

AI INDEX: ASA 37/08/98  
3 APRIL 1998

## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **SRI LANKA**

#### **Amnesty International pays tribute to Charles Abeysekera**

Amnesty International today paid tribute to Charles Abeysekera, the leading human rights defender and former chairman of the Official Languages Commission, who passed away this morning.

In the year in which Amnesty International is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is very sad to lose this champion of human rights who has dedicated so much of his life to the promotion of human rights as indivisible and universal.

Both his role as the Chairman of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality, one of the leading and oldest human rights organizations in Sri Lanka, and his academic career were rooted in a passion for social justice. He was a sharp observer of political developments in the country and his contributions to the defence of human rights have been tremendous.

Many will mourn the death of a great human being. Amnesty International's thoughts are with his family.

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