



amnesty international news release

International Secretariat 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England.
Telephone: 01-836 7788 Telegrams: Amnesty London Telex: 28502



1977
Prisoners of
Conscience Year

AI INDEX: NWS 02/75/77
DISTR: NS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER 1977

Amnesty International welcomed the Indonesian Government's announced release today (Tuesday, 20 December 1977) of 10,000 untried political prisoners, and at the same time criticized the Government for failing to release immediately the many other tens of thousands of untried Indonesian political prisoners.

Amnesty International said today: "There are certainly more than 55,000 people held without trial in Indonesian prisons and labour camps, and the correct total is probably as high as 100,000. The Indonesian Government has now conceded that all these people can be released, but it says further delay in releasing the remaining prisoners is because of high unemployment in Indonesia. We consider this reason unjustifiable, since unemployment is not the fault of the prisoners. It is our view that all remaining untried prisoners should be released immediately and unconditionally, so that the Indonesian Government can finally redress that pattern of gross violations of human rights of vast numbers of people, many of whom have now been 12 years in prison without trial."

Amnesty International also points out that the Indonesian Government has in the past made promises and announcements of releases which were later found to be untrue. Amnesty International said today: "The Indonesian Government has promised to make available the names of all those released today. Until the names, dates and places of release of the reported 10,000 affected today are made publicly available, there is no basis for believing at face value today's government announcement with regard to numbers actually releases."

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