

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 21/83/99

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 15 per section.

UA 195/99

Fear for

INDONESIA Muzakir bin Ustad Ahmad, 39

Nurdin bin Ustad Ahmad, 35

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the two brothers named above, who are being held in incommunicado detention where they are believed to be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

The two men were arrested at their home in Lhok Seutui Village, Baktiya Sub-district, North Aceh District on 31 July 1999 by members of the Indonesian National Army (TNI). They were arrested on suspicion of links with the armed opposition group, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), Free Aceh Movement.

Muzakir and Nurdin were taken in a military truck to the headquarters of the Baktiya Sub-district Military Command (Koramil) in Alue le Puteh. The two men are being denied access to their family and to legal counsel.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since late 1998, serious human rights violations in Aceh have increased in the course of TNI counter-insurgency operations against the armed separatist group, GAM. Dozens of people have been arrested in recent months on suspicion of links to GAM. Suspects detained by the TNI and by a riot control police unit, the PPRM (*Petugas Penindak Rusuh Massa*), are often denied access to lawyers of their choice, and are at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Many of those taken into custody have "disappeared" or been unlawfully killed by the security forces.

Large numbers of people have been unlawfully killed by the security forces in Aceh since late 1998. In February 1999 at least seven people were unlawfully killed when the TNI fired on a march in Idi Cut, East Aceh. On 3 May, human rights monitors claimed that at least 41 people were killed in Krueng Geukueh, Dewantara Sub-District, Aceh, when the TNI fired on a demonstration. On 23 July, at least 45 people and possibly as many as 70 were unlawfully killed by the TNI during counter-insurgency operations in Beutong Sub-district, West Aceh. The TNI claimed that those killed were members of GAM, but eyewitnesses and human rights groups deny this and claim that those killed were unarmed and were executed by the TNI.

GAM have also been accused of committing human rights abuses.

On 30 July 1999, President Habibie announced that he had established an Independent Investigation Commission on Violence in Aceh (*Komisi Independen Pengusutan Tindak Kekerasan di Aceh*) which is expected to conduct investigations into human rights violations which have occurred since August 1998, and to submit a report within six months, including recommendations on legal measures, rehabilitation and reconciliation. The commission is apparently made up of 27 people, including members of Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics and government representatives.

However, the commission has not been given a mandate to investigate human rights violations which occurred during TNI counter-insurgency operations between

1989 and 1998. Amnesty International believes that the commission can only be effective if it is given unrestricted access to all areas of Aceh to conduct full and independent investigations into all human rights violations including those since 1989, if its findings are made public and if its report leads to the prosecution of those found responsible.

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

- urging the authorities to ensure that Muzakir bin Ustad Ahmad and Nurdin bin Ustad Ahmad have immediate and regular access to human rights lawyers, their family and to medical professionals, and that they are immediately released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- urging the authorities to ensure that while in custody they are not at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of Defence and Security  
Gen. Wiranto  
Menteri Pertahanan dan Keamanan  
Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No.13-14  
Jakarta 10110  
Indonesia

**Telegrams: General Wiranto, Jakarta, Indonesia**

**Faxes: + 62 21 381 4535 / 384 5178 (if you are unable to obtain a fax tone please try later)**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Military Commander Region I/Bukit Barisan  
(covers North & West Sumatra and Aceh)  
Major General Abdul Rahman Gaffar  
Pangdam I/Bukit Barisan  
Markas Besar KODAM I  
Medan  
Sumatra Utara  
Indonesia

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 14 September 1999.