

INDONESIA

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

Head of state and government:	Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
Death penalty:	retentionist
Population:	234.3 million
Life expectancy:	69.7 years
Under-5 mortality (m/f):	36/26 per 1,000
Adult literacy:	90.4 per cent

The situations in Papua and Maluku continued to deteriorate, including continued attacks on freedom of expression. The number of prisoners of conscience rose sharply to 117. Attacks against minority religious groups and their leaders increased across the archipelago. Torture, excessive use of force and unlawful killings by police and security forces continued. No progress was made in bringing the perpetrators of past gross human rights violations in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD), Papua and Timor-Leste to justice. Indonesia resumed executions in June, executing 10 people in total. Maternal deaths remained the highest recorded in South East Asia.

Freedom of expression

The government continued to severely restrict freedom of expression. The number of people arrested and detained for peacefully expressing their views rose to at least 32. An additional 85 people imprisoned in previous years remained in jail.

It remained a criminal offence to raise the "Morning Star" flag in Papua, the "Benang Raja" flag in Maluku, and the "Crescent Moon" flag in NAD.

Papua

Low-level conflict between the security forces and pro-independence insurgents in Papua continued. Local community leaders were intimidated and threatened by the military and police. There were reports of torture and other ill-treatment, excessive use of force and extrajudicial executions by security forces.

■ In August, at a rally celebrating World Indigenous Day, police opened fire into a crowd of people after some of them had raised the banned "Morning Star" flag. One peaceful demonstrator, Opinus Tabuni, was found dead following the event.

■ Filep Karma, sentenced to 15 years, and Yusak Pakage, sentenced to ten years, remained in jail. The two men were convicted in 2005 for raising the "Morning Star" flag.

Maluku

Twenty-one men who performed a traditional war dance in front of the President culminating in the unfurling of the banned "Benang Raja" flag were sentenced to between seven and 20 years' imprisonment for "rebellion" in trials throughout 2008.

Freedom of religion

The Ahmadiyya religious minority continued to face discrimination, intimidation and violence. At an interfaith rally in June, Ahmadiyya demonstrators were attacked by sections of the Front Pembela Islam (FPI). Police who were monitoring the rally did not intervene. In response, the Indonesian government announced a joint ministerial decree "freezing" the activities of Ahmadiyya, effectively outlawing its followers. In October, Munarman, a commander of the Islamic Defender Squad, and Rizieq Shihab, leader of the Islamic Defenders' Front, were jailed for 18 months for inciting violence at the rally.

Attacks on Christian leaders and the closure of church buildings in Papua continued.

■ In August, three unknown assailants beat unconscious Catholic priest and human rights defender Father Benny Susetyo in South Jakarta.

Police and security forces

Human rights violations by police and military personnel included excessive use of force during arrest sometimes resulting in death, torture and other ill-treatment of detainees, failure to protect demonstrators during peaceful demonstrations and endemic corruption.

In April, the UN Committee against Torture examined Indonesia's second periodic report. While commending certain legislative developments, the Committee expressed deep concern about the numerous, reliable reports of "routine and widespread use of torture and ill-treatment of suspects in police custody", as well as torture during military operations.

Impunity

In January, the Supreme Court sentenced Polycarpus Priyanto, a former pilot, to 20 years in prison for poisoning human rights activist Munir Said

Thalib on a Garuda airlines flight from Indonesia to the Netherlands in 2004. In February, Indra Setiawan, a former boss of Garuda, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment for falsifying documents that allowed Polycarpus Priyanto to travel on Munir Said Thalib's flight. In December, Muchdi Purwoprandjono, a former deputy chief of Indonesia's Intelligence Agency (BIN), was acquitted of masterminding Munir Said Thalib's murder due to lack of evidence. There were fears that the trial was obstructed after three prosecution witnesses, all former BIN members, retracted their testimony in September.

In July, the Commission of Truth and Friendship (CTF), established to document crimes committed in Timor-Leste in 1999 and promote reconciliation, submitted its findings to the Timor-Leste government and the Indonesian government. It allocated institutional responsibility for gross human rights violations to pro-autonomy militia groups, Indonesia's military, civilian government and police. The Indonesian government welcomed the report and expressed its regret over the events of 1999, but stopped short of offering an apology.

The CTF's mandate prevented it from pursuing its own prosecutions, and it did not name violators. Concerns about impunity led the UN to boycott the CTF's investigations and instead resume prosecutions through the Serious Crime Unit and Timor-Leste prosecutors, specifically to probe the 1999 violence. ■ In April, Indonesia's Supreme Court overturned on appeal the conviction and 10-year sentence of former militia leader Eurico Guterres for crimes against humanity in Timor-Leste. He was the only defendant out of the six originally found guilty, whose conviction had been upheld and who was serving a prison sentence.

Death penalty

Executions resumed in June, ending a 14-month hiatus. Ten people were executed in 2008, compared to 11 recorded in the entire preceding decade. At least 10 people were sentenced to death, and at least 116 people remained on death row.

■ On 8 November, Amrozi bin H. Nurhasyim, his brother Ali Ghufroon and Imam Samudera were executed. The three men had been convicted of involvement in the Bali bombings on 12 October 2002, in which 202 people died.

In December, Indonesia voted against a UN General Assembly resolution calling for a worldwide moratorium on executions.

Right to health

Indonesia had the highest recorded maternal deaths in South East Asia, with an estimated 19,000 deaths every year. Rates of maternal mortality in remote areas and among Indigenous Peoples far exceeded those within more central and developed areas.

Amnesty International visits/reports

✈ Amnesty International delegates visited Indonesia in March, July, August and November.

📄 Indonesia: Briefing to the UN Committee against Torture (ASA 21/003/2008)

📄 Indonesia: Investigate ill-treatment of Papuan prisoner (ASA 21/019/2008)

📄 Indonesia: Crackdown on freedom of expression in Maluku (ASA 21/021/2008)

IRAN

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Head of state:	Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
Head of government:	President: Dr Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
Death penalty:	retentionist
Population:	72.2 million
Life expectancy:	70.2 years
Under-5 mortality (m/f):	35/34 per 1,000
Adult literacy:	82.4 per cent

The authorities maintained tight restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly. They cracked down on civil society activists, including women's rights and other human rights defenders and minority rights advocates. Activists were arrested, detained and prosecuted, often in unfair trials, banned from travelling abroad, and had their meetings disrupted. Torture and other ill-treatment of detainees were common and committed with impunity. Sentences of flogging and amputation were reported. At least 346 people were known to have been executed, but the actual number was