Ethnonationalism and Transnational Lobbying: The Tamil Diaspora after the LTTE

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Changes in International Structure

- Before 2003, Selvarasa Pathmanathan (known as KP) was in charge of the international branch of the LTTE.

- In 2003, he was replaced by Veerakathy Manivannan (known as Castro).

- In late 2008, KP was reinstated – sparked leadership tension between KP and Perinpanayagam Sivaparan (known as Nediyavan)

Protests in Canada

- January 30, 2009 – Human chain protest in Toronto
  - Around 40,000 people take part
  - Organizing led by World Tamil Movement (WTM) and Tamil Youth Organization (TYO)

Radicalized Youth?

- While many in the community accuse the Tamil Youth Organization (TYO) of “radicalizing the youth,” they openly express a commitment to Canadian society, and Canadian values.

- Prabhakaran’s 27 November 2008 Heroes Day speech: “I would also take this opportunity to express my affection and my praise to our Tamil youth living outside our homeland for the prominent and committed role they play in actively contributing towards the liberation of our nation.”

Transnational Government of Tamil Eelem (TGTE)

- KP appointed Visvanathan Rudrakumaran ("Rudra"), a lawyer based in New York, as the acting head of the TGTE after his arrest.

- KP/Rudra vs. Castro/Nediyavan

- TGTE candidates began campaigning throughout April 2010, and elections were held simultaneously in eleven countries on May 2, 2010.

“Too Many Chiefs”

Leadership struggles, petty bickering, and vendettas

“Too many chiefs, not enough Indians”

With the focus still squarely on the Sri Lankan government, diaspora mobilization has moved from fundraising to political lobbying.