

URGENT ACTION

CHURCH CONGREGATION THREATENED

The congregation of the Taman Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church (Gereja Kristen Indonesia, GKI) in Bogor, West Java, is at risk of attacks, harassment and intimidation at their weekly Sunday service on 10 July after receiving threats from members of the local community. The church has been attacked at least six times since 2008.

Members of the congregation fear for their safety after they received a copy of letter on 2 July from residents of the Curug Mekar village in Bogor, calling on the local government authorities and the police to put a stop to all religious services and activities by the congregation. In 2008, following pressure from radical Islamist groups, the church's building permit was revoked by the Bogor city administration and the building was sealed off. Since then the congregation have conducted weekly services on the pavement outside the church, which some local residents claim causes public disruption. This had led to protests against the congregation by the local community allegedly backed by radical Islamist groups. Despite a ruling by the Indonesian Supreme Court in December 2010 ordering the Bogor authorities to re-open the church, the building has remained sealed.

The letter, dated 28 June, warns that the ongoing situation "invites the community and others to react in a way that could spark a potential disturbance", and demands that all of the church's activities stop by 3 July. When the congregation ignored the demand, dozens of residents gathered at the church in protest. The Bogor police deployed around 200 officers to the site in anticipation of a possible outbreak of violence. During the protest a community leader reportedly warned of "anarchy" if the church continued holding services on the pavement. The local residents have now given the congregation a new deadline of 10 July to cease their activities. They fear that they will be intimidated and attacked when they arrive for Sunday services on 10 July and after that date.

Please write immediately in English, Indonesian or your own language calling on the authorities in Indonesia to:

- Take adequate measures to guarantee the safety of the Taman Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church congregation, in accordance with their right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- Conduct prompt, independent and impartial investigations into all reports of intimidation, harassment and attacks against members of the Taman Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church and bring the perpetrators to justice in accordance with international fair trial standards;
- Immediately comply with the Indonesian Supreme Court ruling and re-open the Taman Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church and take steps to ensure that all religious minorities are protected and allowed to practise their faith free from fear, intimidation and attack.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 17 AUGUST 2011 TO:

Mayor of Bogor

Diani Budiarto

Balaikota Bogor, Jl. Ir. H. Juanda No 10,
Bogor, West Java

Indonesia

E-mail: kominfo@kotabogor.go.id or

inspektorat@kotabogor.go.id

Salutation: Dear Diani Budiarto

West Java Chief of Police

Inspector General. Putut Eko Bayuseno

Jl. Soekarno Hatta No. 748, Gedebage,
Bandung, West Java

Indonesia

Fax: +62 22 780 0029

Salutation: Dear Inspector General

And copies to:

Head of the Indonesian National

Commission on Human Rights (Komnas
HAM)

Ifdhal Kasim

Jl. Latuharhary No. 4 B, Menteng

Jakarta Pusat, 10310

Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 392 5227

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

CHURCH CONGREGATION THREATENED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Taman Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church (Gereja Kristen Indonesia, GKI) in Bogor, West Java, was closed and sealed off by the Bogor city administration in 2008 after its building permit was revoked. The Bogor city administration claimed that the permit was obtained using falsified signatures from members of the community. However, in December 2010 the Indonesian Supreme Court overturned the decision and ordered the church to be re-opened. The authorities in Bogor have refused to comply with the ruling, citing fears that it would spark social unrest, and have instead offered the congregation a building in another location to conduct their weekly services which the congregation has rejected.

The church has been subject to intimidation and attacks by local community members, allegedly backed by radical Islamist groups, in the past. In March and April 2009 seven members of the congregation were beaten up in the vicinity of the church. A police report was filed and a court case is currently ongoing. In December 2010 around 1,000 police officers from Bogor were deployed to the site after local residents held a series of protests against the church. Members of the congregation were prevented from entering the church, forcing them to conduct their activities on the pavement in front of the police barricade. During the protest members of the congregation were intimidated and verbally abused by some of the protesters.

The right to freedom of religion in Indonesia is guaranteed in the Indonesian Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is state party. However, Amnesty International continues to receive reports of attacks and intimidation against religious minorities in Indonesia, including Christians. In 2010 at least 30 churches were attacked or forced to close down. Some churches were burned down or otherwise damaged by violent groups. Church members have also been targeted and attacked.

Name: Congregation of the Taman Yasmin Indonesian Church
Gender m/f: Both

UA: 212/11 Index: ASA 21/017/2011 Issue Date: 06 July 2011

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

