

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3118/05  
by Gitte Seeberg (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Human rights situation in Sri Lanka

On 10 June 2005, Commissioner Waldner, MEP, answered a question (P-1864/05) from Mr Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, MEP. The question concerned the serious human rights situation in Sri Lanka and referred, in particular, to a large number of instances of torture.

In its answer, the Commission acknowledged that the human rights situation was serious. Reference was made to the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission (an official body), according to which 'torture is one of the most common forms of human rights abuses in Sri Lanka'. In its answer, the Commission also said that it had consistently called on the Government to respect civil liberties and to renounce the use of violence.

It follows clearly from what has been reported that no changes for the better have taken place. Many serious cases are being reported, as are cases of the killing of victims of torture, obviously committed by the police in order to avoid public trial.

Will the Commission again make representations to the Government and call for more effective measures to be taken to prevent persons from being tortured while held in police custody? Will the Commission also ask the Government to specify the tangible measures that it will take? Referring to the Commission answer, I would point out that instances of torture very often involve the police and that that has nothing to do with the ongoing conflict in the North and North-eastern part of the country.