

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3807/07
by Gitte Seeberg (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Human rights situation in Sri Lanka

In June, the International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP) concluded that the possibility of investigating and establishing responsibility for the recent unfortunate developments in Sri Lanka was non-existent.

The IIGEP was set up for the purpose of overseeing the national Commission of Inquiry's work in investigating breaches of human rights in Sri Lanka. The IIGEP notes that the Commission of Inquiry has not made appreciable progress in its work. The work of the national Commission of Inquiry is criticised, among other things, for lack of independence from the government and a highly questionable programme for witness protection.

There are continuing reports of breaches of human rights in Sri Lanka, including the fact that the use of torture continues to be widespread. The human rights situation in Sri Lanka does not therefore seem to have improved. In the light of the foregoing, please answer the following questions:

Will the Commission, in the light of the IIGEP statement of 12 June 2007, take the issue of the failure to comply with basic human rights in Sri Lanka up for investigation and implement procedures that make it clear to the Sri Lankan government that the EU attaches extremely great importance to the failure to comply with these rights?

Does it agree that the IIGEP report clearly illustrates the government's lack of resolve to cooperate on the introduction of democracy and human rights in Sri Lanka?

Will it inquire of Sri Lanka's government whether the constitutional bodies that are intended to ensure compliance with human rights are in place and operational?