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NATIONS UNIES
HAUT COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME



UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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*PA -> UN Special Rapporteur
MV Cumaraswamy's file*
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Address:
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 GENEVE 10

REFERENCE: G/SO 214 G-3-7VAP/cmc

A/DK

5 March 1998

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

*Presumably UKMU Geneva
will put the Department in the
picture.*

Last week, Mr. Alan Parra in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights who assists me on my mandate, received a call from the United Kingdom Permanent Mission in Geneva expressing concern over two sentences in my draft report. The two sentences attribute remarks made by the Chief Constable of the RUC, Mr. Ronnie Flanagan, to the Special Rapporteur during his meeting with him. It was mentioned to Mr. Parra that the Chief Constable could not recall making those remarks. Mr. Parra was also informed that the reported remarks could put the security of defense lawyers in jeopardy and in particular Ms. Rosemary Nelson's life.

On 2 March 1998, the Special Rapporteur received a similar call from the United Kingdom Mission in Kuala Lumpur.

The Special Rapporteur views these calls with grave concern. If disclosing the remarks made by the Chief Constable as described in the two sentences could put the lives of defense lawyers, and in particular the life of Ms. Rosemary Nelson, in danger, then the question remains: threat from whom, the paramilitaries or the RUC?

As for the Chief Constable's contention that he could not remember making those remarks. I am afraid the contemporaneous note of the meeting recorded by Mr. Parra show otherwise.

I have, however, carefully deliberated on the request for deletion of the sentences and have decided to accede in the interest of the security of the defense lawyers, and not because the Chief Constable disputes having made the remarks.

H.E. [redacted]
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom
to the United Nations Office at Geneva
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R.E.L. DIVISION
22 APR 1998
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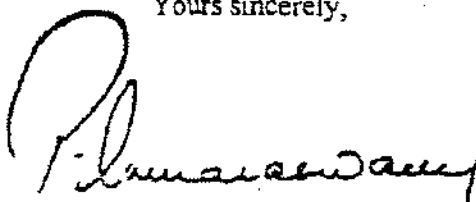
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Since my mission to Northern Ireland, I have received more disturbing information of harassment of defense lawyers by the RUC during interrogation. I have also received copies of complaints lodged by the solicitors concerned. I am particularly concerned over the harassment and threats on Ms. Rosemary Nelson. I appeal to you that your Government gives highest priority to my concerns and prompt measures be taken to provide security for these lawyers.

As it appears that the threats seem to emanate from the RUC, the question of concern is who can provide these lawyers with adequate credible security? I remain very disturbed.

Yours sincerely,



Dato' Param Cumaraswamy
Special Rapporteur on the Independence of
Judges and Lawyers