

URGENT ACTION

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE COULD FACE LIFE IN PRISON

Four Papuan political activists have been detained since 19 December 2016 in Manado, North Sulawesi Province for “rebellion” (*makar*). Detained solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, the men are considered prisoners of conscience.

Hiskia Meage, Emanuel Ukago, Panus Hese gem and William Wim are members of a pro-Papuan independence organization, the West Papuan National Committee (KNPB) in Manado, North Sulawesi Province, and were among at least 70 individuals who were arrested by the Manado Resort Police (Polres) on 19 December 2016. The Papuan activists were protesting in support of the acceptance of the peaceful Papuan pro-independence umbrella group, United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP), as a full member of Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), a sub-Pacific intergovernmental organization. The protest also coincided with the anniversary of Indonesia’s first military operation in Papua (Operasi Trikora) in 1961 when it was a Dutch colony.

The protest was part of simultaneous demonstrations organized by KNPB in cities across Indonesia, including Jayapura, Merauke, Wamena, Nabire in West Papua Province, Manado in North Sulawesi Province, Gorontalo and Yogyakarta. At least 528 people, including children, were arrested nationwide on 19 December 2016. Most were released without charge the following day.

Currently detained in the Manado Resort Police headquarters, North Sulawesi Province, Hiskia Meage, Emanuel Ukago, Panus Hese gem and William Wim have been charged with “rebellion” (*makar*) under Article 106 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP) and could face life imprisonment.

1) TAKE ACTION

Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Hiskia Meage, Emanuel Ukago, Panus Hese gem and William Wim and drop the charges against them as they have been arrested solely for the peaceful exercise of their human right to freedom of expression;
- Ensure that pending their release, Hiskia Meage, Emanuel Ukago, Panus Hese gem and William Wim are not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, and have regular access to their family, lawyer of their choice;
- Stop evoking vague and overbroad legislation to arrest, prosecute and punish persons for peacefully exercising their human rights.

Contact these two officials by 20 March, 2017:

North Sulawesi Regional Head of Police
 Irjen Bambang Waskito
 North Sulawesi Regional Police Headquarters
 Jl. Bethesda No. 62, Manado
 North Sulawesi
 Indonesia
 Fax: +62 (0)431 841998
Salutation: Dear Inspector General

Ambassador Budi Bowoleksono
 Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia
 2020 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC 20036
 Phone: 202.775.5200
 Fax: 202.775.5365
 Email: faisal@embassyofindonesia.org
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

Here’s why it is so important to report your actions: we record the number of actions taken on each case and use that information in our advocacy. **Either email uan@aiusa.org with “UA 35/17” in the subject line or [click this link](#).**

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Indonesia enshrines guarantees to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in its Constitution and national legislation. But legislation continues to be used to criminalize peaceful political activities and to imprison people solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights. Dozens of peaceful political activists are currently imprisoned in the Papuan region (provinces of Papua and West Papua), some sentenced to as long as 20 years' imprisonment, for attending, organizing or participating in peaceful political activities or protests, or possessing, raising or waving the prohibited pro-independence 'Morning Star' flag of Papua.

Many of those arrested are charged with "rebellion" (makar) under Articles 106 and 110 (crimes against the security of the state) of Indonesia's Criminal Code. Amnesty International has also documented the use of excessive force and firearms as well as torture and other ill-treatment against political activists and others accused of links to pro-independence groups. Accountability for such acts is rare and, at most, security personnel only receive disciplinary, as opposed to criminal, sanctions. See other Amnesty International's document for these issues: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/5480/2017/en/>, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/5409/2016/en/>, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/3010/2015/en/>, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/1932/2015/en/> and <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/3797/2016/en/>.

The United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) is an umbrella organization established in December 2014 and formed of different factions of the Papuan independence movement.

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) is an intergovernmental organization, founded as a political gathering in 1983, composed of the four Melanesian states of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and the Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) of New Caledonia. Indonesia is an associate member, while ULMWP is an observing member.

Amnesty International takes no position whatsoever on the political status of any province of Indonesia, including calls for independence. However, the organization believes that the right to freedom of expression includes the right to peacefully advocate referendums, independence or other political solutions.

Name: Hiskia Meage, Emanuel Ukago, Panus Hesegem and William Wim
Gender m/f: male

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