

**FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENT  
BY AND BETWEEN  
MULLAITIVU, NORTHERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA  
AND  
THE CITY OF MARKHAM, ONTARIO, CANADA**

WHEREAS The City of Markham is the home to 30,000 people of Tamil origin, and the Mayor of Markham and his predecessor have visited centres of Tamil population in India and Sri Lanka,

AND WHEREAS Canada is the largest diaspora in the world for people of Tamil origin, and the Greater Toronto Area is the largest Tamil diaspora within Canada,

AND WHEREAS The City of Markham has, for the past five (5) years, celebrated Thai Pongal, a global Thanksgiving Tamil celebration of the first harvest of the year and the start of the Sun's six month long journey Northwards (Utharayanam),

AND WHEREAS The District of Mullaitivu in the Northern Province, Sri Lanka was worst affected by the tsunami in 2004 and during the last days of the War in May, 2009.

AND WHEREAS The City of Markham has invited the participation of the Chief Minister of the Northern Provincial Council, the Hon. Justice C.V. Wigneswaran, to be present at the Thai Pongal proceedings at the Markham Civic Centre,

AND WHEREAS The City of Markham desires to enter into a friendship agreement with Mullaitivu, Northern Province for the purposes of forging strong and enduring cultural and economic development relations,

NOW THEREFORE The City of Markham and the District of Mullaitivu, Northern Province agree to the following:

THAT the Parties actively examine and evaluate opportunities to enhance the economic development and cultural betterment of their respective communities; and,

THAT the Parties strive to keep each other informed on important economic development and cultural issues; and,

THAT the Parties provide information, liaison and support to prospective community groups interested in developing links between both locations; and,

THAT the Parties plan the coordination of exchanges between their respective communities; and,

THAT the Parties undertake to promote public awareness of this agreement; and,

THAT a full fledged official working document including officials from both Parties will be signed in due course.

IN Witness whereof, the Parties have duly executed this Friendship Agreement, on this 14th day of January, 2017.

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**Hon. Justice C.V. Wigneswaran**  
Chief Minister, Northern Provincial Council  
Sri Lanka



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**Frank Scarpitti**  
Mayor of the City of Markham, Ontario  
Canada

