

ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION - URGENT APPEALS PROGRAMME

Urgent Appeal Case: AHRC-UAC-006-2009

21 January 2009

INDONESIA: Police allegedly kill villagers and destroy their property in Papua

ISSUES: Extrajudicial killing

Dear Friends,

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has received information that a man was shot dead by police constables allegedly under the influence of liquor in Teminabuan, south Sorong Regency, West Papua Province at midnight of December 31, 2008. Angry villagers have protested against the killing and in the ensuing violence a police officer was left dead. However, the police unable to control the situation instead destroyed houses. More villagers were injured and an 8-year-old boy was reportedly killed.

CASE DETAILS:

On the evening of December 31, 2008, a group of about ten children gathered to celebrate New Year's eve outside the Wernas village, sub district of Teminabuan, South Sorong Regency, West Papua Province. Their noise of their celebrations caught the attention of a police patrol who were traveling in a private car.

Police officers, reportedly under the influence of liquor, approached the group of children and tried to stop the gathering violently. Due to this violence, some of the children ran home to inform the villagers and their parents about the behaviour of the police.

The villagers came to the scene in order to verify the reports of the children. The agitated police started firing their weapons at the arriving crowd of villagers. The villagers tried to escape from the gunfire but Mr. Marthen Maga (30) was shot to death at 1:30am on January 1, 2009.

Tensions arose after the killing and the villagers retaliated. They eventually caught a police officer whom they identified as the head of the crime Desk of the local police and killed him. Before the shooting and fighting ended, the police also injured several people, and reportedly shot and killed an 8 year-old boy.

After the violence ended, the police allegedly proceeded to destroy houses and property of

people living in the vicinity. Several villagers were injured and killed in this action and other villagers brought the bodies to the police station, Mr. Darwanto, the head of the local police refused to take up the issue stating that there were victims on both sides.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Police brutality is widespread in Indonesia in general, and in the provinces of Papua and West Papua in particular. There, indigenous people are systematically discriminated against and in practice do not enjoy protection by the institutions of the state. Approximately half of the region's population is living in conditions of poverty, even though the province has an abundance of natural resources. Indonesia has assumed sovereignty over West Papua after an equivocal vote under UN supervision in 1962/63. Since then a transmigration policy continues to resettle Indonesians from other parts of the country to West Papua, changing the demographic situation. West Papua's resources are extracted at the hands of foreign trans national corporations, and the indigenous people of Papua receive little, if any, compensation for this.

Indigenous Papuans who express their dissatisfaction with the ongoing exploitation and discrimination are silenced, often violently, by Indonesian security forces. In the past few months several human rights defenders and Papuan empowerment activists have been targeted (see AHRC-UAC-262-2008, AHRC-UAU-071-2008) and killing of Yosias Syet is indicative (see AHRC-UAC-261-2008).

Police brutality and unprovoked violence is not uncommon in wider Indonesia, but in Papua it is a systematic feature of police conduct, which must be understood against the background of the apartheid-like system of discrimination and subjugation in place there. Attempts by the Indonesian government to overcome the concerns with increased funding for the West Papua's infrastructure and institutional welfare have not resulted in change due to corruption on the local level.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Please write letters to the authorities listed below calling for an immediate and impartial investigation of this case.

Please be informed that the AHRC has also written separate letter to the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial killing calling for intervention in this matter.

To support this appeal, please click here:

SAMPLE LETTER:

Dear _____,

INDONESIA: Police allegedly kill villagers and destroy their properties in Papua

Name of victims: Mr. Marthen Maga (30) and unidentified 8 year-old boy
Police involved: unidentified local police constable (INP)

Place of incident: Wernas villages, sub district of Teminabuan, south Sorong Regency, West Papua Province

Date of incident: at midnight on December 31, 2008

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent instances of police brutality in Wernas Villages, Sub- District of Teminabuan, South Sorong Regency, West Papua Province.

According to the information that I have received, policemen arrived in Wernas villages to disperse a group of children who were celebrating the coming of the New Year, on the evening of December 31, 2008. Reports state that the policemen were under the influence of alcohol, and allegedly treated the children violently.

As some of the children ran away to inform their kin of what was going on, word spread, and local people started to appear on the scene. The policemen started firing their guns at the crowd, injuring several people, and killing Mr. Marthen Maga. Following this, tension rose and the crowd caught a policeman whom they identified as the head of the Crime Desk of the local police and killed him. As the violence proceeded, the police shot and killed an 8 year old boy.

After the violence ended and the crowd had dispersed, the police men allegedly went on to destroy houses and property of people of the vicinity. When local people tried to report the crimes to the police station, the head of the police refused to take up the case and denied responsibility.

I therefore strongly urge you to make sure that these violent crimes are investigated thoroughly and impartially. After having completed an impartial investigation, it is imperative that the perpetrators receive a punishment which is proportional to the severity of the crime they have committed.

I take this opportunity to draw your attention to the fact that government officials have received lenient punishments in many cases where they are involved in Papua, in particular the case of human rights violations. In this regards, i reiterate this case must be thoroughly investigated and call upon you to make sure that those responsible are properly prosecuted and punished according to law.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

1. Irjen Polisi Drs. F.X. Bagus Ekodanto
Chief of the Papuan Regional Police
Kepolisian Daerah Papua
Jl. Dr. Sam Ratulangi No. 8
Jayapura

INDONESIA

Tel: +62 967 33317 / 31835

2. R. Widyopramono SH,M.Hum.

Kejaksaan Tinggi Papua

Jl. Anggrek No.6 Tj. Ria

Jayapura

INDONESIA

Tel: +62 967 542764 / 541130

3. Paulus Waterpauw,

Director of the Criminal Unit

Papua Regional Police

Jl. Samratulangi

No. 8 Jayapura

INDONESIA

Tel: + 62 967 531834

4. Mr. Hendarman Supandji

Attorney General

Kejaksaan Agung RI

Jl. Sultan Hasanuddin No. 1

Jakarta Selatan

INDONESIA

Fax: + 62 21 7250213

Tel: + 62 21 7221337, 7397602

E-mail: postmaster@kejaksaan.or.id

5. Gen. Bambang Hendarso Danuri

Chief of National Police

Jl. Trunojoyo No. 3

Jakarta Selatan

INDONESIA

Fax: +62 21 720 7277

Tel: +62 21 721 8012

Email: polri@polri.go.id

6. Mr. Andi Matalatta

Minister of Justice and Human Rights

Jl. H.R. Rosuna Said Kav. 6-7

Kuningan, Jakarta Selatan

INDONESIA

Fax: +62 21 525 3095

7. Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudoyono

President

Republic of Indonesia
Presidential Palace
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8. Mr. Ildhal Kasim
Chairperson
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9. Mr. Ronny Lihawa
Chairperson
KOMISI KEPOLISIAN NASIONAL (National Police Commission)
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Jakarta 12110
INDONESIA
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Thank you.

Indonesia Desk (indonesia@ahrc.asia)

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Asian Human Rights Commission (ua@ahrc.asia)

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