



**amnesty
international**

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**URGENT
ACTION**

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Imminent Execution of Six Political Prisoners

14 March 1990

INDONESIA :
Ruslan Widjayasastra
Sukatno
Iskandar Subekti
Asep Suryaman
I Bungkus
Marsudi

Amnesty International believes that the six political prisoners named above who have spent more than twenty years in prison, are in imminent danger of execution. Their executions by firing squad were reportedly scheduled for Sunday 11 March but, for reasons which remain unclear, were not carried out. On 14 March, Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas announced after a meeting with President Suharto that the government would not bow to pressure from foreign governments and Amnesty International not to carry out the executions.

The six prisoners, all of them elderly men, were accused of involvement in an attempted coup in October 1965, and of membership of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI); some were also accused of involvement in the so-called Blitar Rebellion of 1967.

Amnesty International believes that the six prisoners named above were convicted in trials which failed to meet internationally accepted standards of fairness. In the case of one of these men, documented by Amnesty International, it was found that: the defendant had no access to lawyers for several years after his arrest; defence lawyers, once appointed, had insufficient time to prepare for the trial; there were no witnesses for the defence but more than twenty for the prosecution; the defendant was unable to cross-examine prosecution witnesses; and the defendant was required to testify before any other witnesses were heard.

The political atmosphere which prevailed in the post-coup period - a virulent anti-communism which resulted in the killing of an estimated 500,000 suspected communists - was one in which few if any witnesses would have dared to provide testimony in favour of a suspected supporter of the PKI. Available evidence also indicates that the testimony of some witnesses, many of whom were themselves prisoners, was extracted under duress: torture and other forms of intimidation were common.

There are serious doubts too about the impartiality of the judges, who had been specially appointed by a government which was responsible for the attack on previously lawful left-wing organizations after 1965. Defence lawyers who dared to provide a proper defence for PKI members were themselves accused of sympathizing with the PKI and ran the risk of harassment or worse. There were also strict limitations on the right to appeal. Those tried in the Subversion Courts or Special Military Courts, such as Ruslan Widjayasastra and Marsudi, were denied the possibility of appeal. Those who had the formal right to appeal sometimes waited more than ten years to find that it had been denied.

Telephone: 01-833 1771 Fax: 01-956 1157 Telegrams: Amnesty London WC1 Telex: 28502

Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working for the international protection of human rights. It seeks the release of men and women detained anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religious creed, provided they have not used or advocated violence. These are termed prisoners of conscience. It works for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and works on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial. It opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 1 October 1965 coup was blamed on the PKI which was subsequently banned. A massive purge of the party and its affiliated organizations followed in which an estimated 500,000 people were killed and about 1 million arrested. Most of those arrested had been released by the late 1970's but an estimated 50 now remain in prison more than 20 years after their arrest. At least nine, including the six named above remain under sentence of death.

On 15 February, four political prisoners accused of involvement in the 1965 coup attempt - Satar Suryanto, Yohanes Surono, Simon Petrus Soleiman and Norbertus Rohayan - were executed by firing squad after more than 24 years in prison (see UA 72/90, ASA 21/03/90, 16 February). Their execution brought to at least 26 the number of prisoners executed since 1985, compared to 4 in the preceding ten years. The majority of those executed since 1985 have been political prisoners.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters:

- expressing deep concern that the six political prisoners named above are in imminent danger of execution;
- expressing your belief that their execution more than twenty years after their arrest constitutes a form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment;
- expressing concern about evidence that their trials might not have met with internationally accepted standards of fairness;
- in view of the above, urging government authorities to do everything in their power to ensure that these executions are not carried out, and urging President Suharto to show clemency and commute these and all other outstanding death sentences.

APPEALS TO:

President Suharto
Bina Graha
Jalan Veteran 17
Jakarta
Indonesia

Telegrams: President Suharto
Jakarta, Indonesia
Telexes: 44283 BIGRA IA;
44240 SEKNEG IA

General Try Sutrisno
Commander of the Armed Forces
Jalan Medan Merdeka Barat 13
Jakarta Pusat
Indonesia

Telegrams: Gen. Sutrisno, Markas Besar
ABRI, Jakarta, Indonesia
Telexes: 46116 MENHUB IA;
44310 DEPHUB IA

Ismail Saleh
Minister of Justice
Jalan Rasuna Said, Kav 6-7
Kuningan
Jakarta Selatan
Indonesia

Telegrams: Justice Minister Saleh,
Jakarta, Indonesia
Telexes: 44205 44469; 45611 DEPLU IA;
(via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

COPIES TO:

Ali Alatas
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Kementerian Luar Negeri
Jalan Taman Pejambon 6
Jakarta, Indonesia

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 April 1990.

— Please take action as soon as you receive this Urgent Action appeal. Carefully read the recommended action. If possible, send a telegram or express letter immediately to one or more of the addresses given. Other letters can be sent afterwards.

— Telegrams and letters should be brief and courteous. Stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. Refer to relevant provisions in international law, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 3 — "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Article 5 — "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Article 9 — "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."

— The name of Amnesty International may be used, although letters written in a private or personal capacity may be more effective.

— Copies of appeals should be sent to relevant diplomatic representatives in your country.

— In Urgent Action cases, Amnesty International has to act rapidly to prevent the ill-treatment of prisoners. An appeal is issued when Amnesty International believes it has received reliable and accurate information in such cases. It is not always possible to verify all details independently and in some instances the situation outlined in the appeal may change. Urgent Action participants are always notified of any significant new facts.

— Copies of any replies received from government authorities should be sent immediately to your section's Urgent Action coordinator or direct to the Campaign and Membership Department of the International Secretariat. If appropriate, thank the official who has replied and ask to be kept informed about the case.