



Sri Lanka: “Tell the Truth”

A six point human rights agenda for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Colombo, November 2013

AI index: ASA 37/015/2013
26 June 2013

Four years have passed since the end of the armed conflict in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan authorities continue to deny mounting evidence of crimes under international law committed by its forces during Sri Lanka’s protracted armed conflict. They also attempt to stop their own citizens from communicating with the UN and other international bodies about serious violations they have witnessed.

Amnesty International is calling on the Government of Sri Lanka to “Tell the Truth” on arbitrary detention and torture.

Before the Heads of Commonwealth Government’s Meeting (CHOGM) in November this year, the government should:

- Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and abolish the system of administrative detention in Sri Lanka;
- Release all individuals who have been arrested under emergency or anti-terrorism laws, unless they are charged with recognizable criminal offences;
- Guarantee that all persons arrested have access to counsel from the time of arrest, that lawyers can confer with their clients in private and be present during interrogation;
- Establish a registry of all detainees, with details of when and where they were arrested and where they have been held; and make it

available to relatives, lawyers, judges and others with a legitimate interest.

- Make public the report of the 2006 Commission of Inquiry on 16 “serious violations of human rights,” that includes the findings of investigations into the killing of five students in Trincomalee and the 17 ACF aid workers, and, as recommended by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in February 2013, “accept international assistance to resolve outstanding cases” (A/HRC/22/38);
- Enact an effective Witness Protection Bill.