

UA 136/96

Fear of torture

6 June 1996

**INDONESIA Two men (names unknown)**

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of two men arrested by the Indonesian Armed Forces during a military operation to free 11 hostages held for three months by the Free Papua Movement (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka - OPM*) in the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya.

According to the military, the two men, thought to be members of the OPM, were captured when troops from Indonesia's special forces known as *Kopassus* launched a rescue operation on 15 May 1996 to free the hostages who had been held since 8 January. The names of the two were not given and there has been no information on their whereabouts since their arrest. In view of serious human rights violations in Irian Jaya including extrajudicial executions, "disappearance" and torture Amnesty International fears that the two may be subjected to torture during interrogation. Amnesty International is also concerned that the two may not have had access to independent lawyers.

A human rights manual produced by the Irian Jaya regional military command in December 1995 prohibits the use of torture to obtain confessions or information and stresses the right of captured members of the armed resistance to a trial in accordance with the law. It also states that the arresting authority - in this case *Kopassus* - must record the identity of the persons arrested, the reason for the arrest and detention and that direct visit by family members of detainees must be permitted.

The exact circumstances surrounding the release of the hostages remains unclear with attempts to verify conflicting reports made difficult by the heavy military presence in the area and restrictions on access to independent monitors. Two Indonesian hostages were killed during the rescue operation and, according to the military, six to eight hostage-takers were also killed. There are also unconfirmed reports of retaliations, including killings and house burning, against local people by the military both before and after the rescue.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

*De facto* authority over Irian Jaya was transferred from the Netherlands to Indonesia in 1963. This was followed by a plebiscite in 1969 to determine the territory's political status which resulted in a vote for integration.

Opposition to integration with Indonesia has continued since 1963. The OPM is among the most prominent groups advocating independence. The OPM advocates armed struggle, but many supporters of independence have employed peaceful means, including demonstrations, flag-raising ceremonies, political discussion groups, and appeals to the UN and other international bodies.

In recent years the issue of land and resources has generated particular discontent, focused mainly on the PT Freeport Indonesia Mine at Tembagapura. Since July 1994 both peaceful and violent opposition to the mine from local people has intensified. In April 1995, allegations of serious human rights violations in response to these protests began to emerge. The allegations which included extrajudicial executions, "disappearances", torture and arbitrary arrests, were later investigated and confirmed by Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights, *Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia* (Komnas Ham).

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia, English or your own language:**

- urging the authorities to provide details of the names and whereabouts of the two people arrested during the operation on 15 May 1996 to release the hostages in Irian Jaya;
- seeking assurances that the detainees are not being subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment;
- calling for the detainees to be granted access to lawyers of their own choice, members of the International Committee of the Red Cross, family members and adequate medical care;
- referring to the obligations on the detaining authority under the December 1995 human rights manual produced by the Irian Jaya regional military command.

**APPEALS TO:**

**COMMANDER OF SPECIAL FORCES COMMAND (KOPASSUS)**

*Brig. Gen. Prabowo Subianto*

*Panglima Kopassus*

*Markas Besar ABRI*

*Cilangkap*

*Jakarta Timur*

*Indonesia*

*Telegrams: Panglima Kopassus, Jakarta, Indonesia*

*Salutation: Dear Brig. Gen. Prabowo Subianto*

**MILITARY COMMANDER REGION VIII/TRIKORA**

*(covers Irian Jaya)*

*Major-General Dunidja D*

*Pangdam VIII/ Trikora*

*Markas Besar KODAM VIII/ Trikora*

*Jayapura*

*Irian Jaya*

*Indonesia*

*Telegrams: Pangdam VIII/ Trikora, Jayapura, Irian Jaya, Indonesia*

*Salutation: Dear Major-General Dunidja*

**COPIES TO:**

**MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

*Ali Alatas S.H.*

*Menteri Luar Negeri*

*Jl. Medan Taman Pejambon No.6*

*Jakarta*

*Indonesia*

*Fax: +62 21360 517/380 5511/345 7782/360 541*

*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 31 July 1996.**