

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 37/08/94

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This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 5 per section.

21 January 1994

**Further information on UA 407/93 (ASA 37/25/93, 18 November 1993) -
Unacknowledged detentions / Fear for safety**

**SRI LANKA: About 70 government soldiers detained by Liberation Tigers of
Tamil Eelam (LTTE)**

Amnesty International has received a report that at least 17 security forces personnel, taken prisoner by the LTTE following a major battle at the government military and naval base at Pooneryn in November 1993, have been seen at a location in the Jaffna Peninsula within the last two to three weeks. It has also been reported that five security forces personnel from among those captured had been admitted to hospital in Jaffna for medical treatment. According to the Sri Lanka military, about 70 army and navy security personnel were taken captive by the LTTE following their attack on the Pooneryn base in northern Sri Lanka.

According to press reports, the LTTE maintain that no security forces personnel were captured alive during the five-day battle at Kilali in September 1993 when government forces advanced from their camp on Elephant Pass to Kilali and destroyed the boat-crossing point. However, it has been reported that an army tank commander was captured by the LTTE at Kilali.

Amnesty International is not aware of any statement by the LTTE acknowledging the capture of these prisoners and continues to be concerned for their safety.

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

- continuing to express concern that the LTTE may be holding government security forces personnel in unacknowledged detention following the battles at Pooneryn and Kilali and expressing concern for the safety of these prisoners;
- urging the LTTE to state publicly the number of such prisoners it holds;
- urging the LTTE to ensure that the prisoners are treated according to at least the basic minimum standards required under international humanitarian law;
- urging the LTTE to grant the International Committee of the Red Cross immediate and regular access to any such prisoners;

APPEALS TO:

- 1) Lawrence Thilaker
Tamil Coordinating Committee

341 Rue des Pyrenees
75020 Paris, France

Telegrams: Mr Thilaker, TCC, 341 Rue des Pyrenees, Paris, France

Faxes: + 33 1 43 58 11 91

Salutation: Dear Mr Thilaker

2) LTTE International Secretariat

United Tamil Organization

211 Katherine Road

London E8 1BU, United Kingdom

Telegrams: LTTE, UTO, 211 Katherine Road, London, UK

Faxes: + 44 81 470 8593

Salutation: Dear Sir or Madam

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: LTTE offices in your own countries, if any.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 March 1994.