

**Mandates of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders**

REFERENCE: UA  
LKA 13/2014:

12 December 2014

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 27/1 and 25/18.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning threat, intimidation and harassment of **Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena**, as a reprisal for her enquiries about her allegedly disappeared husband and for her activities to raise awareness about the case.

According to the information received:

Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena, 33 years old, is the wife of Madushka Haris De Silva, who was allegedly disappeared in September 2013 in the district of Anuradhapura, North Central province. Since the alleged enforced disappearance, she has repeatedly raised the case of her husband with various authorities, requesting that thorough investigations are undertaken and that those responsible are held accountable. In November 2013, she presented a petition to the President of Sri Lanka during his visit to Anuradhapura and later, in March 2014, she presented the same petition to the President's wife. She has had various meeting with the National Human Rights Commission where she has submitted complaints about police inactivity and in March 2014, she organized a protest next to the police department in Colombo. She has reportedly been the subject of increasingly serious threats, intimidations and harassment to discourage her to pursue her actions with respect to her husband's disappearance.

Most recently, on 1 November 2014, at around 5:30 p.m., she was abducted and held for an hour and a half and then dropped in Weliwawa, Nochciyagama, Anuradhapura district. She had ordered a three wheeler (local taxi) to go grocery shopping but after she got in the driver drove in the opposite direction. She reported that suddenly a man jumped in and pointed a gun at her. Few minutes later, she was taken out of the taxi and put into a van where four to five men were seated. A gun was aimed at her head and the abductors repeatedly threatened her, saying that she must stop looking for her disappeared husband or may meet the same fate. They took her bag, tied her hands behind her back and verbally abused her. Since her release, she has reportedly been followed on a number of occasions by someone on a motorbike.

Due to her efforts to find her husband, Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena has received at least four threats, including death threats. On each occasion, when she complained to the police, the latter were slow to investigate and informed her that they could not guarantee her security. On 14 July 2014, at about 11:45 p.m. she heard a noise at the back of her house: a voice she did not recognize warned her to stop looking for her husband and threatened her and her three children with death. She called the police, which arrived two hours later. On 6 September 2014, she once again heard noise outside her house and saw someone in a black tracksuit with his/her face covered. She again called the police but they did not come. On 9 September 2014, she heard noise again and found a letter on her door step, which included death threats. Once again, the police officers arrived after two hours and advised her “to go to the media” as they could not do anything to protect her. On 13 October 2014, she received “the last warning” from the abductors which was once again left on her doorstep.

After she was abducted and subsequently released on 1 November 2014, Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena called the police. On 6 November 2014, she was summoned to the police station to give a statement. She had to move out of her house due to security concerns and was afraid to go outside. On 30 November 2014, she went to a meeting with fellow human rights defenders to discuss matters related to their own security. After the meeting, she was once again followed by someone on a motorbike.

Serious concern is expressed about the life, personal security, psychological and physical integrity of **Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena** in light of the continuous intimidations, harassments and threats, including death threats, to her and her children, in connection with her efforts to clarify the fate or whereabouts of her disappeared husband.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we would like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to the relevant international norms and standards that are applicable to the issues brought forth by the situation described above.

With regard to the allegation of threat, intimidation or harassment of Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena as a consequence of her search for her husband, we would like to bring to your Excellency's Government's attention the rights and obligations set out in articles 13 (1), 13 (3) and 13 (5) of the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

These allegations also appear to contravene the prime responsibility and duty of the State to protect, promote and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in particular articles 1, 2 and 12.

The full texts of the human rights instruments and standards recalled above are available on [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org) or [www.wgeid.org](http://www.wgeid.org) or can be provided upon request.

In view of the urgency of the matter, we would appreciate a response on the initial steps taken by your Excellency's Government to safeguard the rights of the above-mentioned person in compliance with international instruments.

It is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and any comment you may have on the above mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide information on measures taken to protect the life, security and physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena, to ensure that she not exposed to any further threats, intimidation or harassment.
3. Please provide details, and where available the results, of any investigation and inquiry carried out in relation to this case, including efforts made to ensure that perpetrators of the alleged threats, intimidation and harassment against Ms. Rankothge Mauri Inoka Kumari Jayasena and her family are brought to justice.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the

investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person responsible of the alleged violations.

Your Excellency's Government's response will be made available in a report to be presented to the Human Rights Council for its consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Ariel Dulitzky  
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary  
Disappearances

Michel Forst  
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders