

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

AI Index ASA 21/001/2002 - News Service Nr. 9
Embargoed for : 19/01/2002 00:01 GMT

Indonesia: Amnesty International delegation to visit Papua

An Amnesty International delegation will visit the Indonesian province of Papua from 19 January to 5 February 2002.

The delegation will meet with a wide range of human rights activists as well as victims of human rights violations during visits to Jayapura, Manokwari and Wamena. The organization also hopes to meet with representatives of the local government, military and police.

"Amnesty International has received many credible reports of serious human rights violations including unlawful killings, torture, 'disappearances', and unlawful arrests in Papua," the organization said. "It is of great concern that despite several investigations no one has so far been brought to justice for these violations."

The organization is also increasingly worried about the situation of human rights defenders in the province who are suffering increasing levels of harassment and intimidation.

"Human rights defenders undertake a legitimate and important role. The Indonesian authorities have a responsibility to protect them so that they can carry out their work without fear of becoming the targets of human rights violations," Amnesty International said.

The delegation will also investigate reports of human rights abuses committed by the armed opposition groups Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) and Tentara Pembebasan Nasional (TPN).

Amnesty International hopes that this visit will draw attention to the human rights situation in Papua and lead to constructive dialogue with the local and national authorities on the steps that must be taken to resolve Papua's outstanding human rights problems.

Background

Amnesty International takes no position on the issue of independence for Papua but believes that the political status of the province should be resolved without either side resorting to human rights abuses.

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement with more than one million members in over one hundred countries, including Indonesia. It operates according to international human rights standards and in accordance with the rights defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is fully independent of any government, political party or religious creed.

Amnesty International's *vision* is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's *mission* is to undertake research and action focussed on preventing grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights. Amnesty International forms a global community of human rights defenders with the principles of international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect. Amnesty International addresses governments, intergovernmental organisations, armed political groups, companies, and other non-state actors.

\ENDS

public document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW web : <http://www.amnesty.org>