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Monday, 20 April 2009

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Oslo attack and International Law

SARATH WIJESINGHE

Diplomatic relations in the world is governed by Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations adopted in the United Nations on April 16, 1961, relevant changes in the Diplomatic Privileges Act. One of the main functions of the sending state is to represent, except the sending state - article 2 (a)- Article 22 is powerful and clear regarding the safety of the receiving state which reads as follows.

229(1) the premises of the mission shall be inviolable. The agents of the receiving state may not enter them except with the consent of the Head of the Mission (2) the receiving state is under special duty to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of the mission against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace mission or impairment of its dignity.

(3) The premises of the mission, their furnishing and other property thereon and the means of transport of the mission shall be immune from search, requisition, attachment or execution.

Irrespective of the size and power of the member country this principle is strictly adhered to. Attack on the Sri Lankan Mission in Norway has raised eye brows of the international community as these incidents are never heard of. Sri Lanka has strictly adhered to the principles despite the humanitarian interventions which have consumed most of the security resources.



A police man inside the Sri Lankan Embassy in Norway following the attack. AFP

Diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Norway have not been satisfactory in the past, due to reasons best known to the international and Sri Lankan communities. It is alleged and well-known that the LTTE lobby in Norway is powerful, and LTTE favours Norway as a facilitator for obvious reasons. Sri Lanka alleges that certain diplomatic missions are misinterpreting and spreads distorted information regarding military activities.

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A crucial juncture

Comments and suggestions to : Web Editor

No arrests on the attack on the mission have been reported so far. The only suspect arrested has already been released.

To the credit of the Sri Lankan Government and Foreign Policy, a full scale protection is guaranteed to the Sri Lankan mission in Norway. Oslo still claims to be in touch with Tigers and active in the old peace process as one of the Co-chairs.

Norwegian introduction of Selvarasa Pathmanathan, Chief of the newly set up LTTE's Department of International Affairs, who is also wanted by the Interpol, to UN office is not in the liking of Sri Lanka and the Lankan Diaspora. It is time, the Norwegian Government come to senses and be diplomatic at this crucial juncture.

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Information or misinformation is powerful and vigorous. Responsible media and websites should act in a more responsible manner when carrying out pro LTTE propaganda in the interest of peaceful resolution to the war on combating of world terrorism. One Mr "X" has written a lengthy article based on the following contention, "The present situation arose because of hostilities between controlled forces, the Tigers are fighting a war of session in a lawful manner, against the Sinhala Chauvinist Government.

Hard realities

He has taken Kosovo, Cambodia, Uganda, Chechnya, Tibet, and Quebec which are completely different and distorted facts, into account. But let us face hard facts and realities though they are bitter and sad to listen to. Still Norway, USA, UK and some Western countries speak in similar voice which is worrying notwithstanding that the LTTE has been declared the most feared and ruthless terrorist organization in the world which is now on the run and boxed to a few square kilometres.

The 30 years of unwanted war started by a group of misguided Tamil youth has resulted in the destruction of public property worth trillions and cost lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians including world leaders.

It is a potential threat to the world peace and security of the region. The good news is the President and Foreign Minister work hard taking Sri Lanka to the peak, despite lukewarm assistance from most of our missions abroad. Mexican Vice Minister Gomez Ralanda has assured the Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary, that Sri Lanka will not be figured in the agenda of the UN Security Council.

Strategic meeting

It is good news and the meeting of President Rajapaksa with President Gaddafi of Libya is a very smart and strategic meeting as Libya will be the next Chairman of the Security Council.

This shows we are in the correct track. We speak with gratitude the decisions of USSR, China and few more countries resisting the attempted anti-Sri Lanka resolutions and warn the Western countries and missions in Sri Lanka not to push us away from non-aligned foreign policy rejuvenated by our Foreign Policy.

It is the time to show maturity and diplomacy in our dealings. We are in one of the main crossroads in our history and it is the time to play our cards well and intelligently, in this diplomatic cold war.

The LTTE has installed civilians as a human shield and some speaks of their safety and not of who are responsible of the plight of the innocent civilians.

The International Community should urge the LTTE who are boxed in a small strip to be realistic and lay down arms to embrace the democratic process.

We urge the Norwegian Government to initiate the process of reconciliation by urging the LTTE to free the trapped civilians in the interest of the world peace to which the LTTE has become a main threat.

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