



PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
TO THE PRIME MINISTER

17 JAN 2014

Reference: C13/93710

Mr Paris Aristotle AM
Chief Executive Officer
Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture
6 Gardiner Street
BRUNSWICK VIC 3056

Dear Mr Aristotle

Thank you for your letter, written jointly with Jorge Aroche and Tracy Worrall, dated 13 December 2013 to the Prime Minister regarding Sri Lanka's human rights record. The Prime Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

As the Prime Minister stated in Parliament on 18 November 2013, "the Government deplores torture, always has, always will." The Government considers that engaging Sri Lanka, not isolating it, is the most effective way to promote human rights. Australia consistently raises directly with the Sri Lankan Government the importance of upholding the rule of law, improving human rights and promoting reconciliation.

Most recently the Prime Minister raised human rights issues with the President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa, during his visit to Colombo to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting on 16 November 2013.

I have written to Mr Aroche and Ms Worrall in similar terms.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JFrydenberg'.

JOSH FRYDENBERG