

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Sri Lanka: Amnesty International calls for an immediate end to attacks on civilians

At least 23 people have been killed and many others injured in two bomb attacks in Sri Lanka.

According to press reports, one bomb exploded on a busy commuter bus at Katubedda, near Colombo, on 6 June, killing 21 civilians, injuring at least 60 others. The second attack targeted a bus in the central Kandy district. Eyewitnesses at the scenes of carnage spoke of the growing fear of travelling just two days after another bomb in Colombo. The recent spate of attacks marks a pattern of deliberate and indiscriminate attacks in the south, as conflict intensifies in the north.

The authorities blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the attacks. While no group has publicly admitted responsibility for the attacks, they bear the hallmarks of LTTE attacks.

Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned abuses by the LTTE, including killings of civilians, hostage-taking, torture and other abuses, and has called for an end to such abuses and for those responsible to be brought to justice in conformity with international law.

As the conflict intensifies in the north, Amnesty International is calling on the Sri Lankan government to ensure that its security forces comply with Sri Lanka's obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law, and in particular to ensure that the civilian population are protected at all times.

Amnesty International is also calling on the LTTE and other armed groups to comply with the rules of international law and to respect civilian life.

Amnesty International calls for an immediate end to attacks on civilians.

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