

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 134/99

Fear for safety

23 September

INDONESIA Joao Quintas

Dioniso de Jesus

Leonio Guterres

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the three men named above, whose whereabouts are unknown.

Joao Quintas and Dioniso de Jesus are local staff members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Atambua District, West Timor. They were abducted by a militia group on 11 September 1999. There has been no news of them since.

Leonio Guterres, a refugee from East Timor, was detained as he was leaving a refugee site in Kefamenanu town, West Timor with his family. He was believed to be in detention at KODIM (District Military Command), but it is not clear whether he is still held there. There are grave concerns for his safety.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Pro-Indonesian militias are operating with impunity in West Timor, and are conducting searches in the refugee camps for independence supporters, human rights defenders, priest and nuns. Amnesty International has received reports that Indonesian soldiers are also involved in these operations. Several independence supporters have been threatened and killed; the fate and whereabouts of scores of others is unknown.

Tens of thousands of East Timorese have been forcibly evacuated to West Timor by the Indonesian army and the pro-Indonesian militias. Access to the camps by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) staff, other humanitarian agencies and independent monitors has been severely limited. Conditions in the camps are precarious, with food and water supplies limited and very little medical care. On 22 September 1999 the Indonesian authorities agreed to allow UNHCR access to the camps, but this has yet to take place.

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

- urging the authorities to establish the whereabouts of Joao Quintas, Dioniso de Jesus and Leonio Guterres and to take immediate measures to guarantee their security;
- urging the authorities to launch an immediate investigation, with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice;
- urging the Indonesian authorities to grant full, secure and unimpeded access to the refugee camps to UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies;
- urging the authorities to immediately disarm and disband the militias and urging that all Indonesian soldiers and police in West Timor are under clear instructions to ensure the refugees are protected and not subjected to threats, harassment or physical harm.

APPEALS TO:

President Jusuf Habibie
Presiden RI
Istana Negara
Jl. Veteran
Jakarta Pusat

Indonesia

Telegrams: President Habibie, Jakarta, Indonesia

Fax: + 62 21 526 8726 / +62 21 380 5511/+62 21 345 7782/ (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Telex: 44283 BIGRA IA; 44469 DEPLU IA

Salutation: Dear President Habibie

MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY / COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES (TNI)

Gen. Wiranto

Menteri Pertahanan dan Keamanan

Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No.13-14

Jakarta 10110

Indonesia

Telegrams: Minister of Defence and Security, Jakarta, Indonesia

Fax: + 62 21 381 4535/ 384 5178 (Fax numbers in Indonesia can be difficult to get through to. Please keep trying.)

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES 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 7 October 1999.