

PUBLIC

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Further information on EXTRA 39/00 (ASA 37/08/00, 14 April 2000) - Fear of safety

SRI LANKA                      W M Sunil Shantha

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At a court hearing on 30 May 2000, the judge postponed the case of the trial against a press officer and a civilian charged in connection with the "disappearance" of six young men in December 1989 on the basis that an inquiry was going on into threats against W M Sunil Shantha, a key witness in the trial.

The inquiry into the threat against Sunil Shantha has apparently been initiated by the Attorney General's department after Amnesty International members expressed concern about the safety of W M Sunil Shantha. In a number of letters received by Amnesty International members from various diplomatic missions of Sri Lanka the authorities provided assurances that steps were being taken to ensure the safety of Sunil Shantha.

Amnesty International is continuing to closely monitor Sunil Shantha's safety. No further action is required at this stage. Thank you to all those who sent appeals.