 2005*, Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), TamilNet, World News Connection (WNC).

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