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## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **SRI LANKA**

#### **Investigations into more than 700 “disappearances” should be made public**

The Government of Sri Lanka should promptly make public and disseminate widely the findings of an investigation into more than 700 "disappearances" reported in 1996 in Jaffna, northeast Sri Lanka, which the investigation panel presented to President Chandrika Kumaratunga yesterday, Amnesty International urged today.

It should also make public the action it intends to take to follow-up on the findings and recommendations of the investigation, and to bring to justice those found to be responsible for “disappearances”.

The investigation has reportedly found that 16 of those reported "disappeared" were alleged to have been killed. In addition, the panel is said to have recommended that 25 cases be investigated with a view to prosecution, and 134 cases be investigated to identify the perpetrators. It also reportedly traced 201 persons who were reported to have "disappeared".

Amnesty International would welcome the resolution of any of these cases, which makes it all the more important that this information be released to the public as quickly as possible.

The Government of Sri Lanka should use this opportunity to clarify to the people of Sri Lanka the fate and whereabouts of those who have “disappeared”, and to take firm and prompt action to ensure that perpetrators of such serious human rights violations as “disappearances” are not able to enjoy impunity.

Amnesty International believes the Government of Sri Lanka should invest adequate resources in investigation and prosecution, seeking assistance where needed in areas such as forensic expertise, in order to ensure that the perpetrators of these “disappearances” can be brought to justice. The government must also ensure that witnesses of “disappearances” and relatives of the disappeared are able to participate in the legal process without fear of intimidation or reprisal.

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