The trial of the seven at the Sorong District court in West Papua province © Democratic Alliance for Papua (ALDP)

INDONESIA: PAPUAN ACTIVISTS IMPRISONED IN SORONG DISTRICT

Amnesty International calls for the immediate and unconditional release of seven Papuan activists in Sorong district, West Papua province in Indonesia, imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights.

On 30 April 2013, police arrested six Papuan men in West Papua province's Sorong district: Obaja Kamesrar (41), Yordan Magablo (43), Klemens Kodimko (72), Antonius Saruf (63), Obeth Kamesrar (66) and Hengky Mangamis (40). A seventh person, Isak Kalaibin, was arrested around a week later, on 8 May.

The seven men had taken part in a peaceful prayer gathering in Aimas city, Sorong to celebrate a traditional festival (*Pesta Mama*) as well as to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the handover of Papua to Indonesia on 1 May 1963.

The Indonesian authorities accused the men of supporting the independence of Papua and planning to raise the Morning Star flag, a symbol of Papuan independence which is prohibited under a 2007 government regulation. They were then charged with "rebellion" (*makar*) under Article 106 and 110 of Indonesia's Criminal Code. On 3 December 2013, the Sorong District Court sentenced six of the men to one year and six months' imprisonment, while Isak Kalaibin was sentenced to three years and six months in prison. Amnesty International considers all seven activists to be prisoners of conscience.

Before the arrests, police and soldiers had opened fire on the prayer gathering, resulting in the deaths of two men, Abner Malagawak (22) and Thomas Blesia (28). A woman, Salomina Kalaibin (37), died on 6 May 2013 from gunshot wounds to her stomach and shoulder. There has yet to be an independent investigation into the deaths of the three people.

Dozens of political activists have been imprisoned in Papua, some for as long as 20 years, for attending, organizing or participating in peaceful political activities and protests, or possessing, raising or waving the prohibited pro-independence flags.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please write to the Indonesian authorities urging them to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release the seven activists, as they have been imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression;

- Urgently undertake a thorough and impartial investigation into allegations of unnecessary use of force, including firearms, by security forces against the peaceful gathering in April 2013 in Sorong, make the results available to the public and hold those responsible to account;

- Repeal or else amend Articles 106 and 110 of the Indonesian Criminal Code so that these articles are no longer used to criminalize freedom of expression;

- Revoke Article 6 of Government Regulation No. 77/2007 which prohibits the display of separatist logos or flags, or else bring it into compliance with international law and the Indonesian Constitution; and

- Respect the rights of all persons, including Papuans, to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly which are guaranteed in Article 19 and Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party.

Please send letters to:

Minister of Law and Human Rights, Republic of Indonesia
Amir Syamsuddin
Address: Jl. H.R. Rasuna Said Kav No. 4-5, Kuningan, Jakarta Selatan 12950, Indonesia
Fax: +62 21 525 3095
Twitter: @Humas_Kumham
Salutation: Dear Minister

Attorney General of the Republic of Indonesia
Basrief Arief
Address: Jl. Sultan Hasanuddin No.1, Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta Selatan 12130, Indonesia
Fax: +62 21 725 0213
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Presidential Advisor (Law and Human Rights)
Albert Hasibuan
Address: Presidential Advisory Council Secretariat, Jl. Veteran III, Jakarta Pusat 10110, Indonesia
Fax: +62 21 381 2063
Salutation: Dear Albert Hasibuan

Please send copies to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

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