

EXTRA 26/00

Fear for**INDONESIA16 people arrested**

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Amnesty International is concerned that 16 pro-independence supporters arrested between 28 February and 2 March 2000 and held since then in incommunicado police custody are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

All were arrested after clashes occurred on 28 February between around 400 pro-independence supporters and police in Nabire town, Papua (formerly known as Irian Jaya), in which three civilians were killed and ten others received gunshot wounds. All 16 have since been detained at Nabire police resort (polres). On 17 March police denied representatives of a local human rights organization access to the detainees.

The precise reasons for their arrest or whether they have been formally charged are not known.

The organization is particularly concerned for their safety after reports that another protester detained around the same time but since released was severely tortured at Nabire Polres. Yance Pekei, aged 21, claimed that while in detention he was hit with various objects, including a rifle and a metal bar, had plastic put over his fingers and shoulders which was then set alight, and had his ears punctured with a stapler. He required hospitalization for his injuries.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Serious human rights violations are occurring in Papua in the context of police and military operations against those suspected of supporting independence for the region. Recent months have seen more pro-independence demonstrations and protests, both peaceful and violent, in reaction to which the police have used excessive force resulting in civilian deaths and injuries.

The opposition movement to Indonesian rule over Papua grew after 1963 when *de facto* authority over the province was transferred from the Netherlands to Indonesia. In 1969 a plebiscite resulted in a vote for integration. The Free Papua Movement (OPM) is the most prominent group advocating independence for the region. Although the OPM advocates armed struggle many supporters of independence employ peaceful means such as demonstrations, flag-raising ceremonies, political discussion groups and appeals to the UN and other organizations.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia or your own language:**

- asking for immediate guarantees that 16 people detained at Nabire Polres between 28 February and 2 March 2000 will not be subjected to torture or ill-treatment and asking that they be given immediate access to their families, lawyers and medical treatment;
- urging the authorities to either charge them with a recognisably criminal offence or release them immediately;
- urging the authorities to launch an immediate and impartial investigation into allegations that Yance Pekei was tortured in detention at Nabire Polres;

- calling on the authorities to ensure that suspected perpetrators of human rights violations are brought promptly to justice before a civilian court according to international human rights standards.

**APPEALS TO (please note that fax numbers to Indonesia are difficult to obtain):**

CHIEF OF POLICE FOR PAPUA

Brig. Gen. S Y Wenas

Head of Regional Police Papua

Jl. Sam Ratulangi No. 8

Jayapura, Papua

Indonesia

**Telegrams:Police Chief, Jayapura, Papua, Indonesia**

**Faxes:+ 62 967 33763**

**Salutation:Dear Chief of Police**

VICE PRESIDENT

Megawati Sukarnoputri

Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan No.6

Jakarta 10110

Indonesia

**Telegrams:Vice President, Jakarta, Indonesia**

**Faxes:+ 62 21 345 2685 (via State Secretariat)**

**Salutation:Dear Vice President**

**COPIES TO:**

STATE MINISTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AFFAIRS

Hasballah M. Saad

Jl Kuningan Timur M 2/5

Jakarta 12950

Indonesia

**Faxes:+ 62 21 5256855**

**AND TO:** the 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 17 April 2000.