

Indonesia: Robin Kimbi, Masri Sebayang and Sruhas Towo

Concern: Prisoners of conscience

Robin Kimbi, Masri Sebayang and Sruhas Towo were arrested following a strike and demonstration at a palm oil plantation owned by the Indonesian company Musim Mas in Riau Province in September 2005. The strike came as a reaction to the company's long-term refusal to negotiate with the Indonesian Wood and Forestry Workers Union. Disputed issues included the implementation of minimum standards guaranteed to workers under the Manpower Act, such as maternity leave, adequate salary and menstruation leave.

During the demonstration, which was attended by almost 1,000 union members, the factory gate was pushed down, injuring two company employees. The three men named above, all union leaders, were charged with "openly committing violence against persons or property" under Article 170 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana, KUHP), although there is no indication that they were involved in any violence. At no point during the trial did the prosecutor attempt to prove, or the judges find, that the men came into contact with the factory gate.

The three men, along with three others who have since been released, were sentenced in early 2006 to prison terms of between 14 months and two years.

The Riau High Court upheld the convictions against Robin Kimbi and Masri Sebayang in April 2006 and Sruhas Towo in June.

Amnesty International believes that they have been targeted because of their legitimate roles as union leaders and considers them to be prisoners of conscience and therefore seeks their immediate release.

Please write to the authorities:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Robin Kimbi, Masri Sebayang and Sruhas Towo.
- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience in Indonesia who have been detained or imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of opinion, belief, expression or association.
- Asking the authorities to make public commitments that there will be no further arrests of individuals engaging in the peaceful exercise of their right to opinion, belief, expression or association.
- Asking the authorities to ensure that all detention conditions in Indonesia meet the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

Please send appeals to:

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
President of the Republic of Indonesia
Istana Merdeka
Jakarta 10110
Indonesia