



RANJINI RELEASED: DEMAND FOR COMPENSATION.

*From the Press Office, Tamil Refugee Council.
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Melbourne, Friday -- The Tamil Refugee Council has called on the Australian government to rehabilitate and compensate mother-of-three Ranjini, a Tamil refugee who was released last night after three years in Villawood detention centre.

Ranjini was one of more than 50 refugees indefinitely detained by the government because of secret ASIO assessments deeming them threats to national security. They were never allowed to see the evidence against them or challenge it in court.

The majority have been quietly released this year without any compensation. Some were detained for up to six years. Between six and 10 remain locked away.

“Over two years ago the UN Human Rights Committee demanded that Australia release, rehabilitate and compensate the ASIO-negative detainees. We are calling on the Turnbull government to act on this demand,” said Trevor Grant, of the Tamil Refugee Council.

“Indeed, if it is serious about joining the UN Human Rights Council, you would expect it to do so.”

Ranjini was released following a recent ASIO interview, after which she was granted a security clearance. “One day this mother of three little children is deemed to be a threat to our national security. Next day she’s not, yet nothing has changed in her life,” said Grant.

“This lays bare the cynical, cavalier use of our national security laws for political purposes. The end result is that lives of decent human beings are seriously damaged.

“Ranjini’s incarceration will remain stain on this nation forever. It was part of a political stunt designed to scare off Tamil asylum-seekers.

“Even though she had been granted refugee status, she was whisked off the streets of Melbourne and locked up in 2012, due to a sudden ASIO decision to declare her a national security threat. We’ve heard not one credible bit of evidence to support such a move.

“She has shown great strength and courage, being forced to bring up three children behind bars for most of her time in Villawood. Her husband Ganesh has been equally strong. The least this government can do is compensate them.”

For further information, contact the Tamil Refugee Council on 0400 597 351.