



## **ASIA/SRI LANKA - Human rights and violence: the refugees in India prefer not to return home**

Tamil Nadu (Agenzia Fides) - Three years after the end of the civil war that devastated Sri Lanka from 1983 to 2009, most of the refugees in India are reluctant to returning home because of financial difficulties and for the fear of suffering human rights violations. According to estimates by the Indian government in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, there are over 100,000 Sri Lankans of Tamil ethnicity, including 68 000 in 112 government-run camps and 32,000 outside the camps. Other sources report ongoing alleged human rights violations in the north and the inability of the government to cope with the problem of thousands of people still missing from the period after the armed conflict, which caused thousands of victims.

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the country registered over 5,000 disappearances linked to the war, regardless of how many disappeared in the last period of the war, between 2008 and in 2009. Despite the financial aid offered by the UNHCR, just over 5000 Sri Lankans have returned home. For some of them to maintain the status of refugees seems to be more advantageous. Some areas of northern Tamil, such as Jaffna and Trincomalee, are more stable, while other areas devastated by war are deprived of basic infrastructure. It is estimated that more than half of the refugees in camps in India were born in India and therefore know very little of Sri Lanka. The largest wave of refugees occurred between 1983 and 1987. According to aid workers, the living conditions in the camps vary from poor to adequate. Some live in thatched huts, others in small houses made of concrete blocks, also in more distant camps there are problems of water and sanitation. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 05/09/2012)