

## Call to Campaign

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As you are probably aware, the United States of America recently halted training for all our elite troops, particularly the Special Forces, Commandos and the Special Task Force.

The decision to stop all training activities in USA for officers and men of the Special Forces came after a damning statement by the former Commander of the Army, Ret. General Sarath Fonseka. Fonseka directly implicated the Special Forces in an alleged massacre of top ranking Tamil Tigers during the final phase of the war.

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Among those young officers scheduled to be trained in US military schools in 2010 included a number of LRRP officers.

Not to be outdone, the Commander-in-Chief, President Mahinda Rajapakse has obtained opportunities for training for our elite troops with the Russian Spetsnaz or Special Forces training schools during a recent visit to Moscow. Sri Lankan troops are also receiving training in China.

DefenceWire's humble appeal to our expatriate readers, particularly those residing in USA is to campaign diligently to reinstate these training opportunities for our elite troops. This is in line with the recommendations of the Committee on Foreign Relations, December 2009. Page 17 of that report states:

The U.S. Congress should:

1. Authorize the U.S. military to resume training of Sri Lankan military officials to help ensure that human rights concerns are integrated into future operations and to help build critical relationships.

Human rights awareness could be built-in to any future trainings of our elite troops by the United States. The current political tussles in Colombo or any diplomatic misunderstandings between Colombo and Washington D.C. have nothing to do with these officers who must be judged on the basis of individual and collective merit in the true war on terror.

-Defencewire