



To: Health Professional Network

From: Special Thematic Issues (Formally known as Health and Human Rights)

Date: 04 August 2010

Health Professional Action
Indonesia: POC receives medical treatment

(Further information on ASA 21/005/2010, 5 May 2010)

Prisoner of Conscience, Filep Karma, 51 years old, travelled to Jakarta for medical treatment on 19 July accompanied by friends and family. He underwent laser prostate surgery on 22 July, which doctors informed him was successful. He returned back to Abepura prison on 31 July. Filep Karma would like to thank everyone who made his surgery possible, including Amnesty International.

Former civil servant Filep Karma has been in prison since December 2004 when he was arrested for taking part in a peaceful ceremony in Abepura, Papua Province on 1 December 2004. In commemoration of the declaration of Papuan independence in 1962, the Morning Star Flag was raised. Police then advanced on the crowd, firing warning shots and beating people with batons. Filep Karma was arrested, tried and received a 15 year prison sentence. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience.

Before his arrest, Filep Karma, suffered health problems, but the conditions at the prison and the refusal of the authorities to provide adequate medical care have exacerbated his problems. Sources in Indonesia have stated that Filep Karma has suffered beatings and ill-treatment by the prison guards. In August 2009, he had complained of intense pain in the lower abdomen, difficulty in urinating and testicular swelling. Further medical tests confirmed that he was suffering from bronchopneumonia, excess fluid in the lungs, urinary tract infection and various other medical problems. It was also recommended in the report that he receive further treatment in Jakarta, but prison authorities refused to send him due to lack of funds. Amnesty International and other human rights advocates had been working to secure him access to treatment in Jakarta but attempts had been unsuccessful until now.

No further action is requested from the health professional network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.