

**Question for written answer E-004531/2014  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 117

**Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)**

Subject: VP/HR - Human rights in Sri Lanka

Since the end of the conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in May 2009, the government of President Mahinda Rajapakse has continued repression against his opponents. In fact, Ruki Fernando of the Colombo-based INFORM association and Father Praveen Mahesan, a Catholic priest, were arrested in Kilinochchi on 16 March and are believed to have been detained without any formal charges under the notoriously draconian prevention of terrorism act (PTA).

While their hasty release after two days' detention is a positive step, other peaceful militants have been arrested in recent months in an attempt to stamp out dissidence.

The arrest and arbitrary detention of eminent human rights campaigners seems to be designed to silence detractors and divert attention from human rights violations.

In its report *Authority without Accountability: The Crisis of Impunity in Sri Lanka*, the International Commission of Jurists reveals that the provisions of the PTA have resulted in arbitrary detentions, contravened suspects' rights to a fair trial and due process and facilitated torture, ill-treatment and enforced disappearances.

Moreover, Amnesty International has received very worrying information to the effect that the Sri Lankan intelligence services have set up a special unit to keep a watch on people suspected of passing information to the UN.

Despite two previous resolutions from the Human Rights Council, in 2012 and 2013, Sri Lanka has taken no measurable steps to bring justice to the victims of its civil war, but has instead launched an aggressive campaign against anyone seeking to hold those responsible to account for their actions. Human rights campaigners, militants, journalists and members of civil society who criticise the government are regularly threatened and harassed. Those who have an international profile are particular targets.

1. What action can the EU take to put an end to this situation of repression and flouting of human rights?
2. How can the EU put pressure on the Sri Lankan government to fulfil its international commitments?