

SRI LANKA

Ambassador Kshenuka Seneviratne

Statement by the delegation of Sri Lanka during the Interactive Dialogue with the
Special Rapporteurs on Counter Terrorism, and Torture,
UN Human Rights Council, 8th March 2010

Mr. President,

My delegation takes note of the report submitted by Mr. Manfred Novak, Special Rapporteur on torture and appreciates his constructive engagement with the Government pursuant to his visit to Sri Lanka in 2007. Concerted efforts are being undertaken by the Government in order to implement his recommendations. In this context, the National Action Plan on Human Rights, currently in preparation, has his recommendations incorporated and streamlined with the aim of their effective implementation. The purpose of this exercise is to maintain synergy among a number of recommendations that have been made in the past by the relevant Special Procedure Mechanisms, Treaty Bodies, and during our UPR process. The Special Rapporteur will be kept informed of the progress being made in this regard. A brief report highlighting the progress made so far will be submitted to the Special Rapporteur in due course in response to the request he made last October.

Mr. President,

We also take note of the Report of Mr. Martin Scheinin, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. With regard to the specific case of Mr. J S Tissanayagam referred to us by the Special Rapporteur, we wish to inform that a review mechanism is currently in progress with the filing of an appeal by Mr. Tissanayagam against his conviction and the sentence. Since the matter is now before the competent legal authority, it would not be appropriate at this stage to venture an opinion with regard to the final outcome of the appeal. It may be noted that Mr. Tissanayagam has been enlarged on bail pending his appeal.

We are aware that the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has expressed an opinion with which we respectfully differ, as Mr. Tissanayagam was at all times subject to procedures established by law. We will continue to keep the Special Rapporteur and the Working Group informed of all future developments with regard to this matter.

Thank you Mr. President.