

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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## News Flash

### **Sri Lanka: Landmark judgement on rape case**

*Amnesty International welcomes the decision of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka which on 25 January 2002 granted 150,000 Sri Lankan rupees (approximately US\$ 1,600) compensation to Velu Arshadevi, a Tamil woman who was raped in Colombo in June 2001.*

*"This is a landmark judgement. It is the first time that the court has awarded compensation to a rape victim, confirming that rape in custody constitutes torture," Amnesty International said.*

*Amnesty International is urging the Sri Lankan authorities to ensure that the criminal prosecution of the three soldiers and three police officers allegedly responsible for raping Velu Arshadevi, who are currently released on bail, will proceed shortly. If it were to go to trial, it would set another precedent, constituting the first prosecution of members of the security forces in relation to rape in custody.*

*It is also urging that justice is assured to the other victims of rape which the organization documented in a report, Sri Lanka: Rape in custody, published today:*

*<http://www.web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/index/asa370012002>*

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