

4th November 2011

Mr. Frank La Rue
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
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Re: Urgent Appeal for an Urgent intervention to protect Frederica Jansz, the editor of The Sunday Leader

Dear Mr. Frank La Rue,

I am William Nicholas Gomes, a Bangladeshi Journalist and Human Rights Activist.

I want to draw your urgent attention for an urgent intervention to protect Frederica Jansz, the editor of The Sunday Leader, who received death threats

On 27 October, Ms. Jansz received an anonymous hand-written letter claiming to come from the "Sinha regiment."

The letter said "Frederica Sandra Carmela Jansz, that damn prostitute, you are now safeguarding the President. By you giving evidence to put Mr. Fonseka in trouble he had to go to courts 57 times. You have even printed the Presidents manifesto. Can you remember that there was a comparison of countries run by Generals in Head to Head? Where was Rakmish Wijeywardene, photographer Thusithar Kumar, they have disappeared at the beginning of the case. Lal Wickremesinghe too was dropped half way. Finally you (tho- in Sinhala) appeared on behalf of five people. You gave false evidence to get promotions. Your genitals were touched nicely by Lasantha Wickrematunge. Now Secretary Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa is coming to see you? That bugger also is having sex with that whore. Bloody whore on the 18th of November whichever way the judgment is given you will not be spared. Do you know that? 1 SR means what? We are the Sinha regiment who took the brunt of the war on our shoulders. Because of our Leader's instructions we didn't get killed during the war. We suffered for what? For this country. The Leader who fought so well was brought to the Military Court by a bloody bitch like you. He slept in the jungles amidst mosquitoes and snakes, with us. In addition to having suffered during the war he is now jailed and tortured. We will not spare you. (underlined) If you want to escape you go to Temple trees and sleep where the President sleeps. There is nothing else to do. Even if Mr. Fonseka comes out or not we will continue our fight. We have enough weapons which we got from the war. It won't be long before the people of this country would join us. Will the people give power to the President and his family to rule forever? Let's see. The win in Colombo is like a victory over the entire country. If the main town was won, what more is there to speak? This time also the full might of the Rajapaksas, of the State, and all the Ministers came to Colombo. In how many staggered times did they hold elections? Why was that done? Because its easy to use State power then. If elections were held in one go State power cannot be used. Anyway the government is falling little by little now. There is turmoil within. When more positions are given to the family the balance will also be destroyed. Someday Chief Justice Sarath N Silva, Fonseka, Wijeydasa Rajapaksa,, Tiran Alles, Mangala Samaraweera and Anura Kumara

Dissanayake will have to take over this country. Then those SLFP people will join them. The UNP will be destitute. Those who are from the underworld, dealing in drugs, into taking bribes, making money by suppressing the people must be vanquished first. That is the day the country will turn right. We heard that you too have a brothel. You cannot do this everyday. A change will come soon. You be careful. Our Sinha regiment boys are very angry now. Your genitals must be smashed. Bloody whore ..because you gave false evidence.”

The letter threatens Frederica warning her that irrespective of the verdict due on November 18, in relation to what is known as the ‘White Flag Case’ she will be dealt with. Interestingly the letter carried some facts related to the White Flag case in which Frederica was the key witness. For instance the letter mentions the name of two staffers at The Sunday Leader Raknish Wijewardena (no longer at the paper) and Photographer Thusitha Kumara both of whom accompanied Frederica to the interview she conducted with former army commander Sarath Fonseka after which she subsequently published a Page One Lead story and interview on December 13, 2009. Both Wijewardena and Kumara were not named as witnesses in the White Flag case. Yet, if indeed this letter has emanated from an army person in the Sinha regiment (formerly under Fonseka’s command) as the writer attempts to have us believe, it is indeed more than strange that a soldier or officer could have recalled the intricacies of Frederica’s evidence in court to name both Raknish Wijewardena and Thusitha Kumara, despite the fact that neither of these two men were named as witnesses nor did they ever appear in court.

[This is not the first time that Ms. Jansz has been target of such threats.](#) The first threats were received shortly after she had provided the evidence. The Sunday Leader’s journalists are often the targets of [all sorts of intimidation.](#) I remind you of the January 2009 murder of the newspaper’s then editor, [Lasantha Wickrematunga](#), which was [never properly investigated](#), according to Reporters Without Borders

Frederica lodged a complaint with the Mirihana Police after receiving the threat; So far, she has received no protection, according to the information received. As a verdict will soon be issued, I am extremely concerned for her safety during the days and weeks to come.

I am worried about the safety of Sri Lankan journalists, who are working in an increasingly fraught environment and are caught between the different forces – political and non-political – operating in Sri Lanka.

I therefore urge you for an urgent intervention into the situation that the threats to be properly investigated and to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure that they stop. Also make it sure that the Sri Lanka authorities should take proper and immediate actions to provide proper protection to her or any other journalist if they desire it.

I thank you for the attention you give to this letter.

Sincerely,

William Nicholas Gomes

Journalist & Human Rights Activist

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CC:

American Society of Newspaper Editors

Amnesty International

Article 19 (United Kingdom)

Artikel 19 (The Netherlands)

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression

Freedom Forum

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Index on Censorship

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Lorne W. Craner, United States Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human

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