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**INDONESIA Muhammad Nazar**

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Political activist Muhammad Nazar has been tortured and ill-treated in police custody. Amnesty International is concerned that he has been detained solely for his peaceful political activities, and if so would consider him a prisoner of conscience.

Muhammad Nazar was arrested on 20 November, and is now held at the Aceh Police Headquarters (Polda Aceh). According to his lawyer, officers of the Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob) have threatened to kill him, sometimes at gunpoint, and have thrown stones and water at him. At around noon yesterday, Brimob officers also reportedly started pounding on the door of his cell in an apparent effort to intimidate him.

Muhammad Nazar is a leading activist with the Information Center for a Referendum on Aceh (SIRA), which was involved in organizing a pro-independence rally in the provincial capital, Banda Aceh, on 10-11 November. The security forces blocked people from travelling to the rally, opening fire on convoys of vehicles. There are reports from local NGOs that more than 20 people died, but the final death toll is not confirmed.

Muhammad Nazar was arrested just over a week after the rally. He has reportedly been charged under articles of the criminal law banning public expression of hostility, hatred or contempt towards the government. These articles have been widely used in the past to imprison other people for their legitimate peaceful activities.

Since his arrest, nine other organizers of the rally have been summoned by the police to give witness statements in connection with his case. They have so far refused to obey the summons.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Serious and widespread human rights violations, including arbitrary detentions, torture and unlawful killings, are continuing in Aceh during armed operations by the Indonesian security forces against the armed opposition group, the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM*).

Over recent months, human rights defenders, humanitarian workers and political activists have faced increasing intimidation. Several have "disappeared" or been tortured or arbitrarily detained.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/e-mails/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language: (please note that the President's e-mail address may be unreliable. Please try the alternative fax numbers if the first one is not successful)**

- expressing concern at allegations that Muhammad Nazar has been tortured and ill-treated in police custody, and asking for guarantees that he will not be subjected to further torture or ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that Muhammad Nazar has access to medical treatment;
- expressing concern that Muhammad Nazar is a Prisoner of Conscience and should therefore be immediately and unconditionally released;

- urging the authorities to launch full, immediate and independent investigations into *all* allegations of torture and ill-treatment by the security forces in Aceh, including the case of Muhammad Nazar.

**APPEALS TO:**

President KH Abdurrahman Wahid

President RI  
Istana Merdeka  
Jakarta 10110  
Indonesia

**Fax: + 62 21 345 2685/526 8726**

**Telex: 44283 BIGRA IA; 44469 DEPLU IA**

**E-mail: presiden@ri.go.id**

**Salutation: Dear President**

Chief of Police for Aceh

Brig. Gen. Chaerul R. Rasyidi  
Kapolda Aceh  
Jl Cut Meutia No.3  
Banda Aceh  
Indonesia

**Salutation: Dear Brigadier General**

**Fax: + 62 651 26689/22488/46864**

**COPIES TO:**

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Dr Alwi Abdurrahman Shihab  
Menteri Luar Negeri  
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Indonesia

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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 16 January 2001.