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Sri Lanka must not torture rejected asylum seekers

The Sri Lankan authorities must refrain from any ill-treatment of a group of rejected asylum seekers who arrived in Colombo on Friday after being forcibly returned from the UK, Amnesty International said.

The 26 Sri Lankans, most of them Tamil, were reportedly taken for questioning on their arrival in the capital. Amnesty International believes that some of the returnees are at risk of torture.

The deportations come after a UK documentary, 'Sri Lanka's Killing Fields', exposed shocking new evidence of war crimes committed during the closing days of Sri Lanka's civil war in 2009.

"The government of Sri Lanka have a history of arresting and detaining rejected Sri Lankan asylum seekers upon their return and we are aware of cases of people being tortured", said Yolanda Foster, Amnesty International's Sri Lanka researcher.

"It is deeply alarming to hear that these people may already have been detained, minutes after stepping off the plane in Colombo. The Sri Lankan authorities must ensure that the rejected asylum seekers are not subjected to any form of ill-treatment or torture, "she added.