The Rt Hon William Hague MP
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London

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Dear Secretary of State,

We are contacting you as you prepare for the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 15 - 17 November 2013.

In March 2013 I recall that the UK Government signed the Commonwealth Charter supporting values and principles which all Commonwealth countries have committed, including the protection and promotion of human rights, freedom of expression and the rule of law.

In line with these values and principles, we call on you to show leadership and send a clear message to human rights victims and defenders throughout the Commonwealth that Sri Lanka’s human rights abuses will not be given a Commonwealth seal of approval.

To date the Commonwealth has been shamefully silent about Sri Lanka’s human rights crisis and failed to address the persistent lack of justice for past crimes and ongoing attacks on human rights defenders and other activists.

Amnesty International urges you to:

* Publicly condemn Sri Lanka’s persistent failure to ensure justice for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity, and to stop its attacks on civil society activists.
* Call for an independent and international investigation into alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity, and condemn continuing reprisals against civil society.
* Stop Sri Lanka from becoming the next Commonwealth Chair. If the Commonwealth approves Sri Lanka as its Chair, it is effectively approving of its human rights abuses.

We do hope that you will support these calls and that you will use the opportunity of attending CHOGM to raise human rights concerns with the Government of Sri Lanka.