



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Summary record of the 1475th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 16 November 2016, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Modvig

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention *(continued)*

Fifth periodic report of Sri Lanka (continued) (CAT/C/LKA/5; CAT/C/LKA/Q/5)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Sri Lanka took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Jayasuriya** (Sri Lanka), replying to questions raised at the 1472nd meeting, said that the purpose of the bill to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure Act was to safeguard the right of suspects to legal representation from the initial stages of the investigation process. Under the current Code, all persons who were arrested and held in police custody had the right to communicate with a family member or friend. Under the Police Ordinance, lawyers representing suspects in police custody were permitted to meet with the commanding officer and know the reasons for the arrest. Suspects were also entitled to legal representation when brought before the judge, at which stage requests for bail were made, where applicable. Although the bill amending the Code had been approved by the Cabinet and the Attorney General, several stakeholders, including the National Human Rights Commission, had voiced concerns, and as a result a committee, consisting of inter alia the Attorney General, the Commission and the bar association, had eventually been established to consult all stakeholders with a view to improving the efficiency of the administration of justice while protecting the rights of accused persons.
3. Regarding prosecutions by the Attorney General of police officers accused of torture, he said that the powers of the Attorney General's Department had been developed in the Constitution and various pieces of criminal legislation, as well as a decision of the Supreme Court, and mechanisms were in place to ensure that all individuals brought before the courts were treated equally. Furthermore, the Department's independence was guaranteed under the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution. There were many cases where the Attorney General had successfully prosecuted police officers for serious offences, including murder and torture. The right to a fair trial was enshrined in article 13 (5) of the Constitution, and the decision to prosecute was based on an objective assessment of the availability of evidence. The Attorney General had never compelled an accused to undergo rehabilitation; indicted persons held in remand custody were free to choose that option, which led to the termination of criminal proceedings.
4. Recalling that the former Special Rapporteur on Torture had found the definition of torture under Sri Lankan law to be in conformity with the definition contained in the Convention, except for the fact that it did not expressly include the notion of suffering, he said that Act No. 22 of 1994 contained the words "severe pain", which necessarily covered suffering. Moreover, in June 2007, the Supreme Court had ruled that conduct that had not caused any physical harm could nonetheless constitute torture and that the circumstances of each case should, therefore, be carefully considered in order to determine whether the acts in question violated the ban on torture. Thus, applicable law was sufficiently broad.
5. **Mr. Jayamanne** (Sri Lanka) said that everyone was entitled to the presumption of innocence. It was the prerogative of the police to determine whether alleged conduct constituted an offence and, in the affirmative, to launch an investigation. Judges had no investigative powers, but they assisted the police with such special requests as telephone records and bank statements. Once a report had been verified, the police had the authority to carry out arrests without a warrant. In the case of serious offences, individuals could be kept in police custody for 24 hours following their arrest before they had to be brought before a judge, who then decided between granting bail and ordering placement in remand for 15 days, which could be extended by a further 15 days. However, in cases where the

investigation might be hindered by the imprisonment of the suspect, the police could request a 24-hour extension of police custody, in which case the suspect could meet with a lawyer, family member or friend. There had been no complaints in relation to the extension of police custody, and the special provision permitting it had been renewed several times.

6. Once an investigation was completed, the police transmitted the file to the court or, for serious offences, to the Attorney General. The role of judges was to ascertain whether the prosecution had proved its case beyond reasonable doubt and to not admit any evidence that was contrary to the Evidence Ordinance. Recorded witness statements, even those made voluntarily, were not considered valid evidence; rather, witnesses were required to testify in court. However, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, confessions made in the presence of a senior police officer were admissible if found by the court to have been made voluntarily and to meet certain other criteria. The defence was free to object to the admission of a confession, but the burden of proof rested on it to demonstrate that the confession had been made involuntarily. In most cases, judges rejected confessions involving offences under the Act. Pursuant to the Act, a suspect could be held for up to 72 hours before being brought before a judge and could then be placed in remand for the duration of the trial. If the police believed it necessary to keep a suspect in custody instead, they could apply to the Ministry of Defence for a three-month detention order, which could be extended for up to 18 months, upon review every 90 days. Detention could be challenged through a habeas corpus procedure or a human rights action before the Supreme Court. There were currently no suspects held in prolonged detention under the Act.

7. The National Authority for the protection of victims of crime and witnesses issued instructions to the police regarding the effective protection of victims and witnesses and the provision of appropriate assistance. Protection activities were entrusted to experienced police officers, under the supervision of the Authority, who had a duty to respond to any threat made against a victim or witness. Failure to comply with the Authority's instructions could constitute an offence. Victims were entitled to compensation for any physical or mental harm, the loss of property and the cost of rehabilitation and counselling. A victim protection fund, to be financed through the State budget, donations and court settlements, would be set up to provide all necessary assistance, including treatment, reparation, restitution and rehabilitation.

8. Referring to high-profile cases mentioned by the Committee, he said that, on the basis of the findings of the Criminal Investigation Department regarding the deaths of the five students in Trincomalee in 2006, the Attorney General was investigating three police officers for murder. Statements had been gathered from 25 witnesses, and efforts were under way to locate others who had left the country. The Cabinet had approved a proposal to amend the Assistance to and Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses Act to enable witnesses to testify remotely from overseas. Reviewing the facts of the case of the 17 aid workers affiliated with Action Contre La Faim (ACF) who had been killed in Muthur, he said that there had been a police investigation as well as a presidential inquiry and that the inquiry report had been presented in 2009.

9. The main difficulty faced by the investigators in identifying the perpetrators was the lack of credible evidence; it was not clear who had had control of the relevant area at the time of the killings. The Attorney General had made recommendations to the investigating agencies to interview, inter alia, all Armed Forces personnel stationed in Muthur at the time of the attack, the family members of the deceased persons, the consortium of humanitarian agencies that had visited the crime scene, and all the permanent staff of ACF in Muthur, including the cook who had fed the aid workers. The Presidential Commission had also recommended a range of further investigative steps, including checking telephone records. The Criminal Investigation Department was pursuing the investigation and collecting statements from a range of sources, including persons now living abroad. The Government

was determined to ensure that the process was carried out in accordance with the procedures and safeguards enshrined in the domestic legal system and in line with international standards. The weapons taken from the crime scene were being forensically examined and the analyst's report would be submitted to the court upon completion. The next calling date before the Magistrate's Court for case No. 843/2008 pertaining to the incident had been fixed for 29 November 2016.

10. With regard to the disappearance of Prageeth Eknaligoda, the investigation had been handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department in March 2015. After conducting in-depth investigations, the Department had made a breakthrough in identifying the perpetrators of the abduction and their modus operandi. Nine members of the Armed Forces had been arrested and detained in connection with abduction, murder and other offences; they had filed a fundamental rights application challenging their arrest and detention. The Department had located the place where Mr. Eknaligoda had been detained after the abduction. The investigation was ongoing, with a focus on evidence from telephone towers. It was a complex inquiry that was being conducted in a professional and scientific manner. Once the investigation was complete, the Criminal Investigation Department would send the file to the Attorney General for a decision. With regard to the case of the Deputy Inspector General of Police indicted for murder, it had been decided to charge him with murder because it carried a harsher penalty — the death sentence — than the punishment provided for torture in the Convention against Torture Act.

11. **Mr. Rohana** (Sri Lanka) said that the Sri Lanka Police had four main training institutions: the Sri Lanka Police College, the Police Academy, the training wing of the Special Task Force, and the police in-service training division. The curricula of all four institutions included the concepts of human rights under the Constitution, the Convention against Torture Act, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, the Istanbul Protocol and other international human rights instruments. All trainees were educated on the possible disciplinary punishments for violations of rights and the zero-tolerance policy on torture. Officers in charge of police stations were made aware that they bore vicarious liability for any acts of torture that might be committed in their stations. Training programmes had been conducted in collaboration with the Scottish Police College and the International Committee of the Red Cross. A special degree programme on policing and investigation had been designed and a master's programme for higher-ranking police officers was under development. Both programmes would cover the relevant provisions of international human rights instruments. There were plans to incorporate the provisions of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance into training curricula.

12. In the post-war period, 1,500 Tamil-speaking police officers, including women, had been recruited from Northern and Eastern Provinces; upon completion of training, they had been posted to Tamil-speaking provinces. In the Northern Province, a hotline telephone service had been introduced in order to receive complaints in Tamil. All documents in respect of police investigations were prepared in Tamil in predominantly Tamil-speaking areas. Tamil-speaking officers had been deployed to all centralized investigation units, such as the Criminal Investigation Department. Recently, 300 Tamil-speaking youths had been recruited with a view to being posted to special investigation units in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. A special rapid recruitment drive had been initiated to recruit 200 female Tamil-speaking police officers; 28 female police constables had already been recruited and were being trained. A training centre had been set up to provide Tamil language courses for Sinhalese-speaking officers; since 2012, some 2,000 officers had received training.

13. The Special Investigation Unit was an independent body that had been operating for more than three decades under the supervision of the Inspector General of Police with a

mandate to investigate cases of police misconduct nationwide. Investigations were initiated on the basis of public complaints. Seventeen indictments had been filed against 36 police officers during the reporting period. Complaints referred by the National Police Commission to the Inspector General of Police were investigated by the Special Investigation Unit. Convictions had been obtained in several cases. Police officers found guilty of disciplinary charges had received punishments such as dismissal, demotion, and withholding of salary increments.

14. **Mr. Pulle** (Sri Lanka) said that, as stated in its report to the Committee, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka undertook unannounced monitoring visits to police stations and detention centres, and upon receipt of complaints had also made special visits to prisons. Between 2010 and 2016, it had conducted a total of 8,616 visits to police stations and 216 visits to prisons and detention centres. According to paragraph 5 of its report, the Commission was of the view that there was political space to critique existing laws, systems, processes and practices, and consequent to making policy interventions on legislative reform the proposed legislation had been suspended. In May 2016, the Commission had issued directives to be followed by officers arresting persons under the Prevention of Terrorism Act to ensure that the fundamental rights of persons arrested or detained were respected and that they were treated humanely. The directives clearly stated that torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment were offences and prohibited at all times. The Terrorist Investigation Division informed the Commission of those arrested under the Act and of transfers of detainees between places of detention. The Human Rights Commission Act provided that the Commission, for the purposes of inquiry or investigation, had the power to admit any evidence which might be inadmissible in civil law criminal proceedings. Accordingly, recommendations of the Human Rights Commission which focused on the violation of fundamental rights could not be used by the Attorney General as a basis for bringing indictments. All government institutions were required to cooperate with the Commission and take the necessary action to implement its recommendations.

15. The nineteenth amendment to the Constitution had introduced a number of safeguards to uphold the independence of the judiciary, including safeguards to the process of appointing senior judges. Accordingly, the Chief Justice and all judges of the Supreme Court and of the Court of Appeal could be appointed by the President only upon approval by the Constitutional Council.

16. The Constitutional Council was obliged to obtain the views of the Chief Justice when appointing judges to the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal.

17. The Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution stipulated that the Judicial Service Commission should consist of the Chief Justice and two senior Supreme Court judges, to be appointed by the President, subject to the approval of the Constitutional Council. In order to remove any members of the Judicial Service Commission, the President was required to obtain the approval of the Constitutional Council. The Commission had the authority to appoint, transfer, discipline and dismiss officials of the lower courts. Higher court judges were appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission and the Attorney General.

18. The provisions set out in chapter 15 of the Constitution served to uphold the independence of the judiciary through specific provisions. The tenure of office of judges of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal was guaranteed by the Constitution, which ensured that such judges could not be removed except by an act of parliament. The salaries and pensions of such judges were paid out of a consolidated fund and could not be reduced. The same rules applied to the salaries of members of the Judicial Service Commission.

19. In order to prevent unwarranted attacks on the judiciary, Sri Lankan courts had been granted the authority to prosecute persons accused of contempt of court. Attempting to interfere with the decisions of the courts, or seeking to influence members of the Judicial Service Commission, were punishable offences under the Constitution. Members of the Commission had been granted immunity for acts carried out in good faith in the performance of their duties.

20. Draft legislation had been formulated to criminalize enforced disappearance and to incorporate the relevant provisions of the Convention into domestic legislation.

21. **Mr. Aryasinha** (Sri Lanka) said that the Government had noted the allegations that persons in detention centres had been tortured and ill-treated. It took all such allegations seriously and would carry out comprehensive investigations into the cases in question, taking into account the right of victims to a fair remedy and the need to address the problem of impunity in respect of human rights violations. The Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanisms, which consisted entirely of representatives of civil society, had sought the public's views on the design of reconciliation mechanisms and would draw up a report reflecting its conclusions. The report in question would be submitted to the President and the Prime Minister and appropriate follow-up action would be taken.

22. **Mr. Perera** (Sri Lanka) said that a committee was currently in the process of drafting new counter-terrorism legislation to replace the Prevention of Terrorism Act. With regard to the scope of the offences covered by the draft legislation, the Government was mindful of the need to recognize the benchmarks and thresholds set by the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism. In the process of drafting the new legislation, the committee was discussing the need to introduce a requirement for the National Human Rights Commission to be notified, within 24 hours, of the arrest of any person suspected of committing terrorist offences; the need for arrests and detentions related to acts of terrorism to be subjected to judicial oversight; and the need for magistrates to monitor the well-being of detainees and ensure that such persons received a medical examination.

23. Issues related to the proposed counter-terrorism legislation had also been addressed during a round-table discussion involving international experts from the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The experts had appreciated the fact that a dialogue on the proposed legislation was taking place while it was being developed, ensuring that any relevant proposals could be taken into account.

24. The time taken for the draft legislation to be implemented would depend on how long it took for the necessary parliamentary procedures to be carried out. The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on National Security had recently commenced its deliberations on the draft legislation. Once that process was complete, the views of the Oversight Committee would be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers, after which the parliamentary procedures for the enactment of legislation would be set in motion.

25. **Mr. Bruni** said he was pleased to note that, following the criticisms made by the National Human Rights Commission of a proposed amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure, the adoption of legislation concerning the right to access legal counsel had been postponed and a committee of experts had been asked to examine the matter.

26. He asked whether ex-combatants offered the opportunity to participate in a rehabilitation programme were being given a genuine choice when declining the opportunity would result in them facing criminal charges. He wished to know on what legal basis the criminal charges against such persons could be dropped if they opted to follow a rehabilitation programme.

27. He asked what charges had been brought against the military officials charged with abducting the journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda and how it had been determined that he had been abducted.

28. In the light of the National Human Rights Commission's claims that torture was routinely practised all over Sri Lanka, he asked how many judicial investigations had been undertaken into the 3,000 allegations of torture that had been submitted to the Attorney General.

29. He wished to hear the delegation's views on the preliminary conclusions of the Special Rapporteur on torture, according to which the practice of torture was widespread and perpetrators were protected by a culture of impunity. He also asked the delegation to comment on the report issued by the International Truth and Justice Project, which stated that torture had routinely been practised at 48 sites, including police stations and army bases, between 2009 and 2015.

30. Noting that the National Human Rights Commission had issued a directive to security officers stating that torture was forbidden, he asked how many cases had been brought against persons suspected of carrying out acts of torture and how many such persons had been punished.

31. The delegation had failed to respond to questions concerning the severe inadequacy of detention conditions and problems of overcrowding in some prisons; the recommendations of the working group on enforced disappearances; and the outcome of the inquiry into torture camps in Trincomalee.

32. **Ms. Gaer** said that the delegation had not explained what steps it was taking to tackle impunity. She also noted that Mr. Mendis had not responded to questions put to him about acts of torture and ill-treatment allegedly carried out by members of the Criminal Investigation Department and the Terrorist Investigation Division, which he had formerly overseen in his capacity as a Deputy Inspector General of Police.

33. According to the report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL), the fourth floor of the headquarters of the Criminal Investigation Department in Colombo had been particularly notorious as a place where many detainees had been taken for interrogation. Furthermore, paragraph 553 of the report stated that certain centres contained "rooms that were set up with torture equipment, illustrating the premeditated and systematic nature of the use of torture by units of the Sri Lankan security forces".

34. It was unusual for the Committee to have the opportunity to ask questions of someone with the experience Mr. Mendis had had as the official responsible in the past for the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) during a period when there had been allegations of widespread abuses. She asked if he could provide any information on: cooperation between those bodies and military intelligence; whether he or officers under his command jointly interrogated persons deprived of liberty along with military officers; disappearances from Vavunia Hospital; persons interrogated in hospital by CID or TID, including whether a registry or database of those persons existed. Men and women at the hospital were apparently separated; could he provide any information on the allegations of sexual abuse and other violence at the hospital and the abduction and torture by TID of J.S. Tissainayagam, V. Jasikaran, V. Valarmathy, and K. Wijesinghe, as reported by Reporters without Borders?

35. She welcomed the information that prisoners were allowed family visits and wondered whether that was true for the prison system as well as persons detained by CID/TID; how frequent were those visits and did the families have any privacy? More information would be welcome on the 39 cases of sexual violence reported to the Government in 2014 by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including on

investigations, convictions and the penalties imposed. She was surprised that there was only one shelter for victims of domestic violence in the entire country given the size of the problem and asked what its capacity was. She asked what powers the proposed judicial mechanism with a special counsel would have and whether its members would include both international and national representatives. She wondered whether ex officio investigations based on information provided by the Human Rights Commission could be undertaken and to whom the Council would submit its information. She was concerned by the acceptance of confessions made outside the court, even if involuntary, which was a violation of the Convention. Were there any data on how many times a judge had rejected such a confession in cases involving the Prevention of Terrorism Act? She would also welcome information regarding the number of applications for habeas corpus and the number of persons released as a result.

36. She requested more information on the aid workers cases; the relatives had claimed that they had been intimidated and threatened to make them give false testimony; how many people had been interviewed, how many of the detainees had been released, had those cases been investigated and, if so, what results had been obtained? With regard to the Trincomalee 5 case, some of the 25 key witnesses were abroad and did not feel comfortable going to the embassy to provide their testimony; she wondered how the Government proposed to address that situation.

37. **Ms. Belmir** asked for an explanation of the roles and responsibilities of the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Council; she expressed concern that the Prime Minister was a member of the latter and wondered if that affected its impartiality. She was concerned that pursuant to the Public Security Ordinance the military could detain individuals for 24 hours; the Committee had received reports of prisoners suffering abuse during their detention. She asked if the delegation had information in that regard and wondered whether detainees were turned over to the police following the initial 24 hours in military custody. Lastly, given the high numbers of quite young children who had suffered abuse at the hands of the military, she wondered what laws and mechanisms existed for the protection of the rights of minors.

38. **Mr. Hani** requested more information on whether cases of torture reported by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka to the Attorney General were automatically investigated, pursuant to the requirements of articles 12 and 13 of the Convention. He welcomed the fact that the Human Rights Commission and its regional offices could make recommendations to the authorities regarding amendments to the law but stressed that a supervisory mechanism must be designated or created to ensure coordination and follow-up with the authorities as well as implementation of any new legislation. He requested more information on the training of facilitators, with the help of international experts, in interrogation methods that precluded the use of force and torture mentioned in the addendum to the State party's report and also asked if the State party intended to implement the recommendations in the report of the Special Rapporteur on torture concerning a universal protocol for non-coercive interviewing methods and procedural safeguards.

39. **The Chair** said that he had received no response to his questions on: the number of cases of torture in police custody confirmed by doctors and the right of a detainee to see a doctor; the number of times judges had requested a judicial medical examination in cases where torture was suspected; whether records of such examinations submitted to the courts were available publicly; whether it was true that no doctors were assigned to prisons; the results of the National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2011-2016; a new Action Plan; and the elimination of secret places of detention.

The meeting was suspended at 5.20 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.

40. **Ms. Jayasuriya** (Sri Lanka), referring to allegations in 2007 of sexual abuse by 134 members of the Sri Lankan peacekeeping contingent in Haiti, said that her Government had

immediately dispatched a four-person team of officers, including one woman Brigadier-General, to investigate on the ground in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). As a result of that preliminary investigation the entire contingent had been returned to Sri Lanka for a comprehensive military court of inquiry undertaken in cooperation with a prosecutor from the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS); 23 of the accused had been found guilty. The delegation would provide more detailed information on that process and its results in writing.

41. There was currently a strict vetting process for peacekeepers undertaken by the military, the police, the intelligence agency and the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka. The names of successful candidates were forwarded to DPKO and further vetted by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Her Government was committed to cooperating and coordinating with relevant United Nations agencies, including DPKO, to ensure that no member of a Sri Lankan peacekeeping contingent would ever be accused of sexual violence or human rights violations.

42. Sri Lanka had no specific domestic legislation relating to non-refoulement, but that principle of customary international law was recognized by the courts pursuant to article 27 (15) of the Constitution relating to “respect for international law and treaty obligations” The Supreme Court had invoked the principle of non-refoulement in some of its decisions. Sri Lanka likewise was not a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees but nevertheless hosted refugees and asylum seekers in facilities operated in accordance with a cooperation agreement signed with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2006. Irregular migrants were detained only in accordance with the regulations of the Immigration and Emigration Department. Families and children were placed in detention by the immigration authorities only in exceptional circumstances and for their own safety. Her Government was aware of the need to develop a coherent national policy, increase the capacity of its facilities and allocate more resources to dealing with refugees and migrants and would do so to the extent its resources as a developing country allowed.

43. **Mr. Jayasuriya** (Sri Lanka) said that the Attorney General had no investigative powers; investigations were undertaken by the police, which transmitted all information to the Attorney General, who then decided whether charges should be laid or requested the police to make further enquiries to make sure that the evidence available established guilt beyond reasonable doubt. A special Presidential Commission of Inquiry could likewise undertake an investigation on a specific matter and forward the results of the inquiry to the Attorney General for a decision on whether charges should be laid. Statements by witnesses were recorded and accused persons had an opportunity to present a defence against any charges or allegations. The Attorney General could never lay charges unless there had first been an investigation; there were therefore no arbitrary prosecutions without substantiating evidence.

44. Access to the rehabilitation process was possible for an individual who was in custody and had been indicted on the basis of evidence collected during the investigation of his alleged crime. Because of the long delays in the criminal justice system and taking into account the nature and severity of the offence and the likely sentence if found guilty, which might be relatively light, the accused could ask to undergo rehabilitation rather than continuing with a long criminal prosecution. For the same reasons the accused could request a reduced charge to avoid a lengthy proceeding. Such measures were intended to offer opportunities to speed up the criminal justice system while still ensuring that punishment was meted out. That flexibility contributed to the national reconciliation process.

45. **Mr. Pulle** (Sri Lanka) said that the Constitutional Council was made up of the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition, one member of

Parliament appointed by the President, five persons appointed by the President of whom two must be members of Parliament and one member of parliament not from the governing or main opposition parties. The Council was responsible for appointing the members of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal as well as various national bodies and commissions, including the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, the National Police Commission and the Election Commission.

46. Pursuant to articles 118 and 125 of the Constitution the Supreme Court was the final appellate jurisdiction for all legal matters, including interpretation of the Constitution and the protection of human rights. The Human Rights Commission could make recommendations to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court could likewise request the opinion of the Commission on specific matters.

47. **Mr. Jayasuriya** (Sri Lanka) said that the dialogue with the Committee had provided an opportunity to gain greater insight into the Committee's concerns, which would be taken into account during preparation of the next periodic report. Time constraints had prevented full answers to some of the Committee's questions; any additional information available would be provided in writing. He thanked the members for their interest; the Committee's recommendations would contribute to continued progress in the promotion of the human rights of all Sri Lankans.

48. **The Chair** said that, while a number of questions had unfortunately gone unanswered, for example those directed to Mr. Mendis, he hoped more information would be provided in writing. He thanked the delegation for a fruitful dialogue.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.