

URGENT ACTION

POLITICAL ACTIVIST FACES DEATH THREATS

Yoab Syatfle, a political activist in the Indonesian province of West Papua, has received repeated death threats. The threats, sent via SMS to his mobile phone, are apparently related to his peaceful political activities. His life could be in danger.

On 26 October, Yoab Syatfle received six anonymous SMS messages threatening that he would be abducted and killed if he left his house. One of them warned: "you are one of the people we are looking for, we remember you, if you leave your house yard one more time, you will be killed".

Those who sent the SMS messages apparently believe that Yoab Syatfle is organizing a demonstration which is due to take place on 29 October in the city of Sorong in Sorong district, West Papua Province. The demonstration, organized by a coalition of groups in Papua, will protest against dialogue with the Indonesian government as a way of solving political problems in the region, and will call for an internationally mediated solution. Yoab Syatfle denies that he has the power to cancel the demonstration.

It appears that Yoab Syatfle has been targeted because he is a prominent peaceful political activist in Papua. He is the Sorong Secretary of the Papua Traditional Council (Dewan Adat Papua) which represents Indigenous communities in Papua. He is also Secretary of the Papua National Consensus Team, a non-violent group campaigning for a peaceful internationally mediated solution to the political problems in Papua.

The right to free expression, opinion and assembly is guaranteed under the Indonesian Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party. However, members of human rights organizations in Papua have been harassed and intimidated because of their work, and many peaceful pro-independence political activists have been arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Indonesian, English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to take immediate action to ensure the safety of Yoab Syatfle, in accordance with his wishes;
- calling for an immediate, effective and impartial investigation into the threats he has received, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the right to freedom of expression and assembly is upheld in Papua, and that local and international journalists, humanitarian workers and human rights defenders have full, unimpeded and unhindered access to the people of the province;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all members of the police and military are made aware of the legitimate role of human rights defenders and their responsibility to protect them, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 DECEMBER 2009 TO:

National Head of Police (Kapolri)
General Bambang Hendarso Danuri
Jl. Trunojoyo No. 3
Jakarta Selatan, Indonesia
Fax: + 62 21 7202142
Salutation: Dear Kapolri

Regional Police Chief (Kapolda)
Inspektur Jenderal Bagus Ekodanto
Jayapura, Papua, Indonesia
Fax: +62 967 533763
Salutation: Dear Kapolda

And copies to:
Chairperson National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM)
Ildhal Kasim
Jl Latuharhary
No4 Menteng Jakarta Pusat 10310
Indonesia
Fax: +62 21 39 25 227

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There is an active peaceful independence movement in Papua, and the Indonesian security forces have responded at times with excessive force, including extrajudicial executions, torture and arbitrary detentions. Amnesty International does not take a position on the independence or autonomy of Papua or any other territory, but campaigns for internationally recognized human rights to be respected and protected for everyone.

The Papua National Consensus Team was set up in April 2009 in order to seek consensus within Papua to find a peaceful political solution to ongoing problems within the region. Amongst other demands, the Team calls for the Indonesian government to give international and national monitors unfettered access to Papua; the liberation of all political prisoners; investigation of past human rights abuses; and for the UN and other countries to support an internationally mediated solution to the ongoing political problems in Papua, including through a review of the UN-supervised referendum, known as the "Act of Free Choice" which took place in 1969 to decide whether or not Papua would remain under Indonesian rule.

Yoab Syatfle is a peaceful political activist who has attended international Indigenous Peoples' meetings to highlight human rights abuses in Papua.

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