

URGENT ACTION

JUDGES FIND VICTOR YEIMO NOT GUILTY OF TREASON

Victor Yeimo, a pro-independence political activist from Papua and a spokesman for the West Papua National Committee, was arbitrarily arrested and charged with treason for peacefully protesting against racial discrimination in Indonesia. On 5 May 2023, judges found him not guilty of treason. However, they found Yeimo guilty of violating Article 155 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Code regarding the act of broadcasting, showing, or pasting a piece of writing or painting in public that contains expressions of feelings of hostility, hatred, or contempt for the Government of Indonesia. Yeimo was sentenced to 8 months in prison and he accepted the sentence. Yeimo was eventually released on 23 September 2023.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

After sessions of trials in Jayapura District Court, Papua, on 5 May 2023, the judges sentenced Victor Yeimo to 8 months in prison, counted from the time of his detention. This happened after his health had recovered. While the judges found Yeimo not guilty of treason, he was found guilty of violating Article 155 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Code regarding the act of broadcasting, showing, or pasting a piece of writing or painting in public that contains expressions of feelings of hostility, hatred, or contempt for the Government of Indonesia. He was released on 23 September 2023.

He is now fully free and has resumed his political activities. In October 2023, Victor Yeimo also visited Amnesty International Indonesia's office to thank us for our support.

Victor Yeimo is a pro-independence activist and was the General Secretary of the West Papua National Committee (Komite Nasional Papua Barat, KNPB) until 2018. Currently he is the international spokesperson for KNPB and PRP (Papuan People's Petition) that rejects the continuation of Special Autonomy in West Papua.

On 9 May 2021, a special police unit, Satgas Nemangkawi, arrested Victor Yeimo in Jayapura, the capital of Papua province. Police charged him with treason for a statement he made in 2019 during anti-racism protests, calling for a referendum on independence. While in detention, Victor Yeimo suffered serious health problems. Urged by various parties, the Indonesian government then treated Victor Yeimo in a hospital in Jayapura. After his health recovered, the case against Yeimo continued.

The Indonesian authorities have used criminal code provisions to prosecute dozens of peaceful pro-independence political activists in Papua and Maluku over the last decade.

Amnesty International does not take any position on the political status of any province or region in Indonesia, or any other state, including calls for independence. However, the organization believes that the right to freedom of expression, including the right to advocate for self-determination or other political issues, carried out in a peaceful manner, must be respected and protected.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Victor Yeimo (he/him)

THIS IS THE THIRD AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 58/21

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA21/4632/2021/en/>

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