

UA 296/02

Fear for**INDONESIA Activists working with the Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy (ELS-HAM) in Papua and Jakarta**

Activists working with the Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy (ELS-HAM) in Papua Province and Jakarta have been subjected to intimidation and harassment. In the past, activists involved in investigating and publicizing human rights cases have received death threats, been accused of defamation and summoned for questioning by the police. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety.

On 28 September ELS-HAM's Jakarta office received an anonymous telephone call telling staff to "be careful". Staff in the organization's office in Jayapura, Papua Province have reported that their office is under surveillance by unknown people, and activists in Mimika, Papua Province, have also said that they are being monitored and followed.

The incidents appear to be connected to a press release issued by ELS-HAM on 25 September. In the press release, the organization stated that there were indications that the military's Special Forces Command (Kopassus) may have been involved in an attack close to the PT Freeport Indonesia gold and copper mine in Tembagapura, Mimika District, Papua Province on 31 August 2002.

The Indonesian military has reportedly threatened to sue ELS-HAM for slander in connection with the statement. The military has also accused ELS-HAM in local media of being a political pro-independence organization.

Amnesty International is concerned that the harassment and intimidation experienced by human rights defenders in Papua is intended to deny their rights to freedom of expression and discourage them from carrying out their legitimate human rights work.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 31 August 2002, one Indonesian and two US citizens were killed when armed men opened fire on the vehicles in which they were travelling near the PT Freeport Indonesia gold and copper mine in Tembagapura, Mimika District, Papua Province. The three were reportedly teachers at an international school for Freeport employees. At least ten other people were injured in the attack (see News Service 153, ASA 21/122/2002, 2 September 2002).

Members of ELS-HAM who carried out an investigation into the attack were subjected to intimidation and harassment during the course of the investigation. There are also credible reports that witnesses were intimidated. ELS-HAM together with the Legal Aid Institute (LBH Papua) and the Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence (Kontras Papua) have called on the authorities to establish an independent and objective inquiry into the killings.

In February 2002, ELS-HAM staff in Jayapura were threatened that they would be killed by Kopassus because of their involvement in investigating the killing of local political leader, Theys Eluay in November 2001 (See UA 43/02, ASA 21/006/2002, 11 February 2002). A number of activists, including members of ELS-HAM and LBH Papua have been summoned for police questioning in connection with their legitimate human rights activities in the past.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of ELS-HAM staff in Papua and Jakarta, and urging the authorities to take immediate, concrete measures to guarantee their safety, as well as the safety of other human rights activists and witnesses in Papua;
- calling on the authorities to investigate the sources of the threats and if substantiated, take immediate and appropriate action against those responsible;
- calling for the authorities to ensure that all members of the police and military are made aware of the legitimate role of human rights defenders and their responsibility to protect human rights defenders under the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

Chief of Police for Papua
Brig. Gen. Made Mangku Pastika
Jl. Sam Ratulangie No. 8
Jayapura, Papua
Indonesia

Fax: + 62 967 531717

Telegrams: Police Chief Pastika, Jayapura, Papua, Indonesia

Salutation: Dear Brigadier General

Commander, Kodam VIII / XVII Trikora (military command covering Papua)

Maj. Gen. Mahidin Simbolon
Pangdam VIII/Trikora
Jl. Polimak Atas
Jayapura, Papua
Indonesia

Fax: + 62 967 31642

Salutation: Dear Major General

COPIES TO:

President Megawati Sukarnoputri
President RI
Istana Merdeka
Jakarta 10110
Indonesia

Fax: + 62 21 345 2685 / 526 8726 / 380 5511/ 345 7782

Telegrams: President Megawati Sukarnoputri, Istana Merdeka, Jakarta, Indonesia

Salutation: Dear President

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 November 2002.