

PUBLIC

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Fear for safety/possible "disappearance"

INDONESIA

Mukhlis Ishak (m), aged 27 ] human rights defenders  
Zulfikar (m) aged 24 ]

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Mukhlis Ishak and Zulfikar, who are believed to be detained by the Indonesian Military, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, (TNI) in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) Province. Their current whereabouts is unconfirmed, and they are at risk of ill-treatment, torture or "disappearance".

Mukhlis Ishak and Zulfikar were detained on the morning of 25 March by plainclothes men. Local sources believe the men were members of the military intelligence unit *Satuan Gabungan Intelijen* (SGI). It is thought that Mukhlis Ishak and Zulfikar are being held in the SGI military post in Bireuen District, NAD Province.

Mukhlis Ishak and Zulfikar are members of the non-governmental organization, Link for Community Development (LCD), which assists internally displaced people. They were arrested while accompanying villagers who were demonstrating outside the office of the District Head (*Bupati*) of Bireuen District, to protest against plans to establish a Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob) post in their village. It is feared that they were targeted by the authorities as a result of their human rights activism.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Grave human rights violations, including unlawful killings, "disappearances", torture and unlawful detention have been carried out in the context of operations by the Indonesian security forces against the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) Province. Local human rights organizations estimate that over 1,300 people were killed in 2002 alone. Anyone detained by the police and military in NAD is at risk of torture, ill-treatment or other human rights violations.

Human rights defenders are among those who have been targeted by the security forces. Since 2000, 13 human rights defenders are believed to have been extrajudicially executed. Scores of others have been subjected to torture or ill-treatment, detention without charge and harassment or intimidation. During 2002, two human rights defenders are believed to have been extrajudicially executed and two political activists "disappeared".

On 9 December 2002, the Indonesian government and GAM signed a ceasefire agreement, known as the Cessation of Hostilities (COH) Agreement. Since this agreement came into effect, local observers have reported a significant fall in the level of violence and in the number of reports of human rights abuses in the province. However, Amnesty International is concerned that, although the COH Agreement requires both sides to allow civil society to express their democratic rights, the right to freedom of expression remains limited.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Mukhlis Ishak and Zulfikar, who were detained in Bireuen town, Bireuen Province on 25 March;
- urging the authorities to immediately clarify their whereabouts and the reason for their detention;
- calling on the authorities to provide guarantees for their safety, including that they will not be subjected to torture, ill-treatment or other human rights violations;

- expressing concern that they may have been detained solely on account of their legitimate human rights activities in which case they should be immediately and unconditionally released;
- reminding the authorities of their obligation to protect human rights defenders so they may carry out their legitimate peaceful work.

**APPEALS TO: *(It may be difficult to get through, but please keep trying)***

Military Commander, Kodam / Iskandar Muda

Maj.Gen. M Djali Yusuf

Markas Komando Daerah Militer Iskandar Muda

Jl. Ahmad Yani

Simpang Lima

Banda Aceh

Nanggoroe Aceh Darussalam

Indonesia

**Telegram: Pangdam Iskandar Muda, Banda Aceh, NAD, Indonesia**

**Fax: + 62 651 270 63 / 269 79**

**Salutation: Dear Major General**

Chief of Police, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD)

Brigadier General BahrumSyah Kasman

Kapolda Aceh

Jalan Cut Meutia No. 3

Banda Aceh

Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam

Indonesia

**Telegram: Kapolda Aceh, Banda Aceh, NAD, Indonesia**

**Fax: + 62 651 22488/ 23670**

**Salutation: Dear Brigadier General**

**COPIES TO:**

Army Chief of Staff

Gen. Ryamizard Ryacudu

Kasad TNI AD

Markas Besar TNI AD

Jl. Medan Merdeka Utara 2

Jakarta Pusat

Indonesia

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 8 May 2003.