

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1864/05
by Poul Rasmussen (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Human rights situation in Sri Lanka

In the EU cooperation agreement with Sri Lanka dating from March 1995 the parties reaffirm the importance of the UN Charter and their respect for democracy and human rights. Article 1 of the agreement even emphasises that the agreement is in its entirety based on respect for human rights which must inspire the domestic and external policies of the parties involved. When the parties met on 29 October 2004 to discuss progress in their mutual cooperation, they exchanged - according to the official joint press communiqué - views on good governance and human rights and agreed on the importance of full implementation of all human rights conventions.

Yet there are continuing reports of breaches of human rights - particularly the widespread use of torture - in Sri Lanka. The human rights situation does not therefore seem to have improved in the country. This being so, what information can the Commission provide about the current human rights situation in Sri Lanka, in particular, the use of torture by the military and the police?