



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tamils

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

9 October 2018

Rt. Hon Sajid Javid MP

Secretary of State for the Home Department
Home Office
Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our Ref: JR13501

Dear Secretary of State,

We write to express our serious concerns at the recent arrest of Mr Sockalingam Yogalingam, outside the Oxford Union on Monday 8 October, as he peacefully protested the speech being delivered by the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe. We understand Mr Yogalingam is still in police custody.

According to information provided to us by sources at the scene, the arrest was carried out at the behest of Sri Lankan Government officials who were filming the protest.

As you know, every UK citizen has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. Members of the UK Tamil community, including Mr Yogalingam, were taking this opportunity to express their legitimate concerns regarding the lack of accountability and reconciliation in Sri Lanka, following the conclusion of the armed conflict in 2009, and the on-going persecution of Tamils on the island.

We believe that Mr Yogalingam should be released as soon as possible. In addition, we ask you to investigate the circumstances of Mr Yogalingam's arrest and to make immediate representations to Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to the UK to ascertain why they believe it is appropriate for Sri Lankan officials to film UK citizens demonstrating peacefully on our streets and to seek to instruct UK police officers to take action against them.

We await your urgent response.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Scully MP

Member of Parliament for Sutton and Cheam, Chair – APPG for Tamils

Siobhain McDonagh MP

Member of Parliament for Mitcham and Morden, Senior Vice Chair

Bob Blackman MP

Member of Parliament for Harrow East, Vice Chair

Zac Goldsmith MP

Member of Parliament for Richmond Park & North Kingston, Vice Chair

Rt. Hon Joan Ryan MP

Member of Parliament for Enfield North, Vice Chair

Wes Streeting MP

Member of Parliament for Ilford North, Vice Chair

Rt. Hon Theresa Villiers MP

Member of Parliament for Chipping Barnet, Vice Chair

Virendra Sharma MP

Member of Parliament for Ealing, Southall, Executive Officer

Cc – Rt. Hon Jeremy Hunt MP

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

– Chief Constable Francis Habgood QPM

Thames Valley Police