Government challenges world critics

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By Sandun A Jaysekera The government yesterday challenged the International Community which is calling for a ceasefire and talks with the LTTE to disclose its strategy if its armed forces cornered terrorists like Bin Laden, Mullah Mohamed or the Taliban.

Transport Minister Dulles Alahapperuma told a news conference that some countries wanted the Sri Lankan government to call off the humanitarian operations and talk to the LTTE after the security forces had sacrificed so much sweat, blood, and resources to force the world’s most ruthless terrorist outfit cornered. He said Sri Lanka’s armed forces had done what most powerful countries were unable to do and the country’s success was a new experience in the fight against terrorism. ‘The government likes to know what the international community will do if this kind of military victory is achieved in Afghanistan, Iraq or any other trouble spot. Will they hold peace talks with the likes of Bin Laden or Mullah Mohamed or sign a peace accord with the Taliban,” Mr. Alahapperuma asked. We are fortunate to have genuine friends like China, Japan and Russia to thwart the covert attempts of a section of the International Community to give a new lease of life to the dying LTTE. “I wonder whether they are envious of Sri Lanka for doing something they have failed.” he said. National Freedom Front leader Wimal Weerawansa told a journalist that the request by a member of the House of Commons to suspend Sri Lanka from the Commonwealth if it did not declare a ceasefire should not be taken seriously. “The member’s vote base is from the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora. He is talking for his own survival. What he says does not reflect the policies of the Liberal Party and the Commonwealth has an accepted procedure to expel member nations,” he said. Mr. Weerawansa said the UNP intra-party rivalry was far from over and it would re-emerge after the Western Provincial Council polls. Health Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva said UNP supporters have been disappointed after being told that party leader Ranil Wickremesinghe would continue to head the party. He rejected UNP claims that the Mahinda Rajapaksa regime was attempting to destroy the UNP and said disputes within the UNP were of its own making and the government did not have any other objective than destroying once and for all the common enemy -- the LTTE. We don’t need UN monitors: Sri Lanka By Jamila Najmuddin The government yesterday rejected a fresh call by the United Nations to allow human rights monitors to visit Sri Lanka saying there was “absolutely no need” for monitors to be present on its soil. Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona told Daily Mirror the government’s stance was made clear to the international community and while the country rejected human rights monitors, it would continue consultations with the UN Human Rights Commission. “There is absolutely no need for human rights monitors to come here. However we are willing to continue our consultations with the UNHRC,” Dr. Kohona said. Against the backdrop of continuing violence and reports of civilian deaths in Sri Lanka, the UN asked Colombo to allow HR monitors to visit the country and assess the situation. “I have asked the Sri Lanka government to allow human rights monitors there. I have not got any response. I am going to press for that,” UN Human Rights Chief Navanethem Pillay told Indian journalists on Monday. Ms. Pillay concluded her two day visit to India yesterday where she discussed the situation in Sri Lanka with rights activists and focused on the Sri Lankan issue during her discussions with External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Home Minister P. Chidambaram and members of the judiciary. “Our view is that you can never succeed through a military solution. The problem can be solved politically,” she said and reiterated that the UN wants the Lankan government to ensure the safety of civilians. After arriving in India from Nepal Ms. Pillay also met People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) activists including its president K.G. Kannabiran, S. Balamurugan and V. Suresh among others. Some of them voiced concern over the condition of the hapless civilians trapped in Sri Lanka’s conflict zone and also alleged human rights abuses in the country.Courtesy: Dailymirror.lk