

For too long families of the disappeared from Sri Lanka have struggled in their search for truth and justice for their missing loved ones.

Amnesty International, in solidarity with Sri Lankan families of the disappeared, urges the new government of Sri Lanka to heed their calls and protect human rights for Sri Lanka's future.



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1) It is estimated that there have been at least 80,000 cases of enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka since the 1980s, including unreported cases. That is 0.4% of the current population of Sri Lanka.

Several Domestic Commissions of Inquiry into Disappearances of Persons (COIs) have been appointed by successive governments since 1990. Altogether they received approximately 80, 000 complaints, more than half of which were considered strong enough for further investigation. In August 2013 a Presidential Commission to Investigate into Complaints Regarding Missing Persons was established. It has received over 20,000 complaints but so far less than 10% have been the subject of preliminary inquiries.

2) Among the perpetrators against whom COIs found credible material suggesting their involvement in enforced disappearances were leading politicians and high ranking officers in the police and security forces, some of whom may still be in positions of responsibility.

4) Since its establishment, the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has transmitted 12,536 cases to the Government of Sri Lanka; 5,731 remain outstanding – only Iraq has a higher number of cases submitted to the UN than Sri Lanka.

5) Families of the disappeared in Sri Lanka continue to seek truth and justice for the disappearance of their loved ones.

3) To date, Sri Lankan authorities have largely ignored the recommendations of these Commissions with regard to prosecution of perpetrators and the steps that need to be taken to prevent the re-occurrence of such incidents in the future.

Amnesty International has called on the Sri Lankan government to:

- Accede to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances.
- Investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for enforced disappearances, in accordance with international norms and in a transparent manner, in line with commitments made during the previous reviews but not yet implemented.

