

THE RESOLUTION
Unanimously adopted at the First National Convention of the
TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT
held at Vaddukoddai
on May 14, 1976
Chairman S.J.V. Chelvanayakam Q.C., M.P. (K.K.S)

Whereas, throughout the centuries from the dawn of history, the Sinhalese and Tamil nations have divided between themselves the possession of Ceylon, the Sinhalese inhabiting the interior of the country in its Southern and Western parts from the river Walawe to that of Chilaw and the Tamils possessing the Northern and Eastern districts; And, Whereas, the Tamil Kingdom was overthrown in war and conquered by the Portuguese in 1619, and from them by the Dutch and the British in turn, independent of the Sinhalese Kingdoms; And,

Whereas, the British Colonists, who ruled the territories of the Sinhalese and Tamil Kingdoms separately, joined under compulsion the territories of the Sinhalese and the Tamil Kingdoms for purposes of administrative convenience on the recommendation of the Colebrooke Commission in 1833; And,

Whereas, the Tamil Leaders were in the forefront of the Freedom movement to rid Ceylon of colonial bondage which ultimately led to the grant of independence to Ceylon in 1948; And,

Whereas, the foregoing facts of history were completely overlooked, and power over the entire country was transferred to the Sinhalese nation on the basis of a numerical majority, thereby reducing the Tamil nation to the position of subject people; And,

Whereas, successive Sinhalese governments since independence have always encouraged and fostered the aggressive nationalism of the Sinhalese people and have used their political power to the detriment of the Tamils by-

- a. Depriving one half of the Tamil people of their citizenship and franchise rights thereby reducing Tamil representation in Parliament,
- b. Making serious inroads into the territories of the former Tamil Kingdom by a system of planned and state-aided Sinhalese colonization and large scale regularization of recently encouraged Sinhalese encroachments, calculated to make the Tamils a minority in their own homeland,
- c. Making Sinhala the only official language throughout Ceylon thereby placing the stamp of inferiority on the Tamils and the Tamil Language,
- d. Giving the foremost place to Buddhism under the Republican constitution thereby reducing the Hindus, Christians, and Muslims to second class status in this Country,
- e. Denying to the Tamils equality of opportunity in the spheres of employment, education, land alienation and economic life in general and starving Tamil areas of large scale industries and development schemes thereby seriously endangering their very existence in Ceylon,

- f. Systematically cutting them off from the main-stream of Tamil cultures in South India while denying them opportunities of developing their language and culture in Ceylon, thereby working inexorably towards the cultural genocide of the Tamils,
- g. Permitting and unleashing communal violence and intimidation against the Tamil speaking people as happened in Amparai and Colombo in 1956; all over the country in 1958; army reign of terror in the Northern and Eastern Provinces in 1961; police violence at the International Tamil Research Conference in 1974 resulting in the death of nine persons in Jaffna; police and communal violence against Tamil speaking Muslims at Puttalam and various other parts of Ceylon in 1976 - all these calculated to instill terror in the minds of the Tamil speaking people, thereby breaking their spirit and the will to resist injustices heaped on them,
- h. By terrorizing, torturing, and imprisoning Tamil youths without trial for long periods on the flimsiest grounds,
- i. Capping it all by imposing on the Tamil Nation a constitution drafted, under conditions of emergency without opportunities for free discussion, by a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of the Soulbury Constitution distorted by the Citizenship laws resulting in weightage in representation to the Sinhalese majority, thereby depriving the Tamils of even the remnants of safeguards they had under the earlier constitution, And,

Whereas, all attempts by the various Tamil political parties to win their rights, by co-operating with the governments, by parliamentary and extra-parliamentary agitations, by entering into pacts and understandings with successive Prime Ministers, in order to achieve the bare minimum of political rights consistent with the self-respect of the Tamil people have proved to be futile; And,

Whereas, the efforts of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress to ensure non-domination of the minorities by the majority by the adoption of a scheme of balanced representation in a Unitary Constitution have failed and even the meagre safeguards provided in article 29 of the Soulbury Constitution against discriminatory legislation have been removed by the Republican Constitution; And,

Whereas, the proposals submitted to the Constituent Assembly by the Ilankai Thamil Arasu Kadchi for maintaining the unity of the country while preserving the integrity of the Tamil people by the establishment of an autonomous Tamil State within the framework of a Federal Republic of Ceylon were summarily and totally rejected without even the courtesy of a consideration of its merits; And,

Whereas, the amendments to the basic resolutions, intended to ensure the minimum of safeguards to the Tamil people moved on the basis of the nine point demands formulated at the conference of all Tamil Political parties at Valvettithurai on 7th February 1971 and by individual parties and Tamil members of Parliament including those now in the government party, were rejected in toto by the government and Constituent Assembly; And,

Whereas, even amendments to the draft proposals relating to language, religion, and fundamental-rights including one calculated to ensure that at least the provisions of the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Regulations of 1956 be

included in the Constitution, were defeated, resulting in the boycott of the Constituent Assembly by a large majority of the Tamil members of Parliament; And,

Whereas, the Tamil United Liberation Front, after rejecting the Republican Constitution adopted on the 22nd of May, 1972, presented a six point demand to the Prime Minister and the Government on 25th June, 1972, and gave three months time within which the Government was called upon to take meaningful steps to amend the Constitution so as to meet the aspirations of the Tamil Nation on the basis of the six points, and informed the Government that if it failed to do so the Tamil United Liberation Front would launch a non-violent direct action against the Government in order to win the freedom and the rights of the Tamil Nation on the basis of the right of self-determination; And,

Whereas, this last attempt by the Tamil United Liberation Front to win Constitutional recognition of the rights of the Tamil Nation without jeopardizing the unity of the country was callously ignored by the Prime Minister and the Government; And,

Whereas, the opportunity provided by the Tamil United Liberation leader to vindicate the Government's contention that their constitution had the backing of the Tamil people, by resigning from his membership of the National State Assembly and creating a by-election was deliberately put off for over two years in utter disregard of the democratic right of the Tamil voters of Kankesanthurai, and,

Whereas, in the by-election held on the 6th February 1975, the voters of Kankesanthurai by a preponderant majority not only rejected the Republican Constitution imposed on them by the Sinhalese Government, but also gave a mandate to Mr. S.J.V. Chelvanayakam, Q.C. and through him to the Tamil United Liberation Front for the restoration and reconstitution of the Free Sovereign, Secular, Socialist State of TAMIL EELAM.

The first National Convention of the Tamil United Liberation Front meeting at Pannakam (Vaddukoddai Constituency) on the 14th day of May, 1976, hereby declares that the Tamils of Ceylon by virtue of their great language, their religions, their separate culture and heritage, their history of independent existence as a separate state over a distinct territory for several centuries till they were conquered by the armed might of the European invaders and above all by their will to exist as a separate entity ruling themselves in their own territory, are a nation distinct and apart from Sinhalese and this Convention announces to the world that the Republican Constitution of 1972 has made the Tamils a slave nation ruled by the new colonial masters, the Sinhalese, who are using the power they have wrongly usurped to deprive the Tamil Nation of its territory, language citizenship, economic life, opportunities of employment and education, thereby destroying all the attributes of nationhood of the Tamil people.

And, while taking note of the reservations in relation to its commitment to the setting up of a separated state of TAMIL EELAM expressed by the Ceylon Workers Congress as a Trade Union of the Plantation Workers, the majority of whom live and work outside the Northern and Eastern areas,

This convention resolves that restoration and reconstitution of the Free, Sovereign, Secular, Socialist State of TAMIL EELAM, based on the right of self determination inherent to every nation, has become inevitable in order to safeguard the very existence of the Tamil Nation in this Country.

This Convention further declares -

- a. that the State of TAMIL EELAM shall consist of the people of the Northern and Eastern provinces and shall also ensure full and equal rights of citizenship of the State of TAMIL EELAM to all Tamil speaking people living in any part of Ceylon and to Tamils of EELAM origin living in any part of the world who may opt for citizenship of TAMIL EELAM.
- b. that the constitution of TAMIL EELAM shall be based on the principle of democratic decentralization so as to ensure the non-domination of any religious or territorial community of TAMIL EELAM by any other section.
- c. that in the state of Tamil Eelam caste shall be abolished and the observance of the pernicious practice of untouchability or inequality of any type based on birth shall be totally eradicated and its observance in any form punished by law.
- d. that TAMIL EELAM shall be a secular state giving equal protection and assistance to all religions to which the people of the state may belong.
- e. that Tamil shall be the language of the State, but the rights of Sinhalese speaking minorities in Tamil Eelam to education and transaction of business in their language shall be protected on a reciprocal basis with the Tamil speaking minorities in the Sinhala State.
- f. that Tamil Eelam shall be a Socialist State wherein the exploitation of man by man shall be forbidden, the dignity of labor shall be recognized, the means of production and distribution shall be subject to public ownership and control while permitting private enterprise in these branches within limit prescribed by law, economic development shall be on the basis of socialist planning and there shall be a ceiling on the total wealth that any individual of family may acquire.

This Convention directs the Action Committee of the TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT to formulate a plan of action and launch without undue delay the struggle for winning the sovereignty and freedom of the Tamil Nation;

And this Convention calls upon the Tamil Nation in general and the Tamil youth in particular to come forward to throw themselves fully into the sacred fight for freedom and to flinch not till the goal of a sovereign state of TAMIL EELAM is reached.

(This is a translation of the Resolution Unanimously Adopted at the 1st National Convention of the Tamil United Liberation Front, held at Pannakam (Vaddukoddai Constituency) on May 15 1976, Presided over by Mr. Chelvanayakam, Q.C, M.P. The TULF went to polls in 1977 with this and received an overwhelming mandate from the Tamil electorate. This was the last time Tamils of Eelam were able to express their wish freely at a democratically conducted poll.)