

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 230/90 (ASA 37/12/90, 5 June and follow-ups ASA 37/13/90, 12 June, and ASA 37/15/90, 22 June 1990) - Death Threats

SRI LANKA: Dr (Mrs) Manorani SARAVANAMUTTU (f)  
Batty WEERAKOON

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The magisterial inquiry into the death of journalist Richard de Zoysa was discontinued on 30 August 1990. At the hearing, the Attorney General made known that he had decided to take no action against the senior police officer named by Richard de Zoysa's mother, Dr Saravanamuttu, as having been among those who abducted her son in February. The Attorney General requested that the police continue to investigate the abduction and killing of Richard de Zoysa, but apparently believed there was insufficient evidence available to bring charges against the police officer identified by Dr Saravanamuttu as one of his abductors. Dr Saravanamuttu's lawyer, Batty Weerakoon, requested that the inquiry be discontinued.

In May, Dr Saravanamuttu was threatened with death if she continued to press for a full inquiry into her son's murder. Her lawyer, Batty Weerakoon also received a death threat, and accepted armed police guards for his protection. On 22 June 1990 two police guards on duty at his home received threats addressed to them by name, warning them to leave Batty Weerakoon unprotected, or face death themselves. Although the fact that Batty Weerakoon was receiving police protection had been publicized, the names of the officers guarding him had not been published.

The police officer named by Dr Saravanamuttu remains on active service.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In keeping with the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 24 May 1989, Amnesty International has urged the Government of Sri Lanka to institute a full, independent investigation into the abduction and murder of Richard de Zoysa. This has not yet been done; instead, the matter is being investigated by police despite the fact that witnesses believe police officers to have been involved in the crime. In view of the death threats received by Dr Saravanamuttu, Batty Weerakoon and the police guards so far, Amnesty International fears that intimidation may continue.

#### FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- urging that a full, independent inquiry into the murder of Richard de Zoysa be instituted, the results of which should be made public;
- reiterating concern that police officers who may become the subject of such inquiry into the abduction and killing of Richard de Zoysa remain on active service;

- reiterating that Principle 15 of the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions, adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 24 May 1989 states that those potentially implicated in extra-legal, arbitrary or summary executions shall be removed from any position of direct or indirect power over complainants, witnesses and their families and those conducting investigations;

- urging that all witnesses, lawyers and investigators involved in an independent inquiry be provided with adequate protection against threats and intimidation.

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency President R Premadasa  
Presidential Secretariat  
Republic Square  
Colombo 1  
Sri Lanka

Telegrams: President Premadasa, Colombo, Sri Lanka  
Telexes: 22650 PRESEC CE

The Hon Ranjan Wijeratne  
Minister of Plantation Industries and Minister of State for Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
Colombo  
Sri Lanka

Telegrams: Minister Defence, Colombo, Sri Lanka  
Telexes: 22229 MINDEF CE

Ernest Perera  
Inspector General of Police  
Sri Lanka Police Headquarters  
New Secretariat  
No 349 Galle Road  
Colombia 1, Sri Lanka

Sunil de Silva  
Attorney General  
Attorney General's Department  
Hultsdorf  
Colombo 12, Sri Lanka

**COPIES TO:** Diplomatic representatives of Sri Lanka in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 October 1990.