



11 September 2019

ORAL STATEMENT
ITEM 3: WORKING GROUP ON ENFORCED OR INVOLUNTARY DISAPPEARANCES

FOLLOW-UP ON THE VISIT TO SRI LANKA

UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Forty-second session
9 September 2019- 27 September 2019

Mr President,

We welcome the Working Group's follow-up report and call on the Sri Lankan government to take further steps to implement the recommendations it made after its visit in 2015.

Amnesty International is encouraged by the Sri Lankan cabinet's proposal to grant the families of the disappeared interim relief in line with recommendations made by the Office on Missing Persons last year. We hope other recommendations made by the OMP and the Working Group will be implemented without further delay.

We are, however, concerned that Sri Lankan authorities are failing to effectively investigate and, where there is sufficient evidence, prosecute those suspected of perpetrating enforced disappearances, as recommended by the Working Group. Amnesty International has campaigned for justice on many emblematic cases in the last decade. In the vast majority of cases the authorities have made little progress. For example, the perpetrators of Prageeth Eknaligoda's enforced disappearance, including those bearing command responsibility, continue to elude accountability.

Amnesty International is further disappointed by recent reports of promotion of military officials suspected of committing crimes under international law. For example, last month, some navy officers who were charged in connection with the enforced disappearance of 11 youth in 2008 and 2009 were promoted after being released on bail.

Despite calls for allegations against Major General Shavendra Silva to be investigated, he has been promoted to the position of Sri Lanka's Army Commander. During the final phase of the conflict in 2009, Major General Silva was the commander of the 58th division of the army, which is alleged to have committed crimes under international law that may amount to crimes against humanity – including enforced disappearances.

We call on the Sri Lankan government to put an end to impunity in Sri Lanka.

Thank you.