

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 37/14/98

15 June 1998

**Further information on UA 78/98 (ASA 37/06/98, 11 March 1998) - Fear for safety / fear of torture/ "Disappearance"**

**SRI LANKA Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham, aged 22  
Kathirgamathamby Sentilkumar, aged 23  
Ponnampalam Thavarajah, aged 40  
Arumugam Mylvaganam, aged 35**

---

The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brussels, Belgium, has provided information that Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham is no longer detained. The fate or whereabouts of the other three people taken into custody remains unknown.

In response to appeals by members of Amnesty International, the Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brussels, Belgium gave further information about the arrest of Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham, who "disappeared" on 23 January 1998 after being taken into custody by individuals believed to be members of the security forces. The Chargé d'Affaires confirmed that Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham was "arrested by an unknown group" and that he was subsequently released on 13 March 1998.

The Chargé d'Affaires also stated that Kathirgamathamby Sentilkumar, who was reportedly detained at the same time as Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham, has been "missing" since 23 January 1998, and that he has "not yet reported back to Poomthoddam Welfare Centre", the place from where both men were initially taken.

Serious concern remains for Kathirgamathamby Sentilkumar, Ponnampalam Thavarajah and Arumugam Mylvaganam. No information has been received by the authorities regarding the whereabouts of Ponnampalam Thavarajah and Arumugam Mylvaganam, who have not been seen since they were detained by uniformed soldiers near Maha Oya, Batticaloa on 5 February 1998.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:**

- welcoming the government's provision of information about the whereabouts of Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham;
- urging the government to investigate fully the identity of the "unknown group" who arrested Subramaniam Tharmabalasingham, and to bring those responsible for his "disappearance" to justice;
- expressing concern for the safety of Kathirgamathamby Sentilkumar, who has not been seen since his detention on 23 January 1998, and for the safety of Ponnampalam Thavarajah and Arumugam Mylvaganam, who have not been seen since their detention on 5 February 1998;
- urging the government to seek information on the whereabouts and reason for arrest of Kathirgamathamby Sentilkumar, Ponnampalam Thavarajah and Arumugam Mylvaganam, who remain "disappeared" since their detention;
- urging that if Kathirgamathamby Sentilkumar, Ponnampalam Thavarajah and Arumugam Mylvaganam are in detention, they be promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence, or immediately released and that steps be taken in the meanwhile to guarantee their physical integrity and to allow them immediate access to their families, legal counsel and medical care.

**APPEALS TO:**

Her Excellency President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga  
Presidential Residence  
"Temple Trees"  
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka  
**Telegrams: President Kumaratunga, Colombo, Sri Lanka**  
**Faxes: + 94 1 33 37 03**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

The Hon General Anuruddha Ratwatte  
Deputy Minister of Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
15/5 Baladaksha Mawatha  
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka  
**Telegrams: Deputy Defence Minister, Colombo, Sri Lanka**  
**Faxes: +94 1 54 15 29/68 77 68**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

R.K. Chandrananda de Silva  
Secretary, Ministry of Defence  
No. 15/5 Baladaksha Mawatha  
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka  
**Telegrams: Secretary, Defence Ministry, Colombo, Sri Lanka**  
**Faxes: +94 1 54 15 29**  
**Salutation: Dear Secretary**

Lt. General Rohan Daluwatte  
Army Commander  
Army Headquarters  
Flagstaff Street  
Colombo 1, Sri Lanka  
**Telegrams: Army Commander, Defence Ministry, Colombo, Sri Lanka**  
**Salutation: Dear Army Commander**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Sri Lanka accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat,  
or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 July 1998.