

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 21/02/96

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Arbitrary detention / Fear of ill-treatment 5 January 1996

INDONESIA Roliati Harefa, labour activist (f)

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Amnesty International is concerned that Roliati Harefa, a female labour activist, has been arbitrarily detained and is at risk of ill-treatment.

Roliati Harefa, Vice-Chair of the Binjai Branch of the independent trade union, *Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia* (SBSI), was arrested at a police station in Binjai, North Sumatra, on 30 December 1995. She had gone to the police station to file a complaint against her supervisor whom she claimed had assaulted her on two separate occasions following her assertion that she had been unfairly dismissed. On 29 December, Roliati had tried to register a complaint with the Sub-District Military Command (Koramil) about her supervisor's behaviour and her dismissal, but her complaint was ignored. When she went to the police station the following day, five officers from Koramil apparently came to the police station looking for her. She was then arrested at the police station and it is believed that she was held there until 5 January 1996 when she was apparently moved to the women's section of the Tanjung Gusta Prison in Medan.

It is believed that Roliati has been accused by the police of assaulting her employer, although the actual charge is not clear. She has not yet seen a lawyer, although it is believed that lawyers are currently attempting to meet with her.

Amnesty International is concerned that Roliati Harefa has been arbitrarily detained while trying to exercise her peaceful labour activities, and that her arrest may also be connected with her activities with SBSI. The organization is also concerned that she has been denied access to independent lawyers and that she is at potential risk of ill-treatment in detention. The threat of torture or ill-treatment would be heightened if she were returned to police or military custody for questioning.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Roliati Harefa's arrest occurred within the context of a crackdown on the SBSI's activities, particularly in Medan, North Sumatra. The Regional Military Commander and Head of the Coordinating Body for Defence and Security (*Bakorstanasda*) for Northern Sumatra, Major General Sedaryanto, was quoted on 28 November 1995 as saying that all SBSI activities in his region had been banned because such activity could disturb order. In November 1995, the security forces broke up two labour meetings organised by the SBSI in Medan on the grounds that the meetings did not have proper authorization and that they could "disturb public order". Up to 35 labour activists were questioned in connection with the meetings. Another SBSI meeting was broken up in December.

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

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Roliati Harefa unless she is to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence;
- urging that she be granted immediate and continuing access to lawyers of her own choice;
- seeking assurances that she is not being subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment in detention.

**APPEALS TO:**

MILITARY COMMANDER REGION I/BUKIT BARISAN

(covers North & West Sumatra and Aceh)

Major General Sedaryanto

Pangdam I/Bukit Barisan

Markas Besar KODAM I

Medan

Sumatra Utara, Indonesia

**Telegrams: Pangdam I/Bukit Barisan, Medan, Sumatra, Indonesia**

**Telephone: +62 61 324 626**

**Salutation: Dear Major-General**

CHIEF OF NATIONAL POLICE

Maj. Gen (Pol.) Banurusman Atmosumitro

Kapolri

Markas Besar Kepolisian RI

Jl. Trunojoyo 13

Kebayoran Baru

Jakarta Selatan, Indonesia

**Telephone: +62 21 721 8000**

**Telegrams: National Police Chief Atmosumitro, Jakarta, Indonesia**

**Salutation: Dear Maj. Gen. (Pol.) Banurusman Atmosumitro**

**COPIES TO:**

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ali Alatas S.H.

Menteri Luar Negeri

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Jakarta

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 20 February 1996.