PRESS RELEASE **12 DECEMBER 2017**

UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE ISSUES INTERIM MEASURE ADVISING AUSTRALIA NOT TO DEPORT TAMIL ASYLUM SEEKER

On 11 December 2017, the UN Committee Against Torture (**CAT**) advised the Australian Government that a Tamil man held in immigration detention in Australia and in danger of imminent deportation, should not be returned to Sri Lanka. Human rights law firm, Human Rights for All, filed a complaint to CAT in early December 2017 on behalf of the man. On 11 December 2017, CAT accepted that the complaint had merit and issued the interim measure.

The man, who has been refused refugee status in Australia, faces deportation back to Sri Lanka, where Tamil asylum seekers have been regularly tortured, including through the use of sexual violence. Returned Tamils also face the risk of unlawful disappearance and/or subsequent murder, due to perceived or actual association with the Tamil movement and / or the LTTE.

CAT has requested Australia not deport the man while it considers his case.

Director Principal of Human Rights for All, Alison Battisson, said of the interim order:

"The Committee Against Torture's interim measure once against highlights the serious issues faced by Tamil asylum seekers in Australia. By issuing this measure, the UN recognises that Sri Lanka is not safe for Tamils, despite Australia denying refugee status to many Tamils.

HR4A is very pleased that the UN Torture Committee has decided to act, and act quickly, to stop the deportation of this man. These interim measures are quite rare - this illustrates the very real concern the UN has over Australia's practices of refouling Tamils to Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is not safe for many Tamils to return to."

For further information on the interim order by the UN Committee Against Torture, please contact Alison Battisson, Director Principal of Human Rights for All:

Ph: 0400 635 110
Email: alison.battisson@hr4a.com.au
http://www.hr4a.com.au
Twitter: @alisonbattisson