

AI Index: PRE 01/221/2012  
25 April 2012

## **Indonesia must end impunity for police violence**

Police in Indonesia shoot, beat and even kill people without fear of prosecution, leaving their victims with little hope of justice, Amnesty International reveals in a new briefing.

Excessive Force: Impunity for police violence in Indonesia details examples of how – despite a decade of supposed reform – officers continue to be implicated in shootings and beatings of peaceful individuals during protests, land disputes and even day-to-day arrests.

Criminal investigations into human rights violations by the police are rare, punishments light and Indonesia has no independent national body to deal effectively with public complaints.

“Indonesia’s police use excessive force, and even kill people, with no fear of sanction, while victims are left without hope of justice,” said Josef Benedict, Amnesty International’s Indonesia Campaigner.

“Those affected by police violence need an independent body that can properly investigate all allegations of human rights violations and, crucially, with a mandate to enable it to submit its findings for prosecution.”

Both Indonesia’s National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) and the National Police Commission (Kompolnas) can receive public complaints about police misconduct, but have no remit to refer cases of criminal offences involving human rights violations to the Public Prosecutor’s office.

Police in Indonesia routinely use excessive force including firearms to quell peaceful protests. On 24 December 2011, three were killed and dozens injured as 100 people peacefully blocked a road in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara province, in a protest over a mining exploration permit. Around 600 police, including the Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob), were dispatched to disperse them. Reports indicate that the Bima District Police Chief ordered officers to use force to quell the protest. In internal police disciplinary proceedings, five police officers were reportedly punished with three days’ detention for beating and kicking protestors who had put up no resistance. However, Amnesty International is not aware of any criminal investigation into the shootings at Bima, or the ill-treatment of protestors. In another incident on 19 October 2011, three people were killed and more than 90 injured when police and military surrounded the venue of the Third Papuan People’s Congress, a peaceful gathering in Abepura, Papua province.

An investigation by Komnas HAM found that security forces had opened fire on the gathering. Despite internal disciplinary proceedings, no criminal investigation into the shootings and ill-treatment at the gathering appears to have been initiated.

In North Sumatra province, in a land dispute in June 2011, Brimob officers attempting to forcibly evict a community in Langkat district reportedly fired tear gas and live and rubber bullets at villagers defending

their homes, injuring at least nine people.

To Amnesty International's knowledge, there has been no investigation into that incident.

“Victims of police violence should not have to wait for justice. Indonesia must ensure all reports of unlawful killings or beatings by police are investigated promptly by an independent body whose findings are made public,” said Josef Benedict.

“Internal disciplinary procedures are for dealing with minor offences, not human rights violations.

“Those suspected of unnecessary or excessive use of force and firearms, including those with command responsibility, should be prosecuted in proceedings which meet international standards and the victims must be granted reparations.”

Amnesty International also called on Indonesia to review police tactics during arrests and public order policing, to ensure that they meet international standards.

Ends/

Notes to Editors

- Interviews with Amnesty International experts on Indonesia are available
- Copies of the report under embargo are available
- After embargo, the report will be available at the following link:  
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA21/010/2012/en>
- Images are available please click: <http://tinyurl.com/c6bkjuo>

For a copy of the new report Excessive Force: Impunity for police violence in Indonesia more information or to arrange an interview please contact:

In London – Katya Nasim, [katya.nasim@amnesty.org](mailto:katya.nasim@amnesty.org) / + 44 207 413 5871

In Jakarta – Josef Benedict +61 812 876 21254