

URGENT ACTION



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2 November 2009

UA 292/09

Forced eviction

INDONESIA

900 Students

An estimated 900 students from a Christian college in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, are facing imminent forced eviction from a temporary site where they have been living and studying. At least 17 students are on hunger strike. The authorities in Jakarta have not offered the students suitable alternative accommodation, so they may be forced to sleep out in the open.



The students, who study at the Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Teologi Injil Arastamar (known as STT Setia) Christian college in Jakarta, could be forcibly evicted within days from the former office of the Mayor of West Jakarta, Grogol. The city authorities have recently lost ownership of the site in a legal dispute with a private company. Electricity and water were disconnected from the building on 26 October, though the authorities have provided water tanks outside the building. The mayor has proposed that the students move to another temporary site, a former temporary holding center for migrants in North Jakarta. However, the Setia college authorities say that the building is in disrepair and is not suitable for people to live and study in.

At least 1,400 students from different provinces were evacuated from their Setia college campus in July 2008 when it was attacked by villagers and others allegedly linked to sections of the hardline Islamist group, the Islamic Defenders Front.

It is the second time in a month that some of these students have been notified that they must leave their premises at short notice. An estimated 700 of them moved to the Grogol building over the last three weeks, after being initially evicted from a campsite in East Jakarta. Over 1,000 students from Setia College have been living in temporary premises lacking adequate sanitation, access to clean water, and health services.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Religious minority groups in Indonesia continue to suffer from discrimination, intimidation and violence.

On 25 -27 July 2008 the local mosque in Pulo Pinang Ranti village, Makassar sub-district, in East Jakarta was used to make announcements calling on people to attack the Setia Christian college after a Setia student was accused of stealing. Soon a mob of hundreds of people began to surround the college and started shouting. Many people from outside the village came with machetes and bamboo stakes. They attacked the student dormitories with stones and molotov cocktails. At least 21 students were injured during the attack and evacuation.

Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

The Setia college staff have made reports to the police about the attacks as well as provided them with additional information. The police initially informed the college they were investigating the matter but Amnesty International is not aware of any arrests in relation to the attack. The students were moved to three temporary accommodation sites, in Grogol, Cibubur and Kalimalang by the city authorities following the July 2008 violent attacks. At the time of writing, the Setia College premises remained uninhabited.

On 27 October, hundreds of Setia College students organized a rally near the Grogol building. According to news reports, at least four police officers and some students were injured during the rally.

Forced evictions are evictions carried out without adequate notice and consultation with those affected, without legal safeguards and without assurances of adequate alternative accommodation. Under international law, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) to which Indonesia is a state party, forced evictions are prohibited, and the state has the duty to ensure that civilians are not subject to forced evictions.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- not to forcibly evict an estimated 900 STT Setia college students from the former office of the Mayor of West Jakarta;
- for assurances that all Setia College students will be provided with adequate accommodation and access to clean water, adequate sanitation and health services;
- to protect all Setia College students from forced eviction and to engage in genuine consultation with those affected, and to end all forced evictions as a matter of urgency;
- to take steps to ensure that the Setia College can operate safely on its own premises or find a suitable solution which will guarantee a degree of security of tenure and protection from future threats of harassment or eviction;
- to conduct a prompt and impartial investigation into the attacks against the Setia college in July 2008 and into reports that the police failed to protect the staff and students.

APPEALS TO:

Deputy Governor of Jakarta

Prijanto
The City Jakarta Administration
Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan 8-9
Blok G Lantai 3 Jakarta, INDONESIA
Fax: 011 62 21 3848850
Email: dkiweb@jakarta.go.id
Salutation: Dear Deputy Governor

Head of the Jakarta Education Department

Taufik Yudi Mulyanto
Jalan Gatot Subroto Kavling 40-41,
Jakarta Selatan 12950,
Jakarta, INDONESIA
Fax: 011 62 21 5204039
Email: dki@jakarta.go.id
Salutation: Dear Mr Taufik

COPIES TO:

Ambassador Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat
Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia
2020 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington DC 20036
Fax: 1 202 775 5365
Email: <http://www.embassyofindonesia.org/contactform/contact-form.php>

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.

Check with the AIUSA Urgent Action office if sending appeals after 14 December 2009.