



1<sup>st</sup> September 2009

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(Prajathantravadi Wamansika Peramuna)  
ஜனநாயக இடதுசாரி முன்னணி  
Democratic Left Front

Commissioner General of Prisons

Colombo 8

It is with sadness that I learnt that our former colleague, J. S. Tissainayagam, was sentenced to 20 years rigorous imprisonment for his writings. It was my understanding that he had written these with the same passion that he helped us in documenting cases of disappearances in late 1980s and early 1990s.

However, now he is convicted and I have seen media reports that there will be an appeal.

In the meantime, I believe it is paramount to ensure his physical safety while in prison.

It is in this regard that I believe it is important that he is not held amongst those convicted for criminal offences, but treated as a political prisoner. I'm particularly concerned that he may face harassment and even attacks by other prisoners in the Welikada prison, which prison authorities may not be able to prevent and control. In fact, it has been brought to my notice already that there have been indications inside the Welikada prison of such possibilities happening in the days following the judgment.

Although you may only hear about such incidents after the event, it would also be extremely damaging to your *authority*.

Thus, it is my contention that it is best not to keep Tissainayagam in Welikeda Prison. The best alternative appears to keep Tissainayagam where he was kept for more than a year, namely J cell in New Magazine Prison. Any rules in this regard that may run contrary to this request should be reviewed on an exceptional basis.

Yours truly,

Vasudeva Nanayakkara

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TRANSACTION REPORT

FOR: SHAN COMMUNICATION

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