

“BUILDING UP IMAGINARY ENEMIES”

MISINFORMATION, DISINFORMATION AND ‘FOREIGN AGENT’
ALLEGATIONS IN PRESIDENT PRABOWO’S INDONESIA



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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Glossary

AUTHORITARIAN PRACTICES

Practices that seek to sabotage accountability, entrench power and silence critical voices. International human rights law and standards do not define authoritarian practices. Political theorist Marlies Glasius defines authoritarian practices as “pattern of actions, embedded in an organized context, sabotaging accountability to people over whom a configuration of actors exerts a degree of control, or their representatives, by disabling their voice and disabling their access to information”. Disinformation can also be part of such authoritarian practices.

BUZZERS

Colloquial term in Indonesia referring to individuals paid or recruited to amplify political narratives online, including spreading mis- and disinformation against political opponents.

CELIOS

Centre of Economic and Law Studies

CELIOS is an independent research institute working on socio-economic and environmental policies. Under the Prabowo administration, CELIOS criticized many government flagship policies, including the Food Estate Project, the free nutritious meals programme (MBG) and policies related to extractive industries.

CHILLING EFFECT

Amnesty International adopts the following definition by Professor of European Law Laurent Pech: “the negative effect any state action has on natural and/or legal persons, and which results in pre-emptively dissuading them from exercising their rights or fulfilling their professional obligations, for fear of being subject to formal state proceedings which could lead to sanctions or informal consequences such as threats, attacks or smear campaigns.”

CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS

Umbrella term used in this report to refer to government critics, activists, human rights defenders and journalists.

DECEPTIVE COORDINATION

Generally, coordination refers to efforts by two or more actors to leverage social media platforms in a synchronized manner to amplify content or narratives in pursuit of a shared objective.

While coordination is not inherently harmful and may also occur in legitimate collective action, this research uses the concept of “deceptive coordination” to describe coordination carried out maliciously with a deceptive intent to increase the visibility of disinformation that targets or contributes to intimidation harassment against specific individuals or groups.

INDICATORS OF DECEPTIVE COORDINATION

Indicators that could identify, measure or analyze patterns of behaviours among multiple actors (online social media accounts, in the context of this research) that could suggest they are working together to amplify certain deceptive narratives.

DISINFORMATION

False or inaccurate information that is shared with the deliberate intent to deceive or mislead.

DPR	Indonesia's House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat – literally translated into English as People's Representative Council)
EIT LAW	Electronic Information and Transactions Law. In Indonesian, this law is called " <i>Undang-Undang Informasi dan Transaksi Elektronik</i> " and often referred to as "UU ITE".
'FOREIGN AGENT' ALLEGATIONS / 'FOREIGN AGENT' NARRATIVES	<p>Harmful and stigmatizing narratives used to label civil society actors as a 'foreign agent'.</p> <p>In the context of this research, these narratives were often fused with mis- and disinformation to attack critics of the government. They often relied on terms like "agen asing" (foreign agents), "antek asing" (foreign lackey), "kekuatan asing" (foreign power), "anasir asing" (foreign element), "pihak asing" (foreign parties) or "ditunggangi asing" (literally, "ridden by foreigners"). At times, the racialized term "antek aseng" ("Chinese agents") has been used to attack Chinese Indonesians.</p>
GERINDRA	Great Indonesia Movement Party, known as Gerindra, is an Indonesian political party led by President Prabowo Subianto.
HRDS	Human rights defenders
HRDD	Human rights due diligence
IHRL	International human rights law
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
INDONESIA GELAP	Indonesia Gelap ("Dark Indonesia") refers to a nationwide protest movement starting in February 2025. This movement became a channel for broad-based expressions of public grievances over budget cuts on government spendings related to social and human rights protection, as well as state repression under the Prabowo administration.
KOMDIGI	Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs, formerly named the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo)
KOMNAS HAM	National Commission on Human Rights
KOMNAS PEREMPUAN	National Commission on Violence Against Women
KONDE.CO	Media outlet focusing on public interest journalism and presenting the perspectives of women and other minorities through feminist lens.
KONTRAS	<p>Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence</p> <p>KontraS is a non-governmental organization working on issues related to various forms of state violence and gross human rights violations.</p>

LBH JAKARTA	<p>Legal Aid Institute of Jakarta (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Jakarta)</p> <p>LBH Jakarta is one of the legal aid offices in Jakarta operating under the umbrella of the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation or YLBHI.</p>
MDIF	<p>Media Development Investment Fund</p> <p>New York-based nonprofit that supports independent media globally and whose funding pool has included a range of international contributors</p>
MBG	<p>Free Nutritious Meals programme (Makan Bergizi Gratis) – a flagship programme launched by President Prabowo in 2025</p>
MILITARY LAW REVISIONS	<p>The revisions to Law No. 34/2004 on the Indonesian National Armed Force –often referred to in Indonesia as <i>Rancangan Undang-Undang Tentara Nasional Indonesia</i> or RUU TNI</p> <p>The revisions empower active-duty military personnel to hold positions in civilian institutions, including the Office of the Attorney-General. This new amendment was introduced by the Prabowo administration and adopted by parliament on 20 March 2025, despite nationwide opposition.</p>
MISINFORMATION	<p>False or inaccurate information disseminated without an intent to cause harm</p>
OPM	<p>Free Papua Movement (<i>Organisasi Papua Merdeka</i>)</p>
PANCASILA	<p>Five foundational principles of the Indonesian state: belief in one God; just and civilized humanity; the unity of Indonesia; democracy guided by deliberation; and social justice for all Indonesians</p>
PROJECT MULTATULI	<p>Project Multatuli – sometimes referred to as Project M.</p> <p>Project M is an independent media outlet focusing on public interest journalism about democracy, human rights, social justice and environmental sustainability.</p>
TNI	<p>Indonesian National Armed Forces (<i>Tentara Nasional Indonesia</i>)</p>
TPNPB	<p>West Papua National Liberation Army (<i>Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat</i>)</p>
UDHR	<p>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</p>
UNHRC	<p>UN Human Rights Committee – the UN treaty body established under the ICCPR for monitoring state parties’ compliance with this treaty and provide recommendations for the improvement of civil and political rights.</p>
UN GUIDING PRINCIPLES	<p>UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights</p>
USAID	<p>United States Agency for International Development</p>
YLBHI	<p>Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (<i>Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia</i>)</p> <p>YLBHI is a non-governmental organization that provides legal aid for victims of human rights violations, as well as members of marginalized communities.</p>

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTENT WARNING: This report contains examples of online content which include harmful and abusive language and graphic calls for violence and discrimination, which may be distressing for some readers.

In the middle of the night on 12 March 2026, Andrie Yunus, the deputy coordinator of the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (KontraS) was targeted in a brutal acid attack in Indonesia's capital Jakarta and suffered serious chemical burns across his body. Andrie is a prominent human rights defender and vocal critic of the increasing militarization and repression in Indonesia under President Prabowo Subianto's administration. The subsequent investigation led to the arrest of four military officers from the Indonesian Strategic Intelligence Agency (BAIS), directly linking the state's security apparatus to the assault.

This incident did not happen in a vacuum. It had been in the making for a long time, preceded by a campaign of coordinated disinformation attacks online involving state actors – designed to undermine Andrie's credibility and delegitimize his work as a human rights defender by portraying him as a 'foreign agent' – and sustained efforts offline to intimidate him.

The first major disinformation campaign targeting Andrie began in early 2025. On 15 March that year, he and two other activists led a peaceful protest against the revisions to Law No. 34/2004 on the Indonesian National Armed Forces ("Military Law revisions"), which empower active-duty military personnel to hold positions in civilian institutions, including the Office of the Attorney-General.

One day after the protest, a video portraying the activists who staged this protest, including Andrie, as 'foreign agents' seeking to weaken Indonesia's military began circulating across social media. Instagram emerged as the platform on which the video circulated most widely. Metadata analysis shows that the earliest dissemination of this video on the platform took place on 16 March 2025 by an account affiliated with Gerindra – the political party led by President Prabowo's leadership. Shortly afterwards, at least 31 social media accounts, including Instagram, Facebook, X and YouTube, that appeared to be affiliated with 27 different military units. These accounts did not have official verification badges – the "blue checks" social media platforms use to vouch for someone's identity. However, they displayed official insignia, unit names and identifiable institutional branding in their profile information. Their posting histories also consistently featured content relating to the respective units and broader activities of the military. All these accounts posted the same video within closely clustered timeframes between 17 and 19 March 2025, with many using identical hashtags. At least 135 public Instagram accounts – mostly anonymous – amplified this content by posting this same video between 16 and 19 March 2025.

This disinformation campaign was followed by a sustained period of physical intimidation. In the months following the 2025 protests, Andrie reported that military officers and unidentified individuals surveilled the office of KontraS, of which Andrie is a deputy coordinator, at least 22 times. These individuals frequently parked outside the Jakarta office to photograph staff, creating a climate of fear that Andrie described as a "dirty tactic". "The military would stop at nothing to silence us," he told Amnesty International in 2025.

Andrie's perception of the military's relentless efforts to silence dissent proved correct. In the days before the acid attack, Andrie was reportedly stalked by unknown men. While authorities have initiated and made progress in investigating this attack and identifying potential perpetrators, Andrie has continued to face further disinformation campaigns using 'foreign agent' allegations to downplay the violence of the attack, cast doubt on his victimhood and imply that the attack was justified.

For instance, between 27 and 29 March 2026, many anonymous social media accounts across TikTok, Instagram and Facebook engaged in a coordinated disinformation campaign in which they posted the same video accusing Andrie of staging the acid attack to receive foreign funding. The video suggested that Andrie should face jail time under Article 195 of Indonesia's new Criminal Code, enacted in 2026, which prohibits receiving money from foreign individuals or organizations to overthrow the government.

Andrie's case is not an isolated incident. The 'foreign agent' allegations levelled against him reflect a broader pattern that has become increasingly visible since President Prabowo took office in October 2024. During this period, state officials have repeatedly resorted to harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, particularly relying on unsubstantiated 'foreign agent' allegations as an authoritarian practice to target critics, including civil society actors, and justify violence against them. Such mis- and disinformation aims to deflect criticism on a range of issues and imply that dissent is not a legitimate expression of grievances rooted in social, economic, or political conditions, but as the product of manipulation by hidden foreign forces. As illustrated by Andrie's experience, such mis- and disinformation can cause serious harm and, at times, intersect with or exacerbate risks of physical violence.

This report exposes the role of state and state-aligned actors in weaponizing such mis- and disinformation against civil society actors as 'foreign agents' in the digital space during the first 18 months of the Prabowo administration. It examines the interplay between online mis- and disinformation and offline forms of violence, analyses the resulting human rights harms, including their chilling effect and assesses the role of social media companies in contributing to these harms.

KEY CONCEPTS AND APPLICABLE FRAMEWORKS

This report distinguishes between:

- **misinformation** – false or inaccurate information shared **without** malicious intent; and
- **disinformation** – false or inaccurate information shared **with deliberate intent to deceive or mislead**.

Because intent is rarely observable directly, this report infers deceptive intent through indicators of coordination. **Coordination** refers to efforts by two or more actors to use social media platforms in a synchronized manner to amplify specific content. Coordination is not inherently harmful and may also occur in legitimate collective action and public campaigning, including for the promotion of human rights, to increase visibility of certain information. However, coordination becomes problematic when it is intentionally used to deceive its audience by amplifying false or misleading information that targets individuals or groups and harms their human rights. In these instances, coordination may indicate a malicious intent. Amnesty International refers to this phenomenon as **deceptive coordination**.

To identify deceptive coordination, this research relies on two categories of indicators:

- 1 behavioural indicators**, such as multiple accounts posting within tightly clustered timeframes or sharing similar activity patterns; and
- 2 content-based indicators**, such as the repeated dissemination of identical or near-identical narratives, captions, images or videos across multiple accounts.

STATE OFFICIALS HAVE REPEATEDLY RESORTED TO HARMFUL AND STIGMATIZING MIS- AND DISINFORMATION, PARTICULARLY RELYING ON

UNSUBSTANTIATED 'FOREIGN AGENT' ALLEGATIONS

AS AN AUTHORITARIAN PRACTICE TO TARGET CRITICS, INCLUDING CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS, AND JUSTIFY VIOLENCE AGAINST THEM.



When false and misleading information is circulated with these indicators present, Amnesty International determined that it was reasonable to infer that multiple social media accounts might not be coincidentally disseminating such falsehoods, which they genuinely mistake as true, but are potentially working together to do so with the malicious intent to deceive audiences. Where such deceptive coordination was identified, Amnesty International classified the content as disinformation.

This report also distinguishes between **state actors** and **state-aligned actors**. State actors are individuals or groups acting at the behest of the state or one of its multiple agencies. State-aligned actors are individuals, groups or organizations that are not formally part of government but whose content consistently advances state interests, often in ways that allow the state to maintain plausible deniability.

Under international law, civil society organizations (CSOs), media outlets and other associations have the **right to seek, secure and utilize resources**, including through cross-border partnerships and international funding arrangements. Such engagement, in and of itself, is not indicative of foreign interference, control or manipulation. Accordingly, forms of expression that equate the mere receipt of international support with acting as a 'foreign agent' or rely on that to construct unsubstantiated conspiracy claims, are false and misleading.

Amnesty International drew upon a wide range of evidence. To understand the role of authorities in disseminating or popularizing harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, Amnesty International collected and analysed public statements by President Prabowo and other officials, including interviews, speeches and other public commentary.

This research extensively examined digital evidence to develop a better understanding of how official rhetoric migrated online and became fused with false and misleading claims targeting civil society actors, and to concretely establish the prevalence of such a practice. Between May 2025 and April 2026, Amnesty International analysed 585 social media posts across X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. These posts were selected as examples of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation faced by civil society actors in Indonesia.

To identify signs of deceptive coordination, Amnesty International researchers considered the behavioural and content-based indicators described above. This included checking whether multiple social media accounts were spreading harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation through posting identical or near identical content within tightly clustered timeframes.

To identify the posting of identical or near-identical content, researchers conducted reverse-image searches, tracing the repeated usage of identical or near-identical images and videos across platforms. In addition, this research relied on TikTok's Original Sound and Instagram's Original Audio features, which generate an index page for every unique audio track. Whenever an account uploads a video with its own unique sound, both platforms create an index page that lists every other account using that exact same audio. By locating a video and clicking on its audio index, researchers could identify all other accounts that uploaded videos using the same sound.

To identify posting behaviours that appeared coordinated in their timing, researchers closely examined the time of publication for each post. X makes precise timestamps publicly available directly in every tweet. Meanwhile, researchers examined metadata to identify timestamps for posts on other platforms.

In parallel, Amnesty International assessed how long each post remained online, as well as its visibility and engagement, including views, likes, shares and reposts, where publicly available. These indicators were used to assess social media companies' responses to harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including content removal and amplification-limiting measures, within the context of engagement-driven surveillance-based business models. The status, availability, and reach of posts were assessed as of 20 April 2026, marking 18 months since the start of President Prabowo's administration and aligning with the temporal scope of this research.

For the purposes of this report, Amnesty International does not comprehensively expose the architecture of networks behind disinformation in Indonesia. In general, Amnesty International does not rely on the behavioural and content-based set of indicators to establish centralized control or formal command structures behind the dissemination of false and misleading information. These also do not allow for definitive attribution of specific actors or networks behind the coordinated activities. In a limited number of cases, however, Amnesty International was able to find identifiable information about the accounts posting such information, including instances where public officials or state institutions originated or spread disinformation through what appeared to be their official accounts. In those cases, attribution is part of the findings.

In addition to establishing the prevalence of mis- and disinformation through the analysis of social media posts, Amnesty International conducted in-person and online interviews between July 2025 and April 2026 with 25 civil society members, journalists and researchers who were targeted by harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation. Their testimonies provided essential insights and serve as case studies in this research, illustrating the wide-reaching harm that disinformation inflicts on individuals and organizations. To complement these perspectives, Amnesty International also carried out eight additional interviews with academics, social media analysts and fact-checkers, whose expertise helped contextualize the dynamics and mechanisms of mis- and disinformation. Amnesty International used these interview testimonies to corroborate digital evidence in all case studies presented in this report.

ENTRENCHMENT OF AUTHORITARIAN PRACTICES

President Prabowo's administration has deepened Indonesia's authoritarian trajectory. During its first 18 months, the government introduced sweeping repressive legislative and policy changes, and expanded military influence over civilian affairs. The entrenchment of authoritarian practices under President Prabowo triggered several waves of nationwide protests throughout 2025 due to growing public concerns over: budget cuts that threaten the state's resources on human rights protection;



TO IDENTIFY THE POSTING OF IDENTICAL OR NEAR-IDENTICAL CONTENT, RESEARCHERS CONDUCTED REVERSE-IMAGE SEARCHES, TRACING THE REPEATED USAGE OF IDENTICAL OR NEAR-IDENTICAL IMAGES AND VIDEOS ACROSS PLATFORMS.

legal amendments that sought to empower the military; corruption scandals; and declining civic freedoms. Authorities responded to protests with excessive force, arbitrary arrests and intimidation of civil society actors.

Government critics and civil society actors also faced escalating online attacks, often driven by mis- and disinformation, including by attacks labelling them as ‘foreign agents’ or as threats to national stability. This culminated in January 2026, when the government announced plans to prepare a draft law on “countering disinformation and foreign propaganda”. Coordinating Minister for Law, Human Rights, Immigration and Correctional Affairs Yusril Ihza Mahendra stated that disinformation originating from outside Indonesia was being used as propaganda to attack the country, and that President Prabowo had directly instructed relevant ministries to begin developing such a law.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND STANDARDS

Mis- and disinformation can negatively affect the fulfilment of various human rights guaranteed under international human rights law (IHRL), particularly when state actors rely on disinformation to entrench power, undermine accountability and target civil society actors. This research primarily examined the negative implications of mis- and disinformation on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as the right to defend human rights.

Under Article 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), individuals and organizations have the right to form associations and to seek, receive and use resources, including foreign funding. The mere receipt of international support does not constitute foreign interference. Mis- and disinformation labelling civil society actors as ‘foreign agents’ stigmatize and intimidate those exercising their rights, discourage participation in public affairs and undermine the rights mentioned above.

IHRL protects freedom of expression broadly, including speech that may be inaccurate or controversial. Article 19(3) of the ICCPR permits restrictions on expression only where they are provided by law, pursue a legitimate aim, and are necessary and proportionate. In assessing restrictions related to mis- or disinformation, the connection between the expression and a specific harm, as well as the severity and imminence of that harm, are central.

THE MAKING OF AN IMAGINARY ENEMY

High-level officials, including President Prabowo himself, have repeatedly suggested that foreign powers orchestrated protest movements and used funding to influence CSOs and media to criticize and undermine the government. According to a report by BBC Indonesia published on 17 February 2026, the president had used this rhetoric 25 times in public speeches since his inauguration in October 2024. Other high-level officers, including Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Bahlil Lahadalia and Minister of Culture Fadli Zon, have used similar language in defending policies under their remsits.

Rather than engaging with the substance of public concerns, authorities have increasingly responded by questioning the loyalty, funding or intentions of those raising them, effectively shifting public debate away from accountability and toward imagined conspiracies and a manufactured sense of crisis. As a senior journalist who asked to remain anonymous observed, these attacks reflected a broader strategy of repression emerging under the Prabowo administration:

“If Prabowo cannot explain or respond to something, he labels people criticizing him or his government as ‘foreign agents’. He has been building up imaginary enemies in people’s minds.”

The journalist further explained that President Prabowo's public statements using 'foreign agent' rhetoric provided material for other actors to generate conspiracy narratives, often through anonymous social media accounts.

This rhetoric migrated online, including on X, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, and fused with false and misleading claims that directly targeted individuals and organizations, reinforcing the stigmatizing framing promoted by President Prabowo and other state officials. Two dominant patterns emerged:

Decontextualization of foreign funding to suggest that civil society actors with records of international partnerships or funding were acting on behalf of foreign powers.

"Colour revolution" conspiracy narratives that frame domestic protest movements as externally orchestrated attempts to destabilize Indonesia. The term "colour revolution" historically refers to democratic transitions in post-communist states across Eurasia in the early 2000s. However, in recent years, governments in many countries have used this term to frame protest movements as being sponsored and manipulated by foreign governments or entities to overthrow the governments.

Although these claims lacked credible evidence, they became highly influential across social media platforms and were repeatedly deployed during periods of heightened political tension. For example, during the nationwide protests in late August and early September 2025, Amnesty International's research found that many influential social media users promoted conspiracy theories portraying the protests as part of an externally orchestrated "colour revolution". They also portrayed many media outlets and human rights CSOs providing assistance to protesters (who were subject to state violence in this period) as 'foreign agents' trying to overthrow the government. These misleading narratives were amplified internationally, including by the Russian state-owned media outlet Sputnik. Many of these posts reached hundreds of thousands of views.

'Foreign agent' allegations against civil society actors were not always disseminated in an isolated manner. The case studies in this research show that during the Prabowo administration, such allegations have been systematically deployed in coordinated campaigns online aimed at deceiving the audiences. In these cases, Amnesty International identified that identical or near-identical content was disseminated within short time intervals, indicating a strong degree of coordination among different social media accounts and allowing researchers to infer a deceptive intent behind spreading false information. Because of the falsity of their content and the deceptive intent, these posts amount to disinformation.

Amnesty International identified four emblematic disinformation campaigns. Three involved social media accounts that appeared to belong to at least 63 entities linked to the military and targeted human rights defenders protesting the Military Law revisions; people involved in the so-called Indonesia Gelap protests that started in February 2025 and the media outlet Tempo. While these accounts did not have verification badges, they used official insignia and unit names, and consistent posting histories suggest ties to specific military units. The fourth campaign targeted the Centre of Economic and Law Studies (CELIOS).

One illustrative example was a disinformation campaign against Tempo. On 12 March 2025, a TikTok user posted a video that paired a selectively edited excerpt of President Prabowo's speech at the 17th anniversary event of Gerindra, his political party, in Sentul City in Indonesia's West Java. During this speech, the president said:

"If anyone is being incited or trying to incite others, be vigilant. I say this is the work of foreign forces who always want to divide Indonesia."

The video combined this speech with decontextualized references to Tempo's Media Development Investment Fund to construct an allegation that the media outlet was acting as a 'foreign agent', despite the absence of evidence that its investment fund compromised the outlet's independence or editorial autonomy. The video ends by concluding: "It is abundantly clear that Tempo is a foreign element wrapped in the mask of media independence." The video went viral in a few days, receiving more than 421,500 views, 31,600 likes and 3,743 shares by 20 April 2026. On 23 March, at least three Instagram accounts, which appeared to belong to Indonesian military units, were involved in amplifying this misleading content about Tempo by posting this video on their accounts.

The use of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation based on 'foreign agent' narratives during President Prabowo's presidency has often operated alongside other stigmatizing labels that intersect with the personal identities of those targeted, including their ethnicity, gender, age and activism focus. Student activists were frequently dismissed as "mahasewa" ("rented students"), suggesting they were mobilized for payment rather than acting out of legitimate political conviction. Activists of Chinese descent were subjected to racist slurs such as "antek aseng", which means Chinese agents. Meanwhile, those working on human rights in Papua were often subjected to compounded accusations, simultaneously labelled as 'foreign agents' and as affiliates or sympathizers of the Free Papua Movement (OPM). By layering multiple pejorative framings and leveraging pre-existing social prejudices and discrimination, state-aligned actors compounded the grounds on which critics were discredited.

Amnesty International observed a clear interplay between mis- and disinformation and offline harms. In multiple cases, false and misleading 'foreign agent' narratives targeting civil society actors contributed to an environment in which intimidation, arbitrary arrest and excessive use of force by police were normalized or justified. One case involved an online campaign against Tempo following a series of intimidation against the outlet's journalists. On 19 March, a severed pig's head with both ears cut off was delivered to Tempo's office. Two days later, an anonymous account sent a threat to Tempo's official Instagram account, warning that "the terror will continue until your office is destroyed." On 22 March, another package arrived at the newsroom, this time containing six decapitated rats. Following such intimidation, anonymous X accounts engaged in a coordinated disinformation campaign online using the same 'foreign agent' allegations to reframe the threats against Tempo as staged incidents intended to attract foreign funding.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS

Amnesty International found that mis- and disinformation based on 'foreign agent' allegations caused direct harm to civil society actors, as it created a widespread chilling effect among those targeted as well as those who witnessed the online attacks. While many of those interviewed remained resilient and continued their activism, many interviewees reported having to censor their work or, in the case of journalists, stifling reporting that could be considered critical of the government. Many further distanced themselves from joining protest movements or building coalitions and other collective actions with organizations or individuals accused of being 'foreign agents', as collaboration could become reputationally and materially dangerous.

Iqbal, a campaigner from Greenpeace who faced coordinated attacks online, captured the threat as follows:

"I take Prabowo speeches and all those disinformation attacks against us as the warning signs. These signs are warning us to keep silent or else."

Overall, civil society actors have faced a hostile environment in which they must constantly calculate personal, legal and reputational risks before engaging in legitimate human rights work. The risks documented throughout this report demonstrate that the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as the right to defend human rights, are seriously threatened by mis- and disinformation based on 'foreign agent' allegations. These rights are all protected by several treaties and declarations, including the ICCPR to which Indonesia is a state party.

ASSESSMENT OF STATE OBLIGATIONS

This research found that the Indonesian government failed to respect, protect and fulfil human rights in the context of proliferating mis- and disinformation documented in this report.



FAILURE TO RESPECT: Under IHRL, states must not spread mis- and disinformation. Despite these obligations, President Prabowo and other high-level state officials have engaged in public speeches and media interviews that spread harmful and stigmatizing narratives that labelled CSOs, media and protesters as 'foreign agents'. As these official narratives became widely disseminated online, state actors, including a member of the Executive Office of the President and members of the Gerindra party, have also played a key role in using them as a basis for spreading false and misleading claims that directly targeted specific civil society actors and organizations. Social media accounts that appeared to belong to military units have directly engaged in deceptive coordinated campaigns spreading disinformation.

Amnesty International wrote to the government of Indonesia on 24 April 2026 provide an opportunity for the government to respond to the allegations included in this report, including to clarify as to whether these accounts were officially affiliated with the military but received no response. Even if these accounts were not formally operated by state institutions, the authorities have clearly failed to prevent actors from presenting themselves as official military entities and using that appearance of authority to spread harmful disinformation.



FAILURE TO PROTECT: The government has obligations under IHRL to protect individuals from harmful and stigmatizing disinformation from third parties. The government must not engage in encouraging or sponsoring disinformation. The government also has an obligation to conduct independent, prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into all instances where online disinformation is associated with physical attacks against civil society actors. This obligation is particularly acute in light of the acid attack against KontraS's deputy coordinator Andrie, which occurred in tandem with sustained disinformation campaigns targeting him. Even though official investigations into the offline attack have started, disinformation campaigns attacking and discrediting Andrie continued to circulate unchecked online.

Indonesia's domestic legal framework falls short in guaranteeing protection and access to justice for those targeted with mis- and disinformation. Authorities continuously enforced vague and sweeping provisions under the Electronic Information and Transactions Law to prosecute and criminalize civil society actors. The broad and imprecise provisions under related regulations also enable systematic censorship of content by civil society actors through takedown requirements. Ongoing efforts to draft a Bill on Countering Disinformation and Foreign Propaganda raised concerns that this law could be used to silence critics and further restrict freedom of expression, given the ongoing pattern of disinformation branding critics as 'foreign agents'. These patterns further reflect how the government has actively promoted and amplified their own narratives through disinformation campaigns while suppressing alternative expressions and critical voices.



FAILURE TO FULFIL: The government has failed to uphold its positive obligation to ensure a safe and enabling environment for civil society actors. Instead, its use of disinformation has heightened hostility towards civil society actors and led to a widespread chilling effect. It has also failed to safeguard an independent and pluralistic media environment that could have enabled people to access diverse and reliable information. As direct testimonies in this research show, journalists themselves have been subjected to online disinformation attacks, as well as offline intimidation and other forms of violence, for reporting on issues perceived as critical of the government.

ASSESSMENT OF PLATFORM RESPONSIBILITIES

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (the UN Guiding Principles) established that companies have a responsibility to respect human rights. Such a responsibility includes conducting ongoing and context-specific human rights due diligence (HRDD) to identify, prevent, mitigate and address adverse human rights impacts linked to their operations, including harms arising from the spread and amplification of disinformation. Amnesty International's research found that X, TikTok, Meta and YouTube failed to meet its responsibility under the UN Guiding Principles for the following reasons:



FAILURE TO MODERATE MIS- AND DISINFORMATION: X, TikTok, Meta and YouTube played a significant role in enabling the dissemination and virality of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation on their platforms. Despite adopting policies related to mis- and disinformation, companies did not enforce them adequately in the context of Indonesia under President Prabowo. Many harmful posts remained online for extended periods, including some that stayed on the platforms for more than one year and one month as of 20 April 2026, despite violating such policies.

Amnesty International wrote to the four companies on 23 April 2026 to share this research findings, including the links to harmful and stigmatizing content listed in this report. Only TikTok responded to Amnesty International on 7 May 2026, stating: "We've reviewed the content you shared, and we have made it ineligible for recommendation to the For You feed. Some of the content identified in your letter is no longer accessible." Amnesty International's subsequent review after receiving the response from TikTok found that while two of the 10 posts Amnesty International sent to TikTok as examples of mis- and disinformation had become inaccessible as of 7 May 2026, the remaining posts, including content linked to coordinated disinformation campaigns, remained publicly accessible. TikTok also pledged to "set up additional monitoring for this specific issue". Meanwhile, X, Meta and YouTube did not respond.



VIRALITY OF HARMFUL MIS- AND DISINFORMATION: Many posts on Instagram, X and TikTok became viral, potentially due to algorithmic amplification. In the past, Amnesty International found that the surveillance-based business models of these companies, which rely on using users' personal data to train algorithms and shape specific content recommended for each user, contributed to the rapid spread of inflammatory content. While this research does not provide an in-depth analysis of each platform's algorithms and their recommender systems, it is plausible that such platform design features contributed to the virality of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation targeting civil society actors in Indonesia.



FAILURE TO ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS RISKS AND IMPACTS: Amnesty International wrote to X, TikTok, Meta and YouTube to request more information on the actions they have taken to address adverse human rights impacts linked to mis- and disinformation against civil society actors under President Prabowo's administration.

On content moderation, TikTok's response stated that the company has been working with "global safety partners," including many Indonesian CSOs, who could access its Community Partner Channel to report "potentially violative content to us directly for review". Despite this existing initiative, TikTok failed to remove multiple videos documented in this report. Regarding HRDD, TikTok responded that it had "partnered with Article One, a business and human rights consultancy, to conduct a human rights impact assessment (HRIA) of our trust and safety operations, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights." However, TikTok's response did not specify when the HRIA included Indonesia-specific HRDD.

Meanwhile, Meta told Amnesty International: "We continue to use both automated tools and expert investigations to catch efforts by previously removed networks to reconstitute on platform. We continue to monitor for and seek to disrupt [coordinated inauthentic behaviours] operations, via a combination of manual investigations and automated detection". However, Meta did not provide details whether and how they have addressed such operations emerging in Indonesia during the Prabowo administration. Regarding HRDD, Meta responded that it had published a "comprehensive human rights salient risk assessment" in 2022 and continued to update its annual human rights reporting, which includes references to Indonesia in the company's 2024 report. However, it acknowledged: "Although we haven't published integrated due diligence on Indonesia since the 2018 Human Rights Impact Assessment, our policies continue to be informed by those findings. In addition to the measures that we disclose publicly, we also have robust internal risk management and tracking systems in place to measure and assess the effectiveness of our mitigations." Similar to TikTok's response, Amnesty International notes that Meta's response did not clarify whether the company has undertaken Indonesia-specific HRDD since President Prabowo took office in October 2024.

X and YouTube did not provide any response.

The absence of Indonesia-specific HRDD in the context of heightened human rights risks under President Prabowo is particularly concerning. Such an HRDD could have allowed the four companies to identify and address content moderation failures, and to determine whether and how their algorithmic systems boosted the virality of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation against civil society actors, particularly in the high-risk context during the Prabowo administration.

A business contributes to an adverse human rights impact when its activities or omissions materially increase the risk of the specific impact that occurred or may occur, even though their actions or lack thereof did not alone result in that impact. The UN Guiding Principles require that businesses "avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities," and address such impacts where they occur.

These social media companies did not themselves produce the harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation documented in this research – that is, they did not directly “cause” the impacts. However, the case studies in this report show that the companies made various omissions that enabled harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation to thrive on the companies’ platforms, facilitating both state and state-aligned actors to disseminate similar content targeting civil society since the presidential inauguration of Prabowo. In light of these findings, Amnesty International concludes that the four companies contributed to the harms documented in this research.

CONCLUSION

This research finds that since President Prabowo took office in October 2024, the proliferation of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation – particularly the ‘foreign agent’ narrative – has contributed significantly to the consolidation of authoritarian practices in Indonesia. These narratives have been used to delegitimize civil society, human rights activism and independent journalism, shift public attention away from substantive grievances, and justify broader repressive measures.

The findings show that state actors were actively involved in spreading and amplifying such narratives through deceptive coordinated campaigns online, and that authorities failed to counter their stigmatizing impacts or create an enabling environment for civil society. At the same time, social media companies – including Meta, X, YouTube and TikTok – contributed to the resulting human rights harms by allowing harmful mis- and disinformation to proliferate and go viral and by failing to conduct adequate, context-specific HRDD in Indonesia.

In light of these findings, both the Indonesian government and social media companies must urgently heed the recommendations set out at the end of this report to end the use of disinformation as an authoritarian tool, prevent further harm, and safeguard civic space, the rule of law and human rights. These recommendations include those listed below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA:

- Refrain from participating in, amplifying, condoning, abetting or otherwise engaging in disinformation campaigns, including labelling civil society actors such as critics, activists, journalists and human rights defenders, and protest movements as ‘foreign agents’, to stigmatize dissent and undermine legitimate criticism.
- Promptly issue clear regulations prohibiting all state bodies, including military units, ministries and public officials, from participating in, amplifying, condoning or abetting disinformation targeting human rights defenders and journalists. These regulations may establish disciplinary proceedings and sanctions for public officials who engage in these campaigns.
- Conduct prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations into instances of disinformation that amount to an internationally recognizable offence, such as incitement to violence, including when state actors are involved.
- Establish an independent complaint mechanism for reporting harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including those originating from state actors.

- Amend the Electronic Information and Transaction Law, particularly the problematic provisions criminalizing “immorality,” defamation and “hate speech”, under Articles 27 and 28, and all the regulations related to online content takedown – including Government Regulation No. 71 of 2019, Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics No. 5 of 2020 concerning the Private Electronic System Operators, and Minister of Communication and Informatics Decree No. 522 of 2024 – to ensure they are in line with IHRL and standards.
- Refrain from proposing a new law regulating “foreign propaganda and disinformation”.
- Adopt and enforce laws requiring mandatory HRDD for all companies, including social media platforms, operating in Indonesia in line with the UN Guiding Principles.
- Refrain from using content takedown regulations to censor expressions critical of the government.
- Hold the companies involved in these abuses to account for providing the space for these online disinformation campaigns to take place and amplify over time.

TO X, TIKTOK, META AND YOUTUBE:

- Remove harmful and stigmatizing disinformation and networks involved in spreading them in the cases documented in this report.
- For harmful and stigmatizing content that does not amount to disinformation documented in this report, consider other restrictions to decrease its visibility and minimize its harm.
- Engage in direct, meaningful, inclusive consultation with targeted civil society actors to determine appropriate forms of remediation for the harms caused and provide such remediation without delay.
- Immediately conduct an Indonesia-specific HRDD to assess the human rights risks and impacts under the Prabowo administration and thereafter carry out such HRDD on a regular basis to address evolving risks, including harmful and stigmatizing disinformation involving state actors.
- Expand rapid response escalation channels to include individuals and groups at high risk of being targeted with harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including those whose cases are documented in this report.
- Create regular dialogues with civil society, including those whose cases are documented in this report, to track emerging threats.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

This research documents how the government of President Prabowo Subianto during its first 18 months in power, from October 2024 to April 2026, has used – or at times contributed to, condoned and enabled the use of – harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation targeting critics, activists, human rights defenders and journalists – which this research broadly refers to as “civil society actors”. This work builds on Amnesty International’s long-standing research, campaigning and advocacy against the ongoing shrinkage of civic space in Indonesia.¹

One of the primary goals of this report is to expose the use of mis- and disinformation to portray civil society actors as paid, manipulated and controlled by foreign entities – with the intent to manufacture a sense of national crisis, delegitimize critical voices and ultimately undermine accountability. Such narratives frequently rely on terms such as “agen asing” (foreign agents) in Bahasa Indonesia (the official, national language of Indonesia). During his first 18 months in government, President Prabowo often employed the derogatory phrase “antek asing”, which conveys a similar meaning but with sharper pejorative undertones, best translated as “foreign lackey.” Actors involved in spreading mis- and disinformation has also used variations such as “kekuatan asing” (foreign power), “anasir asing” (foreign element), “pihak asing” (foreign parties) or “ditunggangi asing” (literally, “ridden by foreigners”), all of which reinforce the same delegitimizing frame. At times, the racialized term “antek aseng” (Chinese agents) has been used to attack Chinese Indonesians. For consistency, this report uses the umbrella term ‘foreign agent’ throughout the document.

This report also examines the human rights impacts of deployment by state and non-state actors of such mis- and disinformation. It forms part of Amnesty International’s broader work on authoritarian practices, which addresses actions seeking to sabotage accountability, entrench power and facilitate human rights violations, including the silencing of critical voices. Political theorist Marlies Glasius defines these practices as “patterns of actions, embedded in an organized context, sabotaging accountability to people over whom a configuration of actors exerts a degree of control, or their representatives, by disabling their voice and disabling their access to information.”²

Central to authoritarian practices are narratives of “us versus them” often used by governments and their leaders, including in Indonesia, to demonize dissidents, invoke widespread fear and increase public support for crackdowns on critical voices.³ In various cases, such narratives further serve to deflect state responsibilities towards its population, including with respect to combating corruption, economic disparities and human rights violations.⁴

1 See, for example, Amnesty International, *Indonesia: Silencing voices, suppressing criticism: The decline in Indonesia’s civil liberties* (Index: ASA 21/6013/2022), 7 October 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/6013/2022/en>

2 Marlies Glasius, *Authoritarian Practices in a Global Age*, Oxford University Press, 2023, p. 11.

3 Amnesty International, *Rights Revealed: Human Rights and the Escalation of Authoritarian Practices Around the World-Part 2* (Index: POL 32/0426/2025), 28 October 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol32/0426/2025/en/>, p. 3.

4 Amnesty International, *Rights Revealed: Human Rights and the Escalation of Authoritarian Practices Around the World-Part 1* (Index: POL 32/0336/2025), 30 September 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol32/0336/2025/en/>, p. 4.

THIS RESEARCH DOCUMENTS HOW THE GOVERNMENT OF
PRESIDENT PRABOWO SUBIANTO

DURING ITS FIRST 18 MONTHS IN POWER, FROM OCTOBER 2024 TO APRIL 2026, HAS USED OR AT TIMES CONTRIBUTED TO, CONDONED AND ENABLED THE USE OF HARMFUL AND STIGMATIZING MIS- AND DISINFORMATION TARGETING CRITICS, ACTIVISTS, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND JOURNALISTS



2.2 KEY CONCEPTS AND APPLICABLE FRAMEWORKS

2.2.1 DISTINCTION BETWEEN MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

Misinformation refers to false or inaccurate information that is shared without malicious intent.⁵

Disinformation is false or inaccurate information that is shared with the deliberate intent to deceive or mislead.⁶

In this report, “falsity” refers to information that is wholly fabricated, as well as cases where accurate facts, images or statements are selectively presented, de-contextualized, manipulated and combined with false claims in ways that create a false sense of reality and mislead audiences.⁷

Establishing intent presents a more complex methodological challenge. In disinformation research, intent is rarely directly observable because actors involved in disinformation dissemination normally seek to minimize detectability and obscure their intent.⁸ However, disinformation is often circulated through campaigns involving the coordination of multiple malicious actors operating at speed and at scale. This report thus infers intent primarily through indicators of such coordination (see Section 2.1.3).

2.2.2 HUMAN RIGHTS HARM AS A PRIMARY ANALYTICAL LENS

The dissemination of false and misleading information becomes a human rights concern when it results in, contributes to, or materially increases the risk of harm to the enjoyment of human rights. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on false and misleading narratives that cause human rights harms, particularly where they target civil society actors.

Misinformation can be harmful, especially if it entrenches stereotypes and prejudice against marginalized groups and/or civil society actors, including human rights defenders. The amplification of misinformation on social media platforms is often directly associated with harmful impact. Although misinformation may be protected by the right to freedom of expression, there are clear instances where it is not – for example, when it amounts to advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.

5 Amnesty International, *Silenced and misinformed: Freedom of expression in danger during Covid-19* (Index: POL 30/4751/2021), October 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/POL3047512021ENGLISH.pdf>, p. 4.

6 Amnesty International, *Silenced and misinformed* (previously cited).

7 UK Parliament POST, *Disinformation: sources, spread and impact*, 25 April 2024, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-0719/POST-PN-0719.pdf>, p. 3. See also Kate Starbird, “Unraveling the Big Lie: Participatory Disinformation and the 2020 Election”, in Steven Livingston and Michael Miller (editors), *Connective Action and the Rise of the Far-Right: Platforms, Politics, and the Crisis of Democracy*, 2025, p. 34; First Draft, “First Draft’s Essential Guide to Understanding Information Disorder”, October 2019, https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Information_Disorder_Digital_AW.pdf

8 Daniel Thiele and others, “Attributing coordinated social media manipulation: A theoretical model and typology”, 29 July 2025, *New Media & Society*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/14614448251350100>

While disinformation may involve the same or similar content as misinformation, its distinguishing feature lies in the intentional dissemination of false content – often through coordinated activity and/or with the involvement of state actors – which significantly expands its scale and accelerates its reach to wider audiences. It is this malicious intent that gives rise to clearer duties and responsibilities for states and business actors under international law to address disinformation.

For this reason, the content analysed in this report includes both misinformation and disinformation, as long as such content had harmful impacts. Centring these harms without overly focusing on proving intent behind every dissemination is essential to avoid reinforcing an information environment in which actors can strategically benefit from structures that obscure intent, complicate attribution and shield them from accountability.

This report refers to “disinformation” when the presence of behavioural and/or content-based indicators provides reasonable grounds to infer a deceptive intent. In other instances, the report uses the term “misinformation” to describe false and misleading information that results in human rights harms, including cases where deceptive intent cannot be established through specific indicators but also cannot be ruled out and remains ambiguous. Amnesty International’s assessment of state obligations and business responsibilities offers a nuanced framework for addressing disinformation and misinformation differently, in line with international human rights law and standards.

2.2.3 DETECTING INDICATORS OF COORDINATION

In this research, coordination refers to efforts by two or more actors to leverage social media platforms in a synchronized manner to amplify content or narratives in pursuit of a shared objective.⁹ Coordination serves as an evidentiary signal indicating that a piece of information is not circulated and shared in an organic or coincidental manner but rather is intentionally amplified to shape the information environment and influence public opinion.¹⁰

Coordination is not inherently harmful and may also occur in legitimate collective action and public campaigning,¹¹ including for the promotion of human rights, to increase the visibility of certain information. However, coordination becomes problematic when it is intentionally used to deceive its audience by amplifying false or misleading information that targets individuals or groups, and harms their human rights. In these instances, coordination may indicate a malicious intent, pointing to disinformation.

Amnesty International refers to this type of problematic coordination as “deceptive coordination”.¹² Deceptive coordination aims not only at increasing the scale and reach of false and misleading information but also deceiving audiences about the credibility of such information.¹³ The case studies highlighted in this report, particularly in Section 5.3, focus specifically on campaigns of deceptive coordination that often constituted disinformation and contributed to intimidation, harassment and public hostility against civil society actors.

9 Lorenzo Mannocci and others, *Detection and Characterization of Coordinated Online Behavior: A Survey*, August 2024, <https://arxiv.org/html/2408.01257v1>.

10 See for example, Timothy Graham, Sam Hames and Elizabeth Alpert, “The coordination network toolkit: a framework for detecting and analysing coordinated behavior on social media”, *Journal of Computational Social Science*, 11 May 2024, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42001-024-00260-z>, p. 4.

11 Lorenzo Mannocci and others, *Detection and Characterization of Coordinated Online Behavior* (previously cited).

12 Amnesty International notes that many organizations, including social media companies, widely used the term “coordinated inauthentic behaviour” to define malicious coordinated activities online. Such definitions vary depending on each organization. This research does not use this term as it is often tied to issues related to the authenticity of users running social media accounts, which is beyond the focus of this report. This research does not differentiate between coordination executed by human actors and coordination facilitated through automated systems because it focuses on the deceptive intent behind coordinated activities. Such intent does not depend on the use of “inauthentic” behaviours, such as bots or automated accounts. See more about the critique of focusing on “inauthenticity” at Daniel Thiele and others, “Attributing coordinated social media manipulation” (previously cited), p. 3.

13 Daniel Thiele and others, “Attributing coordinated social media manipulation” (previously cited).

To identify deceptive coordination, this research relies on two categories of indicators:

- 1 behavioural indicators, such as multiple accounts posting within tightly clustered timeframes or sharing similar activity patterns;** and
- 2 content-based indicators, such as the repeated dissemination of identical or near-identical narratives, captions, images or videos across multiple accounts.**¹⁴

When false and misleading information is circulated with these indicators present, Amnesty International determined that it was reasonable to infer that multiple social media accounts might not be coincidentally disseminating such falsehoods, which they genuinely mistake as true, but are potentially working together to do so with the malicious intent to deceive audiences. Where such deceptive coordination was identified, Amnesty International classified the content as disinformation.

For the purposes of this report, Amnesty International does not comprehensively expose the architecture of networks behind disinformation in Indonesia. In general, Amnesty International does not rely on the behavioural and content-based set of indicators to establish centralized control or formal command structures behind the dissemination of false and misleading information. The indicators also do not allow for definitive attribution of specific actors or networks behind the coordinated activities. In a limited number of cases, however, Amnesty International was able to find identifiable information about the accounts posting such information, including instances where public officials or state institutions originated or spread disinformation through what appeared to be their official accounts. In those cases, attribution is part of the findings.

Disinformation may not always be spread through campaigns where multiple actors operate in a coordinated way. Even though the identification of malicious intent behind uncoordinated disinformation may be challenging, this report identifies examples of disinformation where the intent can be reasonably inferred on the basis of indicators of deceptive coordination. The widespread use of disinformation by state actors against human rights defenders and journalists has led to further human rights violations, for example when disinformation enabled the criminalization of critical voices.

2.2.4 STATE VERSUS STATE-ALIGNED ACTORS

This report pays close attention to different actors involved in the spread of mis- and disinformation. For the purposes of this research, the term “state actors” refers to individuals or groups acting at the behest of the state or one of its multiple agencies. Meanwhile, the term “state-aligned actors” refers to individuals, groups or entities – whether genuinely private or operating with undisclosed links to state institutions – whose actions, narratives or patterns of behaviour consistently support or advance the interests of Indonesian authorities, often in ways that allow the state to maintain plausible deniability.

In online environments, attribution of actors’ identities, affiliations or command relationships is often complicated by anonymity enabled by social media platforms and other technical tools to evade

14 These indicators were also used by EU Disinfo Lab, a non-profit organization specialized in investigating disinformation, together with many other indicators. Amnesty International does not adopt all the indicators used by EU Disinfo Lab, specifically those aiming to uncover the identities or authenticities of accounts behind what EU Disinfo Lab defines as “coordinated inauthentic behaviors” because such analysis falls outside the scope of this research. See EU Disinfo Lab, *Coordinated inauthentic behavior: Detection tree*, August 2024, <https://www.disinfo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/20240805-CIB-detection-tree.pdf>

detection, such as the use of encryption tools.¹⁵ While in some cases, the identities of such actors can be reasonably established, in many other instances, the individuals or entities disseminating such narratives operate through anonymous accounts, making it difficult or impossible to determine their identities. In the Indonesian context, such attribution is further complicated by the widely documented existence of cybertroopers, locally known as “buzzers”, who are financed by state actors and other interest groups to engage in online campaigns to manipulate public opinion through anonymous accounts.¹⁶

This distinction between state actors and state-aligned actors has important implications for the assessment of state responsibility under international human rights law (IHRL). States bear direct responsibility for the acts of their officials and agents acting on their behalf. In this respect, state actors should refrain from circulating, encouraging or abetting disinformation and should exercise due diligence to verify information and facts, and convey only accurate ones. Where disinformation is circulated by private actors or those whose identities or affiliations cannot be conclusively established, states nonetheless should investigate instances of disinformation that amount to an internationally recognizable offence (for example, incitement to violence), establish independent mechanisms to monitor instances of disinformation, and engage in public communications to counter disinformation.

2.2.5 DISTINGUISHING RECEIVING FOREIGN FUNDING FROM ACTING AS A FOREIGN AGENT

Civil society organizations (CSOs), media outlets and other associations have the right to seek, secure and utilize resources, including through cross-border partnerships and international funding arrangements, as protected under IHRL, which will be explored further in Chapter 4. Such engagement, in and of itself, is not indicative of foreign interference, control or manipulation. Accordingly, forms of expression that equate the mere receipt of international support with acting as a foreign agent or rely on that to construct unsubstantiated conspiracy claims, are misleading.

Although these forms of expression may be protected by international law on the right to freedom of expression – for example, when they are conveyed out of genuine misunderstanding – they can also pose harm if used to target specific individuals or groups to oppose their right to seek, secure and utilize resources. They could also constitute disinformation, if they are disseminated with malicious intent, including through deceptive coordinated campaigns.

15 See Jake Sepich, “The evolution of cyber attribution”, 19 April 2023, American University Washington D.C. School of International Service, <https://www.american.edu/sis/centres/security-technology/the-evolution-of-cyber-attribution.cfm>. Amnesty International notes that encryption and anonymity can also be critical for civil society actors to navigate repressive digital environments, so any restrictions by states must meet the requirements of legality, necessity, proportionality and legitimacy and receive court approvals in line with IHRL. UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression), *The use of encryption and anonymity in digital communications*, 22 May 2015, UN Doc. A/HRC/29/32, paras 13 and 57-58.

16 See Wijayanto and Ward Berenschot, “Cybertroops and public opinion manipulation through social media in Indonesia”, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2024, https://s3-csis-web.s3.ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/doc/Research_Report_A4_Cybertroops_and_Public_Opinion_Manipulation_through....pdf?download=1; Yatun Sastramidjaja and Wijayanto, “Cyber troops, online manipulation of public opinions and co-optation of Indonesia’s cybersphere”, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2020, https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TRS7_22.pdf

2.3 EVIDENCE

2.3.1 ANALYSIS OF OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

To understand the role of authorities in disseminating or popularizing harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, Amnesty International collected and analysed public statements by President Prabowo and other officials, including interviews, speeches and other public commentary. This analysis helped map out the interplay between official rhetoric and online narratives propagated by state and state-aligned actors.

2.3.2 DIGITAL EVIDENCE

This research extensively examined digital evidence to develop a better understanding of how official rhetoric migrated online and became fused with false and misleading claims targeting civil society actors and concretely establish the prevalence of such a practice. Between May 2025 and April 2026, Amnesty International analysed 585 social media posts across X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. These posts were selected as examples of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation faced by civil society actors in Indonesia. Not all examples are reproduced in this research, but all have been documented as part of Amnesty International's analysis. All the posts were digitally archived and stored internally with Amnesty International.

Amnesty International found these posts through a combination of keyword and hashtag searches and referrals from interviewees who were directly targeted by harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation. Many of the posts were also submitted to Amnesty International through experts who engaged directly with online influence operators through their research.

To identify coordinated activity, Amnesty International researchers considered the behavioural and content-based indicators described above. This included checking whether multiple social media accounts were spreading harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation through posting identical or near identical content within tightly clustered timeframes.

To identify the posting of identical or near-identical content, researchers conducted reverse-image searches, tracing the repeated usage of identical or near-identical images and videos across platforms. In addition, this research relied on TikTok's Original Sound and Instagram's Original Audio features, which generate an index page for every unique audio track. Whenever an account uploads a video with its own unique sound, both platforms create an index page that lists every other account using that exact same audio. By locating a video and clicking through to its audio index, researchers could identify all other accounts that uploaded videos using the same sound.



MAY 2025 – APRIL 2026

DIGITAL EVIDENCE

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ANALYSED

585 SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

ACROSS X (FORMERLY TWITTER), TIKTOK, FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE

To identify posting behaviours that appeared coordinated in their timing, researchers closely examined the time of publication for each post. X makes precise timestamps publicly available directly in every tweet. Meanwhile, researchers examined metadata to identify timestamps for posts on other platforms.

In the course of this analysis, Amnesty International encountered a wider range of posts seeking to reinforce the 'foreign agent' allegations more generally. Some appeared to be part of coordinated campaigns. These materials informed researchers' understanding of the broader digital environment in Indonesia, which remains rife with inauthentic messaging. However, posts that did not make direct accusations against specific individuals or groups were not included in the core dataset.

In parallel, Amnesty International assessed how long each post remained online, as well as its visibility and engagement, including views, likes, shares and reposts, where publicly available. These indicators were used to assess social media companies' responses to harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including content removal and amplification-limiting measures, within the context of engagement-driven surveillance-based business models. The status, availability and reach of posts were assessed as of 20 April 2026, marking 18 months since the start of President Prabowo's administration, which aligns with the temporal scope of this research.

While this methodology may not capture the full extent of deceptive coordination, it enabled researchers to identify key case studies of coordinated dissemination of false and misleading information targeting civil society actors in Indonesia.

2.3.2 INTERVIEWS

Amnesty International conducted in-person and online interviews between July 2025 and April 2026 with 25 civil society members, journalists and researchers who were targeted by harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation. Their testimonies provided essential insights and serve as case studies in this research, illustrating the wide-reaching harm that disinformation inflicts on individuals and organizations. To complement these perspectives, Amnesty International also carried out eight additional interviews with relevant experts, including academics, social media analysts and fact-checkers, whose expertise helped contextualize the dynamics and mechanisms of mis- and disinformation. Amnesty International used these interview testimonies to corroborate digital evidence in all case studies presented in this report.

Interviewees worked on a diverse set of issues, including civil and political rights, women's and LGBTI rights, human rights in conflict-affected areas and freedom of religion or belief. Many were journalists working at media outlets of various sizes. Amnesty International made a deliberate decision to choose a variety of interviewees to ensure that perspectives collected reflect the breadth of Indonesia's civil society actors and their experiences.

Given varying security risks, some interviewees requested anonymity while others consented to being identified publicly. For those who opted for anonymity, Amnesty International has used pseudonyms and removed all potentially identifying details to protect their safety.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A VIOLENT HISTORY OF LABELLING

Indonesia has a long record of deploying stigmatizing labels to justify repression. In the lead-up to former President Suharto's New Order era when the military was in power (1966–1998), an attempted coup took place in Jakarta on 1 October 1965, and the Indonesian military accused the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) of masterminding it.¹⁷ The Indonesian army responded with an incendiary propaganda campaign depicting PKI members and sympathizers as brutal murderers¹⁸ and agents of Chinese communists betraying the nation.¹⁹ Such propaganda served as a prelude to the “anti-communist purge”, when the military and anti-communist mass organizations committed human rights violations, including killings, arrests, torture and enforced disappearances against alleged PKI members, ethnic Chinese, trade unionists, activists and intellectuals suspected of harbouring sympathies towards communism.²⁰

In post-Suharto Indonesia, anti-communist labels continued to be weaponized against critics, including CSOs. For example, on 17 September 2017, almost 1,000 people gathered and threw stones at the offices of the Indonesian and Jakarta legal aid institutes (YLBHI and LBH Jakarta)²¹ following false rumours that the two organizations were planning to host a seminar about the PKI, while in fact they were holding a creative performance about the right to protest.²²

‘Communist leaning’, however, was not the only stigmatizing narrative. During the New Order, former President Suharto also routinely characterized dissent as manipulation by “foreign powers.”²³ Despite the end of Suharto's rule, this trope remained pervasive, including to label many CSOs as ‘foreign agents’, with a new uptick in the 2010s. For example, in March 2014, a group called the Community Supporting State-Owned Water (Masyarakat Pendukung Air Milik Negara) plastered banners across Jakarta denouncing LBH Jakarta as a “foreign lackey” because of its legal advocacy against water privatization in the capital city.²⁴ Greenpeace faced similar accusations, suggesting the organization was secretly receiving illicit foreign funding.²⁵

Legal and regulatory changes further entrenched suspicion of foreign influence. The 2013 Mass Organizations Law introduced strict controls over foreign CSOs, using vague language about safeguarding national stability and integrity.²⁶ On 10 July 2017, President Joko Widodo (widely known as Jokowi) signed the Government Regulation in Lieu of Law amending the 2013 Mass Organizations Law (Perppu No. 2/2017). Under the 2013 framework, banning an organization or imposing administrative

17 Amnesty International, *indonesia1965.org*, <https://www.indonesia1965.org/> (accessed 17 September 2025).

18 John Roosa, *Buried Histories: The Anti-communist Massacres of 1965–66 in Indonesia*, 2020, p. 71.

19 Adam Hughes Henry, “Polluting the Waters: A Brief History of Anti-Communist Propaganda during the Indonesian Massacres,” *Genocide Studies International*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2014, pp. 153-175.

20 Human Rights Watch, “Indonesia's Dangerous ‘Anti-Communist’ Paranoia,” 18 September 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/09/18/indonesias-dangerous-anti-communist-paranoia>

21 Amnesty International, *Indonesia: Offices of Human Rights Defenders Attacked* (Index: ASA 21/7113/2017), 19 September 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ASA2171132017ENGLISH.pdf>

22 The Jakarta Post, “‘Fake PKI news’ behind anti-communist chaos: LBH-YLBHI”, 18 September 2017, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/09/18/fake-pki-news-behind-anti-communist-chaos-lbh-ylbhi.html>

23 Hellena Souisa, “Benci Tapi Rindu ‘Asing’: Tradisi Lama Warisan Orde Baru?,” ABC News Bahasa Indonesia, 11 April 2025, <https://www.abc.net.au/indonesian/2025-04-11/menuduh-antek-asing-tapi-berharap-investasi-asing/105161692> (in Indonesian).

24 HukumOnline, “Spanduk Menuduh LBH Jakarta Antek Asing”, 11 March 2014, <https://www.hukumonline.com/berita/a/spanduk-menuduh-lbh-jakarta-antek-asing-lt532001dfa6167/> (in Indonesian).

25 Johar Arif, *Greenpeace Bantah Tuduhan sebagai Antek Asing*, 18 August 2011, Republika, <https://news.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/lingkungan/11/08/18/lq4n4t-greenpeace-bantah-tuduhan-sebagai-antek-asing> (in Indonesian).

26 Human Rights Watch, “Indonesia: Amend Law on Mass Organizations,” 17 July 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/07/17/indonesia-amend-law-mass-organizations>

penalties required a court decision.²⁷ Perppu No. 2/2017 eliminated these safeguards, granted the government sweeping powers to dissolve CSOs without any judicial oversight, and imposed criminal penalties on those deemed to contravene Indonesia's "pancasila" state ideology (the five foundational principles of the Indonesian state: belief in one God; just and civilized humanity; the unity of Indonesia; democracy guided by deliberation; and social justice for all Indonesians).²⁸

In addition, Article 195 of the Criminal Code – newly amended in 2023 and enforced in 2026 – includes a broadly worded offence criminalizing individuals accused of "entering into relations with persons or organizations domiciled abroad" to "overthrow or take over the government."²⁹ The provision carries penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment.³⁰

3.2 ENTRENCHMENT OF AUTHORITARIAN PRACTICES

President Prabowo's rise to power does not represent a sharp break from Indonesia's recent trajectory, but rather the continuation and deepening of authoritarian practices that first gathered pace under President Jokowi. Scholars widely described Jokowi's decade in office as an era of "authoritarian revival".³¹ The Jokowi administration deliberately rolled back institutional safeguards for the rule of law and deployed repressive tactics borrowed from Suharto's New Order.³² President Prabowo, who served as the Minister of Defence in Jokowi's 2019 government and became political allies with Jokowi during the 2024 presidential election, has built directly on this foundation with sweeping legal and policy changes that entrenched authoritarian practices.

Most prominent are the revisions to Law No. 34/2004 on the Indonesian National Armed Forces (referred to as "Military Law revisions"), adopted by parliament on 20 March 2025, despite nationwide opposition.³³ The amendments empower active-duty military personnel to hold positions in civilian institutions, including the Office of the Attorney-General.³⁴

Further, the Indonesian police, on 10 March 2025, introduced the Police Regulation Number 3 of 2025 concerning the Supervision of Foreigners.³⁵ Article 5, paragraph 1, requires foreign journalists to obtain a police certificate to carry out journalism in Indonesia, despite existing legal frameworks for foreign journalists to obtain a licence from the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs.³⁶

In 2025, several contentious draft laws or amendments that could result in human rights violations, including revisions to the Police Law³⁷ and the Broadcasting Law,³⁸ have been included in the priority legislative programme (Prolegnas Prioritas 2025) of Indonesia's House of Representatives (Dewan

27 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Amendments of the Mass Organizations Law expand threats to the freedom of association" (Index: ASA 21/6722/2017), 12 July 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/6722/2017/en>, p. 5–6.

28 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Amendments of the Mass Organizations Law" (previously cited).

29 Indonesia, Criminal Code, Article 195. <https://the-world-is-watching.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-Indonesia-Penal-Code.pdf>

30 Indonesia, Criminal Code, Article 195 (previously cited).

31 Sana Jaffrey and Eve Warburton, "Introduction: Jokowi's Decade in Power," in *The Jokowi Presidency: Indonesia's Decade of Authoritarian Revival*, 2025, p. 10.

32 Edward Aspinall and Fauziah Mayangsari, "Civic Space, Protest and Repression: The End of the Reformasi Coalition," in *The Jokowi Presidency: Indonesia's Decade of Authoritarian Revival*, 2025, p. 208.

33 The Guardian, "Indonesia passes controversial law allowing greater military role in government," 20 March 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/mar/20/indonesia-passes-controversial-law-allowing-greater-military-role-in-government>

34 Amnesty International, "RUU TNI Masih Memberi Ruang Kembalinya Dwi Fungsi TNI dan Militerisme," 13 March 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/ruu-tni-masih-memberi-ruang-kembalinya-dwi-fungsi-tni-dan-militerisme/03/2025/> (in Indonesian).

35 Amnesty International, "KKJ Tolak Perpol No. 3 Tahun 2025: Kebijakan Bermasalah yang Mengancam Kebebasan Pers dan Demokrasi," 7 April 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/kkj-tolak-perpol-no-3-tahun-2025-kebijakan-bermasalah-yang-mengancam-kebebasan-pers-dan-demokrasi/04/2025/> (in Indonesian).

36 Amnesty International, "KKJ Tolak Perpol No. 3 Tahun 2025" (previously cited).

37 Office of the Secretary General of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (Setjen DPR RI), Revisi UU Polri Masuk Prolegnas Prioritas 2025, Dibahas oleh Komisi III, 20 September 2025, <https://jdih.dpr.go.id/berita/detail/id/59519/t/Revisi%2BUU%2BPolri%2BMasuk%2BProlegnas%2BPrioritas%2B2025%2C%2BDibahas%2BBoleh%2BKomisi%2BIII> (in Indonesian, accessed on 10 February 2026).

38 Setjen DPR RI, Revisi UU Penyiaran Akomodir Perubahan Zaman, Platform Digital Masuk Pembahasan, 25 September 2025, <https://jdih.dpr.go.id/berita/detail/id/59666/t/javascript%3B> (in Indonesian, accessed on 10 February 2026).

JANUARY 2026

THE NEW CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE

LACKS ESSENTIAL PROVISIONS FOR GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL AND CONTAINS INADEQUATE JUDICIAL OVERSIGHT OVER LAW ENFORCEMENT, INCLUDING IN RELATION TO ARREST AND DETENTION



Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR). The draft National Police Law significantly expands the police's power, granting it the authority to prevent, deter and address "threats, including the presence and activities of foreigners in the national interest" and "take action, block or cut off, and slow down access to cyberspace for domestic security purposes".³⁹ Meanwhile, Article 50B, paragraph 2, of the draft Broadcast Law prohibits the "exclusive broadcast of investigative journalism," which appears to bar broadcasters from airing any original investigative reports broadcast as a unique, proprietary piece of journalism.⁴⁰ It also bans LGBTI content as well as content that could be considered fake news, slander and insults and defamation, which will inevitably have a negative impact on press freedom.⁴¹

A new Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code came into force in January 2026. Civil society organizations raised concerns that many provisions in the revised Criminal Code could strengthen state repression, as they introduce problematic provisions criminalizing all sexual activities outside of marriage; organizing protests without notification to police authorities; and insulting the president and state institutions.⁴² The new Criminal Procedure Code lacks essential provisions for guaranteeing the right to fair trial and contains inadequate judicial oversight over law enforcement, including in relation to arrest and detention.⁴³

3.3 CLAMPDOWN ON PHYSICAL AND ONLINE CIVIC SPACE

The entrenchment of authoritarian practices under President Prabowo triggered several waves of nationwide protests in 2025. These protests reflected growing public concern over key policy and legislative changes threatening human rights during President Prabowo's administration.

The first episode of mass protests took place between 17 and 24 February 2025. The Indonesia National Association of University Student Executive Bodies, an umbrella group of student activists, staged demonstrations under the name of Indonesia Gelap ("Dark Indonesia"). Protesters voiced concerns about the so-called "Efisiensi Anggaran" ("budget efficiency") measures introduced through Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 2025 in late January. The instruction ordered the reduction of state agencies' budgets, with the goal to redirect the funds to finance the government's free nutritious meals programme (Makan Bergizi Gratis, MBG) and sovereign wealth fund, Danantara, which are intended as investments in megaprojects.⁴⁴ Students and other civil society actors warned that the budget cuts would directly undermine essential public services including education, health and social protection, as well as reduce

39 BBC News Indonesia, "Kontroversi RUU Polri dan RUU KUHAP – Apa saja yang bermasalah dan poin apa yang seharusnya dimuat?" 27 March 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/c89yz9g8p0xo> (in Indonesian).

40 Usmida, RUU Penyiaran dan Larangan Penayangan Eksklusif, Dosen Umsida: Dimana Kebebasan Pers?, 5 June 2024, <https://umsida.ac.id/ruu-penyiaran-dan-larangan-penayangan-eksklusif/> (in Indonesian).

41 Amnesty International, "Reformasi Putar Balik," 21 May 2024, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/reformasi-putar-balik/05/2024/> (in Indonesian).

42 Asia News Network, "Indonesia's new criminal code takes effect, stirring concerns over civil rights and free speech", 11 March 2026, <https://asianews.network/indonesias-new-criminal-code-takes-effect-stirring-concerns-over-civil-rights-and-free-speech/>

43 Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (ICJR), "Nine Crucial Issues in the 2025 Draft Criminal Procedure Code (RUU KUHAP)," 16 April 2025, <https://icjr.or.id/nine-crucial-issues-in-the-2025-draft-criminal-procedure-code-ruu-kuhap/>

44 Jacqui Baker, "Talking Indonesia: Prabonomics," 28 February 2025, Indonesia at Melbourne, <https://indonesiaatmelbourne.unimelb.edu.au/talking-indonesia-prabonomics/>

the resources of Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) and the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan).⁴⁵

The second wave of protests erupted following the passage of revisions to the Military Law by parliament on 20 March 2025. During these protests, Indonesian police used excessive force against protesters in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Semarang and Manado.⁴⁶ Police also assaulted journalists covering these protests.⁴⁷ Violence escalated further on International Labour Day on 1 May 2025, when protesters were criminalized and subjected to kidnapping, assault, stalking and intimidation.⁴⁸

State authorities also responded punitively to symbolic forms of protest. In early August 2025, protesters adopted the straw hat pirates' Jolly Roger flag from Japanese anime One Piece as a symbol of defiance against the government. As a result, high-ranking officials made public statements threatening that such an act could constitute a criminal offence, including treason.⁴⁹ Police and military authorities carried out raids in several places to confiscate the flags.⁵⁰

Another major escalation occurred in late August 2025, following revelations that members of parliament were receiving monthly housing allowances of approximately IDR 50 million (USD 3,075) nearly 10 times Jakarta's minimum wage.⁵¹ Protests resumed nationwide, and tensions peaked after a ride-hail driver, Affan Kurniawan, was killed by a police vehicle during clashes.⁵²

During this period, civil society members made various demands on government. A group of influencers summarized the demands into a set of "17+8" demands, referring to 17 urgent demands and eight additional calls for further reforms within one year, addressed to the Prabowo administration and the DPR.⁵³ The 17 demands included publishing the use of public budgets by the DPR for transparency, ending police violence in handling demonstrations and investigating human rights violations against protesters during this period. The additional eight demands addressed more systemic issues, including enforcing accountability for corruption, keeping the military out of civilian affairs and strengthening the capacity of Komnas HAM and other independent oversight institutions.

The state's response intensified, leading to grave human rights violations. By late 2025, at least 12 individuals had been killed during protests.⁵⁴ The Fact-Finding Commission (KPF), an investigative team set up by three CSOs, reported that 6,719 individuals were arrested due to their involvement in

45 FORUM-ASIA, "Indonesia: Stop harassment against student protestors, ensure people's right to scrutinize government policies," 12 March 2025, <https://forum-asia.org/indonesiagelap/>. See also details about the reduced funding for Komnas HAM and Komnas Perempuan at Sonya Hellen Sinombor, "Pemangkasan Anggaran Melemahkan Perlindungan Perempuan dan Kelompok Rentan", 23 February 2025, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/en-pemangkasan-anggaran-berpotensi-lemahkan-upaya-perlindungan-perempuan-dan-kelompok-rentan> (in Indonesian).

46 Amnesty International, "Demo Tolak Pengesahan Revisi UU TNI Diwarnai Teror, Kekerasan, dan Intimidasi terhadap Aktivist, Mahasiswa, dan Jurnalis," 21 March 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/demo-tolak-pengesahan-revisi-uu-tni-diwarnai-teror-kekerasan-dan-intimidasi-terhadap-aktivis-mahasiswa-dan-jurnalis/03/2025/> (in Indonesian).

47 Reporters Without Borders (RSF), "Indonesia: RSF condemns police violence against journalists covering protests," 27 March 2025, <https://rsf.org/en/indonesia-rsf-condemns-police-violence-against-journalists-covering-protests> (in Indonesian).

48 Amnesty International, "Surat Terbuka: Penculikan dan Kekerasan terhadap Aktivist May Day," 12 August 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/surat-terbuka/surat-terbuka-penculikan-dan-kekerasan-terhadap-aktivis-may-day/08/2025/> (in Indonesian).

49 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Stop Crackdown on One Piece Anime Flag Ahead of Independence Day," 8 August 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/indonesia-stop-crackdown-on-one-piece-anime-flag-ahead-of-independence-day/08/2025/> (in Indonesian).

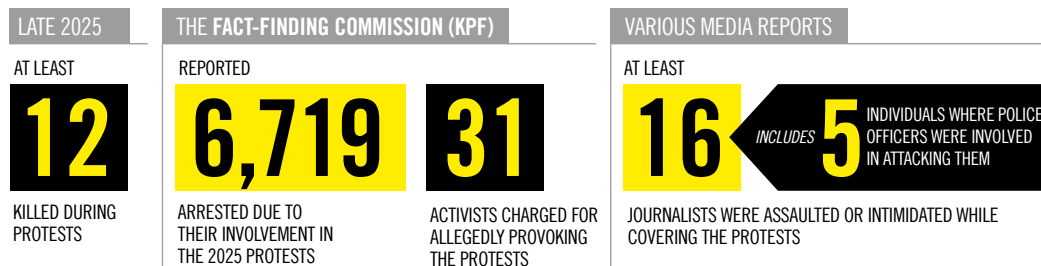
50 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Stop Crackdown on One Piece Anime Flag Ahead of Independence Day," (previously cited).

51 Al Jazeera, "Indonesia in chaos: Five Indonesians give views on why – and how – to fix," 5 September 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/9/5/indonesia-in-chaos-five-indonesians-give-views-on-why-and-how-to-fix>

52 Al Jazeera, "Protests resume in Jakarta after ride-share driver killed by police," 29 August 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/29/protests-resume-in-jakarta-after-ride-share-driver-killed-by-police>

53 See full list of the 17+8 demands at BBC News Indonesia, "Apa itu tuntutan 17+8? – Mahasiswa akan terus demo sampai tuntutan dipenuhi, DPR berikan tanggapan," 4 September 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cqxzjq7rwxyo> (in Indonesian).

54 On file with Amnesty International.



the August 2025 protests, whereas 13 activists were charged for allegedly provoking the protests.⁵⁵ According to various media reports, at least 16 journalists were assaulted or intimidated while covering the protests, including five individuals where police officers were involved in attacking them.⁵⁶ During the same period, the military also threatened to file a criminal charge against a social media influencer and activist speaking out about the protest.⁵⁷

Further escalation occurred in early 2026, marked by a series of acid attacks against activists and critics. On 12 March 2026, Andrie Yunus, a deputy coordinator of KontraS, was attacked with acid in Jakarta and suffered serious chemical burns across his body, including his right eye.⁵⁸ The military police subsequently arrested four military officers working for the Indonesian Strategic Intelligence Agency (BAIS), who were allegedly involved in the attack.⁵⁹ Separately, the National Police released the initials of two suspects identified through CCTV footage; however, these did not correspond with the list provided by the military police, raising concerns that not all individuals involved in the attack had been identified.⁶⁰ Similar attacks took place against environmental activist Muhammad Rosidi in mid-February 2026 and Tri Wibowo, a member of the Confederation of Indonesian Trade Unions, in late March 2026.⁶¹

Police investigations indicated that Andrie was not the only intended target of the acid attack. Other civil society actors were identified as potential targets, including Amnesty International Indonesia's Director Usman Hamid; Chairperson of the YLBHI Muhamad Isnur; and leaders of CELIOS.⁶²

Alongside physical repression, the authorities intensified efforts to restrict online civic space. Officials repeatedly claimed that protests were instigated by "false information" circulating on social media.⁶³ During the August demonstrations, Deputy Communications and Digital Affairs Minister Angga Raka Prabowo stated in a media interview that false information on TikTok and Instagram provoked public

55 Nino Citra Anugrahanto, Unjuk Rasa Agustus 2025 dan Indikasi Operasi Pembungkaman Aktivistis, 19 February 2026, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/unjuk-rasa-agustus-2025-dan-indikasi-operasi-pembungkaman-aktivistis> (in Indonesian).

56 RSF, Indonesia: "RSF urges President Prabowo to protect journalists amid nationwide protests", 1 September 2025, <https://rsf.org/en/indonesia-rsf-urges-president-prabowo-protect-journalists-amid-nationwide-protests>

57 Amnesty International, "Koalisi: Hentikan Upaya Kriminalisasi Ferry Irwandi dan Usut Teror terhadap Direktur Imparsial," 9 September 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/koalisi-hentikan-upaya-kriminalisasi-ferry-irwandi-dan-usut-teror-terhadap-direktur-imparsial/09/2025/> (in Indonesian).

58 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Acid attack on human rights defender must be investigated," 16 March 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org.au/indonesia-acid-attack-on-human-rights-defender-must-be-investigated/>

59 Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: Acid Attack Against Rights Activist", 24 March 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/03/24/indonesia-acid-attack-against-rights-activist>

60 Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: Acid Attack Against Rights Activist" (previously cited).

61 Faisal Irfani, "Mengapa air keras dipakai untuk menyerang Andrie Yunus dan dua aktivis lain?", 7 April 2026, BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/c30r6jqn1jeo>

62 Tempo, "Once they kidnapped, now they terrorize", 30 March 2026, <https://magz.tempo.co/read/opinion/44102/acid-attack-on-kontras-activist>

63 Muhammad Reza Zaini, From Dialogue to Discord: Buzzers and Conflict in Indonesia's Online Public Sphere, 18 September 2025, <https://peacehumanity.org/2025/07/18/from-dialogue-to-discord-buzzers-and-conflict-in-indonesias-online-public-sphere/>

anger that led to anti-government protests.⁶⁴ As a result, authorities urged TikTok and Meta to tighten content moderation against such “disinformation”.⁶⁵ In March 2026, the Minister of Communications and Digital Affairs Meutya Hafid reportedly issued a warning to Meta about the company’s low-level of compliance in taking down various types of content, including “disinformation” and “hate speech” on Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.⁶⁶

Government critics also faced escalating online attacks, often driven by mis- and disinformation. Buzzers – individuals paid or recruited to amplify political narratives often operating in an anonymous and coordinated manner – played a prominent role.⁶⁷ These dynamics form part of what some scholars term Indonesia’s “disinformation shadow economy” — a covert industry that has become deeply embedded in political campaigning since the 2012 Jakarta regional election.⁶⁸ During the period of the Prabowo administration, many researchers reported having identified what appeared to be operations by these actors who routinely engaged in information manipulation, including defending government policies and spreading harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation portraying civil society actors as ‘foreign agents’ or as threats to national stability.⁶⁹

In January 2026, the government announced plans to prepare a draft law on “Countering Disinformation and Foreign Propaganda”.⁷⁰ Coordinating Minister for Law, Human Rights, Immigration and Correctional Affairs Yusril Ihza Mahendra stated that disinformation originating from outside Indonesia was being used as propaganda to attack the country, and that President Prabowo had directly instructed relevant ministries to begin developing such a draft law.⁷¹

This tightening control over both physical civic space and online information environments forms the backdrop against which the ‘foreign agent’ narrative gained prominence. The following chapters show how harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation have been constructed, mainstreamed and weaponized based on these narratives and how this is harming civil society in President Prabowo’s Indonesia.

64 Reuters, “Indonesia urges TikTok, Meta to act against harmful online content”, 27 August 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/indonesia-urges-tiktok-meta-act-against-harmful-online-content-2025-08-27/>

65 Reuters, “Indonesia urges TikTok, Meta to act against harmful online content” (previously cited).

66 Reuters, “Indonesia gives Meta ‘stern warning’ over disinformation”, 5 March 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesia-gives-meta-stern-warning-over-disinformation-2026-03-05/>

67 See, for example, Jeremiah Edbert Griffith Sihite, “How ‘buzzer politics’ is reshaping Indonesia’s democracy”, 23 January 2026, Lowy Institute, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/how-buzzer-politics-reshaping-indonesia-s-democracy>; Natania Seah, Democracy in the Digital Age: How Buzzer Culture is Stinging Indonesia’s Democracy, 17 December 2024, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, <https://www.csis.org/blogs/new-perspectives-asia/democracy-digital-age-how-buzzer-culture-stinging-indonesias-democracy>; and Iim Halimatusa’diyah and Ronald Adam, *Political Buzzer Networks as Threat to Indonesian Democracy*, 3 September 2024, ISEAS Yusof-Ishak Institute, https://www.iseas.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/ISEAS_Perspective_2024_66.pdf; Noory Okthariza, *Understanding the role of actors and risks of misinformation in Indonesia*, 2024, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep64399.pdf?acceptTC=true&coverpage=false&addFooter=false>

68 Jonathan Corpus Ong and Ross Tapsell, “Demystifying disinformation shadow economies: fake news work models in Indonesia and the Philippines”, *Asian Journal of Communication*, 22 March 2022, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01292986.2021.1971270>

69 See, for example, Monash University, “Attempt to Influence Public Opinion in the ‘Indonesia Gela’ Protest”, 23 February 2025, <https://www.monash.edu/indonesia/news/attempt-to-influence-public-opinion-in-the-indonesia-gelap-protest>; Muhammad Reza Zaini, “From Dialogue to Discord: Buzzers and Conflict in Indonesia’s Online Public Sphere”, 18 July 2025, Platform for Peace and Humanity, [https://peacehumanity.org/2025/07/18/from-dialogue-to-discord-buzzers-and-conflict-in-indonesias-online-public-sphere/#:~:text=The%20buzzers%20framed%20opposition%20to,to%20fail%20Indonesia's%20economic%20achievements](https://peacehumanity.org/2025/07/18/from-dialogue-to-discord-buzzers-and-conflict-in-indonesias-online-public-sphere/#:~:text=The%20buzzers%20framed%20opposition%20to,to%20fail%20Indonesia's%20economic%20achievements;); Fitriani and Radityo Dharmaputra, “How authoritarian propaganda presents Indonesian protests as foreign-instigated”, 11 September 2025, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/how-authoritarian-propaganda-presents-indonesian-protests-as-foreign-instigated/>

70 Amnesty International, “Hentikan penyusunan RUU Penanggulangan Disinformasi dan Propaganda Asing”, 23 January 2026, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/hentikan-penyusunan-ruu-penanggulangan-disinformasi-dan-propaganda-asing/01/2026/> (in Indonesian).

71 Nino Citra Anugrahanto, RUU Penanggulangan Disinformasi dan Propaganda Asing Dinilai Berisiko Batasi Kebebasan Berpendapat, 22 January 2026, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/ruu-penanggulangan-disinformasi-dan-propaganda-asing-dinilai-berisiko-batasi-kebebasan-berpendapat> (in Indonesian).

4. INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND STANDARDS

Mis- and disinformation can negatively affect the fulfilment of various human rights guaranteed under international human rights law and standards, especially when state actors rely on disinformation to entrench power, undermine accountability and target marginalized groups. False narratives that rely on rhetoric, such as labelling civil society actors as ‘foreign agents’, discredit, stigmatize and intimidate those exercising their human rights and may discourage participation in public debate.⁷²



This section sets out the international human rights legal framework relevant to assessing the use of mis- and disinformation grounded in ‘foreign agent’ rhetoric. It examines the implications of such practices for the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as the right to defend human rights, and outlines the corresponding obligations of states and responsibilities of corporate actors.

4.1 FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

The right to freedom of expression encompasses the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers and through any media.⁷³ It is guaranteed under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party.

Freedom of expression is closely interconnected with the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 21 of the ICCPR) and freedom of association (Article 22 of the ICCPR). These rights together protect the ability of individuals and groups to organize, mobilize, report, advocate, and participate in public affairs.

4.1.1 RESTRICTIONS ON MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

International human rights law (IHRL) protects freedom of expression broadly, including speech that may be inaccurate or controversial.⁷⁴ The UN Human Rights Committee’s (HRC)’s General Comment No. 34, which provides an authoritative interpretation of Article 19 of the ICCPR, states that “the [ICCPR] does not permit the prohibition of expressions of an erroneous opinion or an incorrect interpretation of past events.”⁷⁵ As such, misinformation may be protected by the right to freedom of expression, even when it is harmful for specific individuals targeted by it.

72 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression*, 13 April 2021, UN Doc. A/HRC/47/25, para. 24.

73 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 19.

74 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 38.

75 UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), General Comment No. 34 on Article 19: Freedom of opinion and expression, 12 September 2011, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/34, para. 49.

Misinformation, or misleading forms of expression, is more likely to be protected when circulated by non-state actors without a malicious intent, for example because they are not aware of the falsity or inaccuracy of the information. However, in specific instances, proportionate restrictions on freedom of expression may be permissible, especially when considering misinformation that entrenches prejudice and discrimination and whose harmful impact is compounded by amplification on social media platforms.

Indeed, Article 19(3) of the ICCPR permits restrictions on expression but only where such restrictions satisfy a strict three-part test. Any restriction must be:

- 1** provided by law
- 2** pursue a legitimate aim – such as protecting the rights or reputations of others or safeguarding national security or public order; and
- 3** be necessary and proportionate to that aim.

Falsehood of an expression alone is not a legitimate aim that could be subjected to restrictions.⁷⁶ Accordingly, any restrictions on misinformation or disinformation must comply with this three-part test.

In assessing restrictions on misinformation or disinformation, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression) has emphasized that the connection between the expression and a specific harm, as well as the severity and imminence of that harm, are central to determining whether restrictions are necessary and proportionate.⁷⁷ Different forms of restrictions can vary depending on the severity and imminence of the harm.⁷⁸ As disinformation is based on a malicious intent, it is likely to be more harmful than misinformation, especially when disinformation campaigns rely on coordinated efforts to deceive or are spurred on or supported by high-ranking public officials. The deceitful intent and the likelihood of harm associated with disinformation must be taken into account in assessing the necessity and proportionality of restrictions on this form of expression.

Under Article 20(2) of the ICCPR, states must prohibit advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. However, such prohibitions do not necessarily require criminalization. In general, criminal sanctions for such unlawful forms of expression should be a measure of last resort, to be applied only in strictly justifiable situations. The Rabat Plan of Action, which includes interpretive guidelines to implement Article 20 (2) of the ICCPR, sets out six threshold factors to assess whether this high standard, that may justify criminal sanctions, is met: context, status of the speaker, intent, content and form of the speech, extent of its dissemination and likelihood of harm.⁷⁹

76 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 40.

77 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 41.

78 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited).

79 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 43. See also UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, 11 January 2013, UN Doc. A/HRC/22/17/Add.4, para. 29.



ARTICLE 20(2) OF THE ICCPR

STATES MUST PROHIBIT ADVOCACY OF NATIONAL, RACIAL OR RELIGIOUS HATRED THAT CONSTITUTES INCITEMENT TO DISCRIMINATION, HOSTILITY OR VIOLENCE.

4.1.2 STATE OBLIGATIONS TO COMBAT MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

States have both negative and positive obligations under IHRL in addressing mis- and disinformation.

First, states must respect the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association by ensuring that they do not suppress legitimate expressions and spread mis- and disinformation. The Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression explicitly stated: “Where States systematically and simultaneously suppress other sources while promoting their own false narratives, they are denying individuals the right to seek and receive information under article 19 (2) of the ICCPR.”⁸⁰

Similarly, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association) argued in a 2019 report to the Human Rights Council that government-sponsored cyberattacks, including the use of trolls to disseminate propaganda and disinformation to drown out critical voices, constitute a “direct violation of individual rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.”⁸¹ The report further stated: “These attacks undermine the ability of civil society organizations and activists to share or receive information and communicate with others. They create incentives for self-censorship, while threatening individuals’ personal security and integrity.”⁸² States are required to “[e]nd all acts of government-sponsored online trolling, intimidation and disinformation targeted at civil society actors” and “investigate these acts, provide effective remedies, and adopt and implement preventive measures.”⁸³

In addition, states have the duty to protect individuals from disinformation by private, non-state actors. In order to protect the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, states should not sponsor or encourage statements by non-state actors they know, or should reasonably know, to be false.⁸⁴

State protection of individuals from mis- and disinformation must be in line with the strictly and narrowly construed permissible restrictions on the right to freedom of expression based on the standards described above under Articles 19(3) and 20(2) of the ICCPR.⁸⁵ Criminal sanctions represent one of the most severe forms of interference with freedom of expression and are generally considered disproportionate, except in the most serious circumstances. The Rabat Plan of Action underscores that criminalization should be reserved for the most extreme cases of advocacy of hatred that constitute incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence that meet the six-part threshold of incitement (see Section 4.1.1).⁸⁶ States should consider alternatives, such as administrative and civil sanctions, in addressing other forms of unlawful expressions that do not pass this test, as well as provide remedies for those targeted.⁸⁷

80 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression*, 13 April 2021 (previously cited), para. 45.

81 UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association), Report, 17 May 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/41/41, para. 44.

82 UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association, Report, 17 May 2019 (previously cited).

83 UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association, Report, 17 May 2019 (previously cited), para. 79.

84 UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association, Report, 17 May 2019 (previously cited), para. 43. See also UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 88.

85 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 88.

86 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rabat Plan of Action (previously cited), para. 34.

87 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rabat Plan of Action (previously cited).

This framework is particularly important in contexts where vaguely defined “fake news” laws are used to target journalists, political opponents or human rights defenders.⁸⁸ The Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and “Fake News”, Disinformation and Propaganda, a guidance document signed by the Special Rapporteur on freedom expression and many other international and regional human rights expert bodies in March 2017, broad prohibitions on the dissemination of “false news” or “non-objective information” are incompatible with international standards for restrictions on freedom of expression.⁸⁹ The Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression has raised concerns about the increasing misuse of vaguely worded “false news laws” around the world to target critics, journalists and human rights defenders.⁹⁰ These laws often do not meet the three-part test of **legality, legitimate aim, and necessity and proportionality** set out in Article 19(3) of the ICCPR.⁹¹

The duty to protect individuals from disinformation by non-state actors requires states to conduct thorough and effective investigations in instances where disinformation amounts to an internationally recognizable offence, for example incitement to violence, and to prosecute suspects in proceedings that respect fair trial standards.⁹² Moreover, states should put in place independent mechanisms to monitor disinformation and collect individual complaints, or mandate existing institutions, such as national human rights institutions, to take on such tasks. States should also counter specific instances of disinformation, through public campaigns and communications.

Moreover, states must fulfil the right to freedom of expression by creating a safe and enabling environment for all and provide media literacy tools to the general public to debunk disinformation, counter stereotypes and prejudice that may constitute the backbone of disinformation, and put in place an adequate privacy and data protection framework to protect people targeted with disinformation.⁹³ To guarantee media freedom, states must ensure journalists, fact-checkers and other media workers are free from physical and digital attacks, including disinformation attacks, so that they are able to carry out their work safely.⁹⁴

Social media companies play a key role in increasing the speed, scale and reach of mis- and disinformation online. States have the duty to ensure that companies respect human rights. While they should not compel social media companies to block or remove content,⁹⁵ they should adopt and enforce laws focusing on mandatory human rights due diligence (HRDD) to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for human rights impacts, as well as put in place transparency and remediation mechanisms.⁹⁶

The regulators’ independence and remit must be clearly defined, guaranteed and limited by law.⁹⁷ While they should not compel social media companies to block or remove content,⁹⁸ they should adopt and enforce laws focusing on mandatory HRDD to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for human rights impacts, as well as transparency and remediation mechanisms.⁹⁹

88 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 55.

89 Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and “Fake News”, Disinformation and Propaganda, para. 2(a).

90 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 55.

91 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 54.

92 See more about state obligations to prohibit unlawful expressions, including disinformation, amounting to incitement to violence, at ICCPR, Article 20; UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression during armed conflicts*, 12 August 2022, UN Doc. A/77/288, para. 113.

93 See UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Freedom of expression and elections in the digital age*, 11 June 2025, UN Doc. A/HRC/59/50, para. 28; UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression during armed conflicts* (previously cited), para. 38; and UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 23.

94 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Reinforcing media freedom and the safety of journalists in the digital age*, 20 April 2022, UN Doc. A/HRC/50/29, para. 63.

95 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 90.

96 UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association, Report, 17 May 2019 (previously cited), para. 80.

97 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *The negative impacts of gendered disinformation*, 7 August 2023, UN Doc. A/78/288, para. 130.

98 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 90.

99 UN Special Rapporteur on peaceful assembly and association, Report, 17 May 2019 (previously cited), para. 80.

ARTICLE 22 OF THE ICCPR

INDIVIDUALS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- ✓ **FORM AND JOIN AN ASSOCIATION**
- ✓ **SEEK, RECEIVE AND USE RESOURCES (INCLUDING FUNDING), FROM DOMESTIC, FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL SOURCES**



**FOREIGN
AGENT**

4.1.3 FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION IN THE CONTEXT OF STIGMATIZATION

Under Article 22 of the ICCPR on the right to freedom of association, individuals have the right not only to form and join an association but also to seek, receive and use resources, including funding, from domestic, foreign and international sources.¹⁰⁰ Despite this protection under international law, civil society actors around the world increasingly face misleading allegations that they are ‘foreign agents’ solely based on the fact that they receive foreign funding.¹⁰¹

In a 2024 report to the UN General Assembly, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association pointed out that stigmatizing narratives against civil society actors are often supported by mis- and disinformation.¹⁰² Whether intentional or not, such narratives often fuel harmful stereotypes and justify punitive measures and undue restrictions against civil society.¹⁰³ In some cases, they could also serve as an underlying source and instrument for subsequent legal harassment and repression of activists and social movements.¹⁰⁴

The Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association further emphasized that hostile rhetoric labelling associations or participants in assemblies as ‘foreign agents’ can violate multiple rights, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.¹⁰⁵ Such stigmatization can generate severe chilling effects, restrict public participation and create an environment where anti-rights movements could easily thrive.¹⁰⁶

The Joint Declaration on Protecting the right to freedom of association in light of “Foreign Agents”/ “Foreign Influence” Laws – the guidance document signed by various expert bodies including the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Representative of Indonesia to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and published on 13 September 2024 – provides further guidance on the protection of the right to freedom of association amid increasing stigmatizing narratives labelling assemblies and associations as ‘foreign

100 ICCPR, Article 22. See also UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association (UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association), Report to the Human Rights Council, 24 April 2013, UN Doc. A/HRC/23/39, para. 8; and Amnesty International, *The right to freedom of association: Preliminary observations to the UN Human Rights Committee to inform the development of General Comment no. 38* (Index: IOR 40/0498/2025), 19 December 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/0498/2025/en/>

101 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization*, 31 July 2024, UN Doc. A/79/263, para. 39.

102 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 21.

103 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 11.

104 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 74.

105 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 9.

106 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 71.

agents'.¹⁰⁷ It calls on public officials to refrain from advocacy of hatred constituting incitement to violence, hostility or discrimination and to avoid stigmatizing or vilifying civil society actors.¹⁰⁸

The Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association has recommended that states ensure public rhetoric supports and respects fundamental freedoms, promptly condemn harmful rhetoric, and promote alternative narratives that prevent the portrayal of individuals and groups exercising their rights as threats or criminals.¹⁰⁹ States should guarantee protections in law, policy and practice against vilification related to the exercise of fundamental freedoms.¹¹⁰ Further, states should ensure accountability for state and non-state actors that spread stigmatizing rhetoric inciting violence or discrimination, and provide reparations addressing both individual and collective harm.¹¹¹

4.2 RIGHT TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to defend human rights is an autonomous and independent right enshrined under IHRL and standards, including the UDHR, ICCPR and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹¹² The UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (HRDs Declaration) also articulates these rights and highlights the role of human rights defenders.

Article 2 of the HRDs Declaration establishes that states bear the ultimate responsibility to protect human rights defenders, to prevent and effectively address allegations of human rights violations and abuses committed against them and related to their human rights work, and to ensure that they can carry out their work in a safe and enabling environment.¹¹³



Additionally, in General Comment No. 34, the HRC states that restrictions of the right to freedom of expression “may never be invoked as a justification for the muzzling of any advocacy of multi-party democracy, democratic tenets and human rights.”¹¹⁴ States have the obligation to carry out a timely, thorough and effective investigation on physical attacks, as well as online attacks that amount to an internationally recognizable offence, such as incitement to violence, against journalists, human rights defenders and other individuals exercising their right to freedom of expression, prosecute perpetrators and provide redress to those affected.¹¹⁵ Amnesty International notes that such attacks do not just violate the rights of those directly affected but can also discourage people from exercising their rights for fear of retaliation.¹¹⁶

107 Joint Declaration on Protecting the right to freedom of association in light of “Foreign Agents”/ “Foreign Influence” Laws (previously cited), Principle 9.

108 Joint Declaration on Protecting the right to freedom of association in light of “Foreign Agents”/ “Foreign Influence” Laws (previously cited), Principle 9.

109 UN Special Rapporteur on to freedom of assembly and of association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 117 (a)

110 UN Special Rapporteur on to freedom of assembly and of association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 117(g).

111 UN Special Rapporteur on to freedom of assembly and of association, *Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization* (previously cited), para. 117(h).

112 Amnesty International, *Human Rights Defenders Under Threat – A Shrinking Space for Civil Society* (Index: ACT 30/6011/2017), 2017, <https://www.amnesty.at/media/2457/human-rights-defenders-under-threat.pdf>, p. 39.

113 Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Article 2.

114 HRC, General Comment 34 (previously cited), para. 23.

115 HRC, General Comment 34 (previously cited).

116 See Amnesty International’s previous research at Amnesty International, *“Being ourselves is too dangerous”: Digital violence and the silencing of women and LGBTI activists in Thailand* (Index: ASA 39/7955/2024), 16 May 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa39/7955/2024/en/>, p. 84; and Amnesty International, *“I turned my fear into courage”: Red-tagging and state violence against young human rights defenders in the Philippines* (Index: ASA 35/8574/2024), 14 October 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa35/8574/2024/en/>, p. 21.



THE RESPONSIBILITY TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS

IN CASES WHERE COMPANIES CAUSED OR CONTRIBUTED TO ADVERSE IMPACTS, THEY MUST TAKE STEPS TO ADDRESS THEM, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, BY **“TAKING ADEQUATE MEASURES FOR THEIR PREVENTION, MITIGATION AND REMEDIATION”**

4.3 BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITY

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (the UN Guiding Principles) established that companies have a responsibility to respect human rights, which requires a range of measures companies must take to fulfil these responsibilities. Therefore, the business responsibility to respect human rights implies positive responsibilities, rather than a passive “do no harm” approach. This responsibility applies throughout companies’ operations regardless of where their operations, business partners, users or customers are located.¹¹⁷

If a company is directly linked to human rights harm as a result of their business relationships with other parties in its value chain, it must use its leverage to prevent or mitigate such impacts.¹¹⁸ In cases where companies caused or contributed to adverse impacts, they must take steps to address them, including but not limited to, by “taking adequate measures for their prevention, mitigation and remediation.”¹¹⁹

Remediation refers to the process of providing remedy for adverse human rights impacts and producing positive substantive outcomes that could counteract such impacts.¹²⁰ It could take various forms, including apologies, restitution, rehabilitation, financial or non-financial compensation and the prevention of harm, including through guarantees of non-repetition.

Companies must know and show that they respect human rights.¹²¹ Ongoing and context-specific HRDD is a crucial means for realizing this responsibility under the UN Guiding Principles. It allows companies to identify both potential and actual adverse human rights impacts.¹²² The potential impacts, also referred to as “human rights risks”, must be prevented or mitigated, whereas the actual impacts that already occurred must be remedied.¹²³ Businesses should also ensure meaningful consultation with potentially affected groups and other stakeholders in the process of due diligence.

117 UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *The right to privacy in the digital age*, 30 June 2014, UN Doc. A/HRC/27/37, para. 43.

118 UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UN Guiding Principles), Principle 19.

119 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 11, including Commentary.

120 OHCHR, “The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights: An Interpretive Guide”, 2012, HR/PUB/12/02, p. 7.

121 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 14.

122 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 17.

123 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 17.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights affirmed the responsibility of technology companies under the UN Guiding Principles through its B-Tech Project launched in 2019. The project's foundational paper asserts that technology companies should carry out HRDD that "includes addressing situations in which business model-driven practices and technology design decisions create or exacerbate human rights risks."¹²⁴ It also refers to examples of social media companies' business models and underlying algorithmic systems that "that manufacture virality and preferentially – if unintentionally – promote content that contributes to online and offline human rights harms and grave human rights abuses, including genocide."¹²⁵ It recommends companies to "stress test – and as necessary improve – the design of technologies in ways that demonstrably minimize the risks of severe human rights harms, versus only optimizing for maximizing revenue, or delivering the maximum benefit or convenience for the most people."¹²⁶

In response to stigmatizing narratives and disinformation targeting assemblies and associations, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association recommended that businesses conduct broad, multi-stakeholder consultations, including with civil society, to develop effective strategies for detecting and responding to stigmatization and the spread of disinformation.¹²⁷ They should ensure transparent and consistent content moderation policies aligned with IHRL and other international standards.¹²⁸ The companies should also provide meaningful avenues for individuals and groups to challenge content removal decisions and access remedies if they were exposed to harms through stigmatizing narratives and disinformation.¹²⁹

In general, proportionate restrictions by companies on online content that constitute either disinformation or harmful misinformation, especially when such content is amplified by social media algorithms, may be necessary to comply with their responsibility to respect the right to freedom of expression.

124 OHCHR, "Addressing Business Model Related Human Rights Risks: A B-Tech Foundational Paper", July 2020, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Business/B-Tech/B_Tech_Foundational_Paper.pdf, p. 6.

125 OHCHR, "Addressing Business Model Related Human Rights Risks" (previously cited), p. 4-5.

126 OHCHR, "Addressing Business Model Related Human Rights Risks" (previously cited), p. 7.

127 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and of association, Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization (previously cited), para. 120(c).

128 UN Special Rapporteur on to freedom of assembly and of association, Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization (previously cited), para. 120(e).

129 UN Special Rapporteur on the freedom of assembly and of association, Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association from stigmatization (previously cited).

5. THE MAKING OF AN IMAGINARY ENEMY

This chapter traces how harmful and stigmatizing 'foreign agent' rhetoric moved from official discourse into digital spaces. Section 5.1 maps how state and state-aligned actors have promoted and normalized this trope in public. Section 5.2 shows how this rhetoric migrated online and fused with mis- and disinformation, targeting civil society actors. Section 5.3 demonstrates that these attacks were not only isolated but, in several instances, disseminated in coordinated patterns across platforms and accounts. Section 5.4 examines how 'foreign agent' allegations intersected with other stigmatizing frames, including ethnicity, gender and activism, to intensify risks. Finally, Section 5.5 highlights the interplay between online attacks and physical violence and other human rights violations, underscoring how online mis- and disinformation are interconnected with offline intimidation and criminalization.

5.1 HOW STATE AND STATE-ALIGNED ACTORS ENGINEERED THE 'FOREIGN AGENT' NARRATIVE AGAINST DISSENT

This section outlines how state and state-aligned actors – ranging from President Prabowo and senior officials to grassroots mass organizations – have regularly used 'foreign agent' rhetoric against independent civil society actors. It draws on public statements, media interviews and news reports to construct a timeline of how the narrative became popularized under the Prabowo administration.

5.1.1 USAGE BY STATE ACTORS

Under President Prabowo, the foreign agent trope has gained prominence as one of the key narratives used by state officials to frame protest, journalism and civil society advocacy as externally engineered threats, rather than legitimate expression or public participation.

Prior to his inauguration, and while serving as Minister of Defence from 2019 to 2024, Prabowo occasionally invoked similar narratives to attack government critics. For example, during the period of mass demonstrations against the Omnibus Law on Job Creation in Indonesia in October 2020 driven by concerns about the law's impacts on workers' rights, then-Minister Prabowo made a statement asserting that there was a foreign mastermind behind the protests.¹³⁰ In an interview released by Gerindra Party on 12 October 2020, he said: "There must be a mastermind behind this... They must be foreign-funded elements."¹³¹ He also alleged that protesters were mobilized through mis- and disinformation, stating, "I want to issue a warning: these hoaxes mean that there are parties who want to create chaos."¹³²

In another instance, then-Minister Prabowo used similar rhetoric against critics of the government's flagship Food Estate Project, a policy initiative aimed at boosting Indonesia's agricultural output but widely criticized for bypassing meaningful consultation with Indigenous communities who hold customary rights

130 Read more about human rights concerns linked to the Omnibus Law on Job Creation at Amnesty International, "Omnibus Bill on Job Creation Poses 'Serious Threat' To Human Rights", 19 August 2020, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/omnibus-bill-on-job-creation-poses-serious-threat-to-human-rights/08/2020/>

131 SIN PO, Prabowo Duga Ada Pihak Asing yang Jadi Dalang Kekacauan Demo UU Cipta Kerja, 13 October 2020, <https://sinpo.id/detail/10042/prabowo-duga-ada-pihak-asing-yang-jadi-dalang-kekacauan-demo-uu-cipta-kerja> (in Indonesian).

132 SIN PO, Prabowo Duga Ada Pihak Asing yang Jadi Dalang Kekacauan Demo UU Cipta Kerja (previously cited).

over affected lands.¹³³ Speaking at the West Java Agricultural Extension and Farmer Development and Participatory Food Estate event at Sumedang, West Java on 30 January 2024, he stated: “Therefore, if there are people who badmouth about the Food Estate Project... I am worried that they are foreign lackeys who want Indonesia to be always weak, always poor.”¹³⁴

During the campaigning period leading up to the 2024 presidential election, President Prabowo also made references to ‘foreign agents’ in his public speeches. For instance, during Prabowo-Gibran volunteer consolidation in Bengkulu on 11 January 2024, he made a statement addressing his supporters: “Hey thieves, corruptors, Prabowo will never be afraid of you. Hey hypocrites, hey foreign lackeys, Prabowo-Gibran is with the Indonesian people!”¹³⁵ On 9 February 2024, during his campaign event in East Java’s Sidoarjo city, he gave a speech defending his then-political ally Jokowi against critics by labelling them as ‘foreign agents’: “President Jokowi is currently being criticized by people, possibly foreign agents.”¹³⁶

After President Prabowo’s inauguration in October 2024, this framing became integrated in presidential communications, marking a notable shift. According to a report by BBC Indonesia published on 17 February 2026, the president has used this rhetoric 25 times in public speeches since taking office.¹³⁷

For example, on 15 February 2025, speaking at Gerindra Party’s 17th anniversary celebration event, he warned of attempts to incite unrest and attributed such efforts to external forces, stating: “If anyone is being instigated, or if anyone wants to incite them, be careful. This is the work of foreign powers who always want to divide Indonesia.”¹³⁸ He went on to suggest that civil society and media were being used as instruments of such interference, adding:

“NGOs and media outlets funded by foreign parties to influence public opinion will be exposed.”¹³⁹

The speech was delivered amid rising online criticism of the government and its flagship policies, including the free nutritious meals programme, which had become one of the focal points of public dissent and would later contribute to the mobilization of large-scale protests that year (see Chapter 3).¹⁴⁰

On 6 April 2025, during the period of nationwide protests against the Military Law revisions, President Prabowo participated in a publicly broadcasted interview with six media editors-in-chief, one of whom asked President Prabowo his views on the ongoing demonstrations.¹⁴¹ President Prabowo responded:

133 See Amnesty International’s press release raising concerns about the lack of meaningful consultations or prior agreement with the affected Indigenous people in South Papua’s Merauke district regarding the national strategic Food Estate Project, Amnesty International, “Indonesia: New government must ensure accountability for human rights violations”, 18 October 2024, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/indonesia-new-president-must-ensure-accountability-for-human-rights-violations/10/2024/>

134 Alfitra Akbar, “Menilik Narasi Antek Asing Prabowo dalam Hadapi Kritik Publik”, 10 April 2025, Tirta, <https://tirta.id/menilik-narasi-antek-asing-prabowo-dalam-hadapi-kritik-publik-halP> (in Indonesian).

135 Adhyasta Dirgantara and Diamanty Meiliana, “Prabowo: Hei Koruptor, Kaum Munafik, Antek Asing, Prabowo Tidak Pernah Gentar terhadap Kalian!”, 11 January 2024, Kompas, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2024/01/11/13303741/prabowo-hei-koruptor-kaum-munafik-antek-asing-prabowo-tidak-pernah-gentar> (in Indonesian).

136 Wildan Pratama, “Bela Jokowi yang Tuai Kritik Banyak Pihak, Prabowo: Mungkin Antek Asing”, 9 Februari 2024, Suara Surabaya, <https://www.suarasurabaya.net/politik/2024/bela-jokowi-yang-tuai-kritik-banyak-pihak-prabowo-mungkin-antek-asing/> (in Indonesian).

137 Faisal Irfani, “Yang terekam dalam 70 pidato Presiden Prabowo: Dari klaim keberhasilan MBG hingga antek-antek asing”, 17 February 2026, BBC Indonesia, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cn0exy2zy17o> (in Indonesian).

138 Media Indonesia, “Prabowo Sebut Pihak Asing Ingin Memecah Belah Bangsa”, 15 February 2025, <https://mediaindonesia.com/politik-dan-hukum/744084/prabowo-sebut-pihak-asing-ingin-memecah-belah-bangsa> (in Indonesian).

139 Tempo, “Penggunaan Narasi Antek Asing oleh Prabowo”, 24 March 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/politik/penggunaan-narasi-antek-asing-oleh-prabowo-1223654> (in Indonesian).

140 During this speech, Prabowo used the pejorative Javanese word “ndasmu” to attack critics of his flagship policies. See BBC News Indonesia, “Presiden Prabowo sebut ‘ndasmu’ terhadap pengkritiknya – ‘Kritik terbuka seolah-olah musuh’”, 16 February 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cy0p075wxpwo> (in Indonesian).

141 The full video is available at Narasi Newsroom, Presiden Prabowo Menjawab, 7 April 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPOYCMCJnJA> (in Indonesian).

“In running a country, we must always be vigilant about whether there are foreign groups or forces seeking to divide and conquer. This is commonplace, as data has recently emerged. The Trump administration disbanded USAID, and evidence has emerged that the agency funds numerous NGOs across the country. So, I urge us to think clearly, okay? Demonstrations are a right, but if demonstrations are designed to cause chaos and unrest, I believe this is against the national interest and the interests of the people.”¹⁴²

Later, during the ceremony of Pancasila Day at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 2 June 2025, President Prabowo delivered another speech using the same rhetoric.¹⁴³ He asserted:

“For hundreds of years, they [foreign powers] have been dissuading us, even now, with money. They fund NGOs to divide us. They claim to be upholders of democracy, human rights, and press freedom.”¹⁴⁴

On the following day, Hasan Nasbi, the Head of the Presidential Communications Office, provided further explanations to media regarding the statement, claiming that “the president’s statement focuses on groups that have been undermining unity, groups that have been discrediting the government by spreading false rumours.”¹⁴⁵ He added, “Any group, be it an individual, an organization, or perhaps even an NGO, is playing this role [of discrediting the government].”¹⁴⁶

On 22 August 2025, President Prabowo made another remark at a national-level orientation session for teachers and principals involved in Sekolah Rakyat – the state-led programme initiated by President Prabowo with the aim to increase access to education for disadvantaged communities.¹⁴⁷ He said, “There are a handful of people who have become foreign lackeys, whether they realize it or not. They are foreign lackeys, and they don’t like Indonesia rising, but we will rise.”¹⁴⁸

The speech was delivered in the days preceding the outbreak of large-scale protests on 25 August 2025, at a time when online criticism of the government and parliament was already intensifying.

During a national meeting for coordinating with central and regional governments on 2 February 2026 in Bogor city in West Java, President Prabowo made a remark in response to ongoing criticism and mass demonstrations against the government, simultaneously asserting that protests were economically harmful and externally manipulated. He stated, “If you want to protest, go ahead. But what will that achieve? You can protest 5,000 times and not a single factory will open. So, these groups – whether they realize it or not – are being controlled by foreign parties. I am convinced of this! And I have evidence.”¹⁴⁹ The speech framed protests not as a legitimate expression of grievance, but as externally manipulated activity that undermined national development.

142 Nawir Arsyad Akbar, “Jawaban Prabowo Soal Demonstrasi dan Dugaan Kepentingan Asing”, 9 April 2025, Kompas, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2025/04/09/17012881/jawaban-prabowo-soal-demonstrasi-dan-dugaan-kepentingan-asing> (in Indonesian).

143 Firda Cynthia Anggrainy, “Prabowo Ajak Rakyat Bersatu, Sebut Asing Biayai LSM untuk Adu Domba”, 2 June 2025, Detik, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-7944924/prabowo-ajak-rakyat-bersatu-sebut-asing-biayai-lsm-untuk-adu-domba> (in Indonesian).

144 Firda Cynthia Anggrainy, “Prabowo Ajak Rakyat Bersatu, Sebut Asing Biayai LSM untuk Adu Domba” (previously cited).

145 CNN Indonesia, “PCO: Info Prabowo Lengkap soal Asing Danai LSM Diskreditkan Pemerintah”, 3 June 2025, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20250603180831-20-1236098/pco-info-prabowo-lengkap-soal-asing-danai-lsm-diskreditkan-pemerintah> (in Indonesian).

146 CNN Indonesia, “PCO: Info Prabowo Lengkap soal Asing Danai LSM Diskreditkan Pemerintah” (previously cited).

147 Ega Shepiani, “8 Fakta Sekolah Rakyat yang Akan Diresmikan Presiden Prabowo”, 11 January 2026, Detik, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-8302091/8-fakta-sekolah-rakyat-yang-akan-diresmikan-presiden-prabowo> (in Indonesian).

148 Emir Yanwardhana, “Prabowo Tuding Ada Antek Asing Tak Suka Indonesia Maju”, 22 August 2025, CNBC Indonesia, <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20250822190035-4-660691/prabowo-tuding-ada-antek-asing-tak-suka-indonesia-maju> (in Indonesian).

149 Lizza Egeham, “Prabowo: Kalau Tidak Suka Sama Prabowo Silakan 2029 Bertarung”, 2 February 2026, <https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/6270010/prabowo-kalau-tidak-suka-sama-prabowo-silakan-2029-bertarung> (in Indonesian).

By mid-2025, other cabinet members had also begun to echo similar framings to defend specific government policies. In one notable case, amid outcries against nickel mining near the archipelago Raja Ampat in Southwest Papua province due to its impacts on the environment and the rights of local Indigenous communities, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Bahlil Lahadalia said on 5 June 2025, “There are foreign parties who are unhappy or displeased with this downstreaming project.”¹⁵⁰ Downstreaming refers to the Indonesia government’s current policy to add value to raw minerals, including nickel, by processing them into higher-value products.¹⁵¹

In the same month, Minister of Culture Fadli Zon used the same rhetoric when defending the government’s programme to produce a 10-volume official national history of Indonesia. Many critics, including historians, raised concerns that this project might result in the erasure of past human rights violations during the New Order era.¹⁵² Such violations included the large-scale sexual violence against women, particularly Chinese Indonesian women during a riot in 1998.¹⁵³ Responding to such public criticisms, Minister Fadli called the 1998 incident a mere “rumour”¹⁵⁴ drawing heavy criticism from civil society.¹⁵⁵ The minister later provided additional comments to media during his visit to the Institute of Home Affairs Governance (IPDN) in Jatinangor district of Sumedang Regency in West Java. He claimed that the narrative about the 1998 mass rape was crafted by foreign actors trying to harm Indonesia’s image, stating “We do not want to tarnish our own reputation. In my opinion, there were framings including from foreign sources claiming that there was a mass rape, but where is the evidence?”¹⁵⁶

On 2 July 2025, addressing the same issue during a meeting with the DPR’s Commission X, which oversees the drafting of legislation related to education, youth, sport, tourism, arts and culture, Minister Fadli reiterated this theme. He mentioned that he believed the narrative around the 1998 mass rape had been manipulated by unnamed foreign parties without evidence, stating, “We must not fall prey to the divisive narratives of foreign power”.¹⁵⁷

150 Antara News, “Bahlil menduga pihak asing terlibat untuk gagalkan hilirisasi”, 5 June 2025, <https://www.antaranews.com/berita/4881665/bahlil-menduga-pihak-asing-terlibat-untuk-gagalkan-hilirisasi> (in Indonesian).

151 Dimas Muhamad, “The Next Chapter of Indonesia’s ‘Downstreaming’ Agenda”, 1 November 2024, *The Diplomat*, <https://thediplomat.com/2024/11/the-next-chapter-of-indonesias-downstreaming-agenda/>

152 Ananda Teresia and Gayatri Suroyo, “In Indonesia, fears grow that dark past may be rewritten with government’s new history books”, Reuters, 19 May 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesia-fears-grow-that-dark-past-may-be-rewritten-with-governments-new-2025-05-19/>

153 Civil Society Coalition Against Impunity, “Indonesia: Sexual Violence in May 1998 in Indonesia is Not a Rumour, Reject the State’s Distortion and Erasure of New Order Crimes”, 12 June 2025, <https://asia-ajar.org/press-release/sexual-violence-in-may-1998-in-indonesia-is-not-a-rumour-reject-the-states-distortion-and-erasure-of-new-order-crimes/>

154 IDN Times, “Real Talk: Debat Panas!! Fadli Zon vs Uni Lubis Soal Revisi Buku Sejarah”, 10 June 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1gYkKIZJKU>

155 Amnesty International, *Indonesia: Government’s history rewrite project that omits 1998 mass rape should be canceled*, 7 July 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/indonesia-governments-history-rewrite-project-that-omits-1998-mass-rape-should-be-canceled/07/2025/>

156 CNA, Menteri Fadli Zon ragukan pemerkosaan 1998 terjadi secara massal, apa penjelasannya?, 24 June 2025, <https://www.cna.id/indonesia/menteri-fadli-zon-ragukan-pemerkosaan-1998-terjadi-secara-massal-apa-penjasannya-34601> (in Indonesian).

157 Tria Sutrisna and Jessi Carina, Penjelasan Fadli Zon Ragukan Pemerkosaan 1998 Berlangsung Massal: Jangan Kita Masuk Narasi Adu Domba, 2 July 2025, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2025/07/02/14513121/penjelasan-fadli-zon-ragukan-pemerkosaan-1998-berlangsung-massal-jangan-kita> (in Indonesian).

SEXUAL VIOLENCE DURING THE MAY 1998 RIOTS

In mid-May 1998, riots broke out across major cities across Indonesia amid the Asian financial crisis (1997-1998). Mass unemployment, inflation and corruption in Indonesia led to growing political tensions that triggered mass demonstrations calling for an end to former President Suharto's New Order regime.¹⁵⁸ During this period, ethnic Chinese communities faced stigmatization, as they were often accused of playing a role in the economic crisis.¹⁵⁹ The riots featured the burning down of buildings, killings of more than 1,000 people, as well as lootings and attacks targeting Chinese Indonesians.¹⁶⁰ Following these riots, the Suharto government stepped down from power.

Sexual violence was rampant during the riots. The Joint Fact-Finding Team, an investigative body founded by the government after the incident, documented 85 cases of sexual violence, including 52 rape cases, 14 incidents of rape with additional violence, 10 cases of sexual assault or abuse, and nine instances of sexual harassment.¹⁶¹ Most of the victims were ethnic Chinese women.¹⁶² Research conducted by the Indonesian National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan), published in 2008, further confirmed the prevalence of sexual violence in the May 1998 riots, despite survivors' ongoing struggles to speak out publicly about their traumatic experiences.¹⁶³

THE MARCELLA SANTOSO CASE: STRENGTHENING THE NARRATIVE OF 'EXTERNALLY ENGINEERED PROTEST'

In June 2025, prosecutors alleged that lawyer Marcella Santoso – a defence lawyer who worked on high-profile corporate cases – had participated in a scheme to bribe judges in order to secure an acquittal for corporate defendants in a court case related to crude palm oil export permits.¹⁶⁴ She faced money laundering and obstruction of justice charges due to the alleged bribery.¹⁶⁵

None of these charges relates to protest activity, but authorities publicly linked the high-profile investigation to ongoing nationwide protests and online criticism of the government. At a public press conference on 17 June 2025, the Attorney-General's Office screened a video in which

158 Eunike Mutiara Himawan, Annie Pohlman and Winnifred Louis, Revisiting the May 1998 Riots in Indonesia: Civilians and Their Untold Memories, 2022, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/18681034221084320>, p. 242.

159 Eunike Mutiara Himawan, Annie Pohlman and Winnifred Louis, Revisiting the May 1998 Riots in Indonesia (previously cited), p. 243.

160 Eunike Mutiara Himawan, Annie Pohlman and Winnifred Louis, Revisiting the May 1998 Riots in Indonesia (previously cited).

161 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Government's history rewrite project that omits 1998 mass rape should be canceled", 7 July 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/indonesia-governments-history-rewrite-project-that-omits-1998-mass-rape-should-be-canceled/07/2025/>.

162 Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Government's history rewrite project that omits 1998 mass rape should be canceled" (previously cited).

163 Indonesian National Commission on Violence against Women, Time to settle the sense of security: A step toward the fulfilment of right for women victim of sexual violence in May 1998 riot, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/lib-docs/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session13/ID/Komnas_Perempuan_UPR_IDN_S13_2012_KomnasPerempuan_Annex6_E.pdf, p. 7.

164 Rob Harkavy, "Indonesia rocked by judicial bribery allegations", 15 April 2025, *Global Legal Insights*, <https://www.globallegalinsights.com/news/indonesia-rocked-by-judicial-bribery-allegations/>

165 Agung Sandy Lesmana and Faqih Fathurrahman, "Minta Maaf Sebar Konten Negatif, Begini Doa Advokat Marcella Santoso ke Kejaksaan", 18 June 2025, *Suara*, https://www.suara.com/news/2025/06/18/093224/minta-maaf-sebar-konten-negatif-begini-doa-advokat-marcella-santoso-ke-keagung#google_vignette (in Indonesian).

Marcella Santoso appeared to acknowledge and apologize for creating and financing “negative content” related to the Indonesia Gelap protest movement, a broad mobilization that included demonstrations against the revision of the Military Law. The prosecutors, however, did not present further evidence apart from the confession video. One day later, Marcella Santoso spoke to the media and contradicted her statement in the video screened by denying she was involved in creating protest-related content.¹⁶⁶

Despite the contested nature of the claims, Major General Kristomei Sianturi, head of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) information centre, announced on 20 June 2025 that the army would launch an investigation into the case.¹⁶⁷ Speaking to media, he stated that authorities believed Marcella Santoso funded CSOs and others involved in the protests.¹⁶⁸ He also mentioned that authorities believed there were more people behind this operation, apart from Marcella Santoso.¹⁶⁹

Civil society activists warned that the public airing of unconfirmed allegations risked chilling freedom of expression and stigmatizing CSOs and protest movements.¹⁷⁰ The Indonesian Student Executive Board (BEM SI), which played a key role in organizing the Indonesia Gelap protests, also denied receiving funding from Marcella Santoso and other sponsors as alleged.¹⁷¹

Shortly after this development, on 20 July 2025, President Prabowo, during his speech at the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) Congress in Solo, accused the Indonesia Gelap demonstration of being financed by “corruptors”.¹⁷² He stated:

“It turns out [the protests] are all orchestrated. It’s fabricated; it’s paid for. By whom? By those who want Indonesia to always be in turmoil. Those who want Indonesia to stay poor. It’s the corruptors who are funding those protests. ‘Indonesia is dark... Indonesia is dark.’ Sorry to burst your bubble, but Indonesia is bright! The future of Indonesia is bright!”¹⁷³

While the episode was not framed explicitly as a ‘foreign agent’ case, it closely aligned with the broader official narrative portraying protests as externally manipulated and financially engineered. It advanced a functionally similar logic, casting dissent as illegitimate and reinforcing suspicion of civil society actors.

166 Rumondang Naibaho, “Marcella Santoso Bantah Buat Konten Negatif soal RUU TNI-Indonesia Gelap”, 18 June 2025, Detik, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-7970773/marcella-santoso-bantah-buat-konten-negatif-soal-ruu-tni-indonesia-gelap> (in Indonesian).

167 VOI, “TNI Headquarters Explores Marcella Santoso Which Denies Making Negative Content Of The TNI Bill”, 20 June 2025, https://voi.id/en/news/489818#google_vignette (in Indonesian).

168 Tempo, “TNI Menduga Marcella Santoso Mendanai Buzzer dan LSM untuk Membuat Konten Negatif RUU TNI”, 22 June 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/tni-menduga-marcella-santoso-mendanai-buzzer-dan-lsm-untuk-membuat-konten-negatif-ruu-tni--1774114> (in Indonesian).

169 Tempo, “TNI Menduga Marcella Santoso Mendanai Buzzer dan LSM untuk Membuat Konten Negatif RUU TNI” (previously cited).

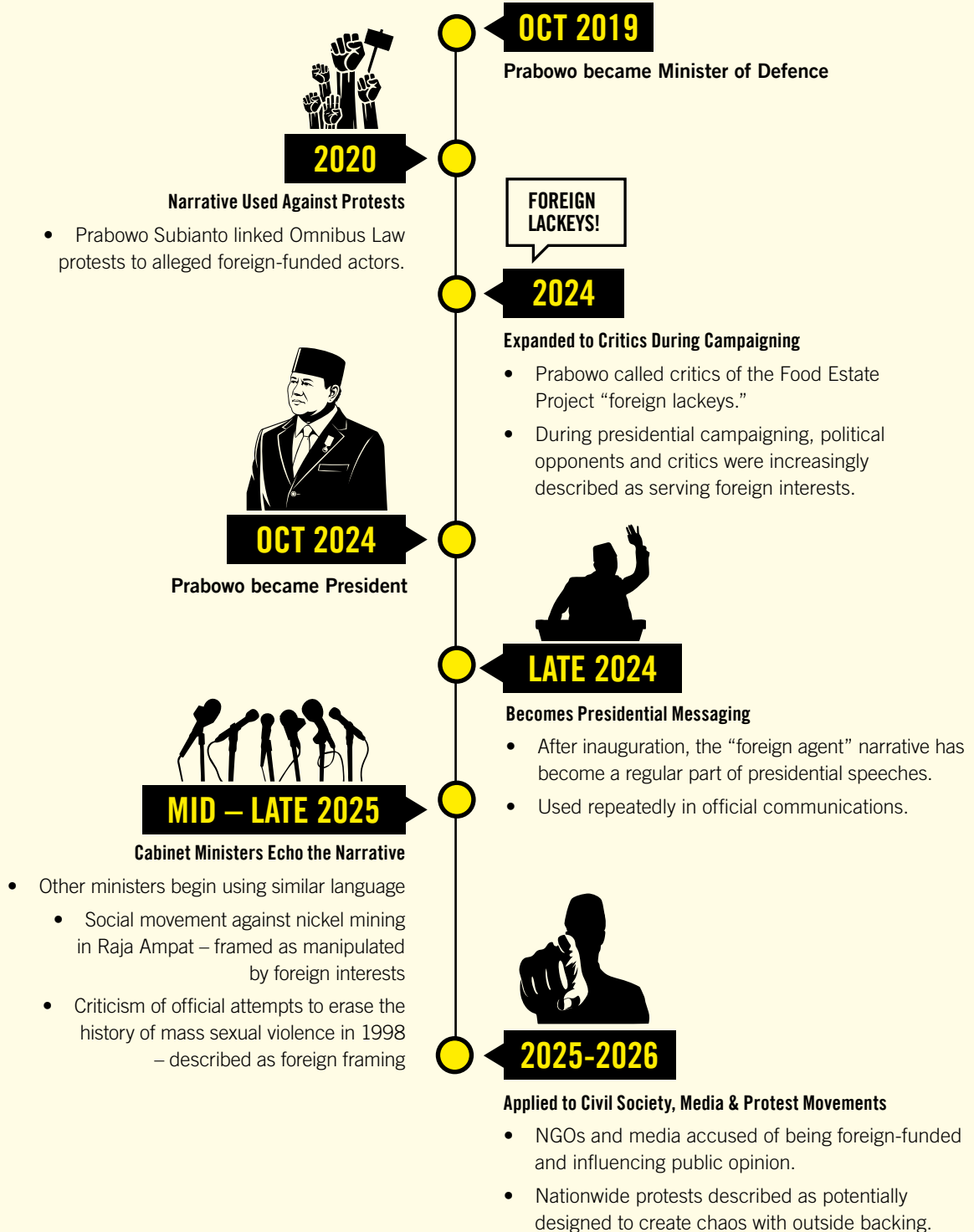
170 Tempo, “Amnesty Pertanyakan Motif Penayangan Video Marcella Santoso yang Singgung RUU TNI dan Indonesia Gelap”, 20 June 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/amnesty-pertanyakan-motif-penayangan-video-marcella-santoso-yang-singgung-ruu-tni-dan-indonesia-gelap-1755506> (in Indonesian).

171 Tempo, “Amnesty Pertanyakan Motif Penayangan Video Marcella Santoso yang Singgung RUU TNI dan Indonesia Gelap” (previously cited).

172 Amnesty International, “Presiden harus berhenti mendelegitimasi gerakan masyarakat sipil”, 21 July 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/presiden-harus-berhenti-mendelegitimasi-gerakan-masyarakat-sipil/07/2025/> (in Indonesian).

173 Amnesty International, “Presiden harus berhenti mendelegitimasi gerakan masyarakat sipil” (previously cited).

OVERVIEW TIMELINE: RISE OF THE “FOREIGN AGENT” NARRATIVE IN INDONESIA UNDER PRESIDENT PRABOWO



5.1.2 USAGE BY STATE-ALIGNED ACTORS

State-aligned actors – individuals and groups whose ideologies align with government interests – also played a role in amplifying 'foreign agent' narratives. Speaking to media during his visit to the presidential palace complex in Jakarta on 28 August 2025, Abdullah Mahmud Hendropriyono, the former head of Indonesia's State Intelligence Agency (BIN) and President Prabowo's close political ally, made a comment claiming that non-state foreign actors instigated the renewed wave of protests in August 2025.¹⁷⁴ He stated:

“These parties from outside the country only sought to use accomplices inside the country. I’m very sure that the accomplices inside don’t realize they’re being used. But in time, they’ll have to be exposed.”¹⁷⁵

He refused to name the specific actors to which he was referring.¹⁷⁶

The use of this trope has been reinforced by the historical role of mass organizations (commonly referred to as “ormas”) in Indonesia's political landscape. In contemporary Indonesia, many mass organizations, which are privately organized groups, have periodically acted as extra-institutional enforcers of dominant political or moral agendas, mobilizing protests and other vigilante activities, intimidation or public pressure against groups deemed threatening to national stability, religious values or political authority.¹⁷⁷

In March 2025, the mass organization Youth Movement Forum (Forum Gerak Pemuda) staged a demonstration to demand the Finance Ministry audit CSOs receiving international funds, alleging they “financed unrest and hindered government performance of duties.”¹⁷⁸ In the same month, another group called the Anti-Foreign Intervention Community Alliance (Aliansi Masyarakat Anti-Intervensi Asing) held a protest action at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights calling for people to be aware of ‘foreign agents’ dividing up the country through CSOs.¹⁷⁹

A month later, in April 2025, the Media Concerned Civil Society Coalition (KMPSM) staged a protest in front of the Press Council and Meta's Jakarta office.¹⁸⁰ The demonstrators accused Tempo of working as a foreign agent on behalf of George Soros (see Section 5.2.1) They demanded that Tempo be summoned for questioning and that Meta block Tempo's Instagram platforms, including Bocor Alus Politik, Tempo's YouTube podcast. Tempo and independent fact-checkers clarified that the allegation misrepresented the outlet's financial relationships: Tempo acknowledged that its digital unit received an investment from the Media Development Investment Fund (MDIF), a New York-based non-profit organization that supports independent media globally and whose funding pool has included a range of international contributors, including entities historically linked to the Open Society Foundations.¹⁸¹

174 Eva Safitri, “Hendropriyono ungkap pihak asing dalang demo ricuh di DPR”, 28 August 2025, Detik, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-8084316/hendropriyono-ungkap-pihak-asing-dalang-demo-ricuh-di-dpr> (in Indonesian).

175 Eva Safitri, Hendropriyono ungkap pihak asing dalang demo ricuh di DPR (previously cited).

176 Eva Safitri, Hendropriyono ungkap pihak asing dalang demo ricuh di DPR (previously cited).

177 See research on this issue at [Laurens Bakker](#) and [Ahmad Karim](#), “Performing Peace: The Evolving Roles of Security Groups in Indonesia”, 17 March 2022, *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, Volume 23, Issue 1, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14442213.2021.2014946> and [Laurens Bakker](#), “Organized Violence and the State”, 2016, *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia*, Volume 172, Issues 2-3, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/org/science/article/pii/S0006229416000575>

178 JPNN.com, “Forum Gerak Pemuda Desak Pemerintah Lakukan Audit NGO Penerima Dana Asing”, 27 March 2025, <https://www.jpnn.com/news/forum-gerak-pemuda-desak-pemerintah-lakukan-audit-ngo-penerima-dana-asing> (in Indonesian).

179 JPNN.com, “Waspada Agen Asing Berkedok LSM Sengaja Tolak RUU TNI, tetapi Dukung LGBT”, 19 March 2025, <https://www.jpnn.com/news/waspada-agen-asing-berkedok-lsm-sengaja-tolak-ruu-tni-tetapi-dukung-lgbt> (in Indonesian).

180 Tempo, “Teror Kepala Babi: Polisi Sebut Kurir Gojek Dapat Barang dari Driver Grab”, 10 April 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/teror-kepala-babi-polisi-sebut-kurir-gojek-dapat-barang-dari-driver-grab-1229774> (in Indonesian).

181 Cek Fakta, “Hoaks Serangkaian Narasi Menyerang Bocor Alus Politik Tempo”, 21 March 2025, <https://cekfakta.com/focus/26259> (in Indonesian).

However, Tempo emphasized that this investment did not entail editorial control or compromise its independence.¹⁸²

2.1.3 THE ‘FOREIGN AGENT’ TROPE AS A TOOL TO DEFLECT ACCOUNTABILITY

These developments illustrate how the ‘foreign agent’ trope has evolved into a widely used response to suppress dissent against the government and justify efforts to do so during President Prabowo’s time in power. To shield themselves from criticisms on various issues, state officials have repeatedly resorted to the same explanatory framework: dissent is not treated as an expression of grievance rooted in social, economic or political conditions, but as the product of manipulation by hidden foreign forces. State-aligned actors also actively echoed the same narrative.

Rather than engaging with the substance of public concerns, authorities increasingly responded by questioning the loyalty, funding or intentions of those raising them, effectively shifting public debate away from accountability and towards imagined conspiracies and a manufactured sense of crisis. As a senior journalist who asked to be anonymous observed:

“If Prabowo cannot explain or respond to something, he labels people criticizing him or his government as ‘foreign agents’. He has been building up imaginary enemies in people’s mind.”¹⁸³

5.2 ONLINE PROLIFERATION OF THE ‘FOREIGN AGENT’ ALLEGATIONS

Amid the frequent use of ‘foreign agent’ rhetoric by state and state-aligned officials, variations of the same framing circulated widely on social media platforms. This section examines the proliferation of online content based on such rhetoric and provides examples of how civil society actors were targeted with ‘foreign agent’ accusations – claims they described as false, misleading and unsubstantiated.

5.2.1 RECURRING STRANDS OF FALSE AND MISLEADING ALLEGATIONS USED TO ATTACK CIVIL SOCIETY ONLINE

In many instances documented by Amnesty International, false or misleading information took the form of direct labelling of specific organizations or individuals as ‘foreign agents’ without presenting credible evidence. In other cases, the allegations were more elaborate. They relied on decontextualized references to donor relationships, international partnerships or cross-border solidarity to construct misleading conspiracy claims portraying civil society actors that supposedly received foreign funding as having covert mandates to divide, destabilize or undermine Indonesia. The different forms of false and misleading information described above became particularly visible during moments of heightened political tension, including major protest cycles.

As set out in Section 2.1.5, cross-border partnerships and funding arrangements, in and of themselves, cannot serve as evidence of foreign manipulation. Amnesty International treats content that conflates receiving international support or funding with acting as a ‘foreign agent’ as misleading.

182 Cek Fakta, “Hoaks Serangkaian Narasi Menyerang Bocor Alus Politik Tempo” (previously cited).

183 Interview in-person with a senior journalist (real name withheld for security reasons), July 2025, Jakarta.

Across the material documented by Amnesty International, 'foreign agent' allegations tend to rely on two main recurring tropes.

The first involved invoking foreign funders or foreign foundations to delegitimize targets. The Open Society Foundation, founded by George Soros, was often invoked, alongside other donor organizations, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).¹⁸⁴ In these framings, the mere mention of an organization's real or alleged exposure to international funding – whether through grants, partnerships or donations – was treated as evidence that the organization was acting as a 'foreign agent'.

The second trope centred on 'colour revolution' conspiracy claims. The term "colour revolution" historically refers to democratic transitions in post-communist states across Eurasia in the early 2000s.¹⁸⁵ However, in recent years, governments in many countries have used this term to frame protest movements as being sponsored and manipulated by foreign governments or entities to overthrow the governments.¹⁸⁶ In the material documented for this report, allegations of a 'colour revolution' were used to portray domestic protest movements as foreign-backed destabilization efforts, and to suggest that civil society actors were complicit in such efforts – without credible evidence.

The following sub-section examines in detail case studies of these two tropes and analyses how they contributed to stigmatization and increased risks for targeted organizations and individuals.

5.2.2 CONFLATING INTERNATIONAL FUNDING WITH ACTING AS A FOREIGN AGENT

During the wave of Indonesia Gelap protests starting in February 2025, Amnesty International documented posts that used the 'foreign agent' rhetoric to attack human rights organizations supporting the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. For example, on 17 February 2025, the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI) posted a photograph on its official X account documenting the Indonesia Gelap protest (see Sample Post 1). Shortly afterwards, anonymous X accounts reframed the post using a 'foreign agent' narrative. One account insinuated that YLBHI was "getting cosy" to foreign donors like USAID (see Sample Post 2).

A second account then amplified and escalated this allegation by quote-tweeting the first post and adding a more explicit and accusatory claim, stating: "This is typical of foreign-funded CSOs; they are determined to act as instruments of discord, inciting the public to attack the legitimate government in order to trigger a colour revolution. From the 'Blue Garuda' to a "Indonesia Gelap" movement,¹⁸⁷ what will they come up with next? Shame on you, ICW @antikorupsi and @YLBHI" (see Sample Post 3).

184 The use of donor-based insinuations to discredit civil society is not unique to Indonesia. In global political discourse, George Soros has become a recurring symbol in conspiracy narratives alleging covert orchestration of protests, media criticism, or democratic mobilization. See Caroline Lees, "Global leaders smear their critics: Dissenters beware – these made-up charges are being used across borders to distract and destroy", 17 December 2019, *Index on Censorship*, Volume 48, Issue 4, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0306422019895719>; and Valentina Pisanty, "On the Logic of Conspiracy: Theories and the Soros Myth", January 2024, *Semiotic eye on media*, Volume 25, <https://www.ocula.it/files/OCULA-FluxSaggi-PISANTY-On-the-logic-of-conspiracy-theories-and-the-soros-myth.pdf>

185 Evgeny Finkel and Yitzhak M. Brudny, "No more colour! Authoritarian regimes and colour revolutions in Eurasia", 28 February 2012, https://commonweb.unifr.ch/artsdean/pub/gestens/f/as/files/4760/42821_182433.pdf

186 See an example from Serbia at Aleksandra Jerkov, Milivoj Beslin and Branislav Radelijic, "The depoliticization of protest: Understanding the 2024/2025 Serbian students' uprising", 2025, *Cogent Social Sciences*, Volume 11, Issue 1, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/23311886.2025.2583748>, p. 11.

187 The reference to the "Blue Garuda" pertains to the "Peringatan Darurat" (Emergency Warning) meme that went viral in late 2024. Featuring a blue-background silhouette of the national emblem, it became a visual shorthand for mass resistance against legislative manoeuvres. Raidi, "'Blue Garuda' Returns as Symbol of Protest Against 2025 12% VAT Hike", 21 November 2024, *Indonesia Sentinel*, <https://indonesiasentinel.com/blue-garuda-returns-as-symbol-of-protest-against-2025-12-vat-hike/>

These posts did not provide evidence that YLBHI was acting as a foreign agent. Instead, they relied on misleading framing, selectively invoking the organization’s international links and embedding them within conspiracy narratives about ‘foreign interference.’



Sample Post 1: Tweet from YLBHI documenting a protest in February 2025. The tweet was published on 17 February 2025.

The tweet said: “Captured this epic shot via @jackjackparr. Thousands of students flooded the streets of Jakarta today, standing up against a tone-deaf state.

This spirit must spread to everyone. We must prove that ultimate power resides with the people.

To keep the momentum going, drop your photos or videos of protests in your city in the replies!”



Sample Post 2: Tweet quoting YLBHI’s original tweet about the Jakarta protest in February. This tweet was published on 18 February 2025.

The post featured a screenshot of an event hosted by Meta and USAID in which YLBHI participated.

It said, “So YLBHI is getting pretty cosy with USAID now, huh?”



Sample Post 3: Tweet quoting Image 2 above and attacking YLBHI and other NGOs further with the ‘foreign agent’ allegations. The tweet was published on 18 February 2025.

The tweet said: “This is typical of foreign-funded NGOs; they are determined to act as instruments of discord, inciting the public to attack the legitimate government in order to trigger a colour revolution. From ‘Blue Garuda’ to ‘Indonesia Gelap’ movements, what will they come up with next? Shame on you, ICW @ antikorupsi and @YLBHI”

Bareng Warga, a collective disseminating information about the Indonesia Gelap protest movement on social media platforms, reported experiencing similar attacks online.¹⁸⁸ The group’s representatives told Amnesty International that they often received false accusations that they were the masterminds of protests who instigated public dissent to attract funding from foreign donors, even though the group was merely focused on publicizing news about the protests.¹⁸⁹

One of the Bareng Warga representatives told Amnesty International,

“We use X as our main channel of communication, but sometimes the reply section got overwhelmed by disinformation. The common accusation was that we received money from foreign entities. The goal was perhaps to delegitimize our activism and make people believe that we were only mobilizing, not for our rights, but for financial incentives.”¹⁹⁰

Similar patterns re-emerged during the nationwide protests in late August and early September 2025. During this round of protests, an online campaign for regional solidarity was established to encourage individuals across Southeast Asia to make small donations to support Indonesian protesters, including contributions for food, legal aid and emergency assistance.¹⁹¹ This cross-border solidarity action was shared online via the hashtag #SEAbings – a play on “Southeast Asia” and “siblings”.¹⁹²

188 Nino Citra Anugrahanto, “‘Bareng Warga’, Tak Surut Menolak Revisi UU TNI meski Disudutkan”, 30 March 2025, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/bareng-warga-tak-surut-menolak-revisi-uu-tni-meski-disudutkan> (in Indonesian).

189 Interview in person with two representatives from Bareng Warga, a group of activists, 24 July 2025, Jakarta.

190 Interview with two representatives from Bareng Warga (previously cited).

191 Riana A. Ibrahim and Tessa Wong, “‘The only way I can help is to send food’: Indonesia protests spark support from Asian neighbours”, 5 September 2025, BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crrjlk14yx4o>

192 Adhiraaj Anand, “#SEAbings: The New Southeast Asian Transnational Solidarity Campaign”, 15 September 2025, The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2025/09/seabings-the-new-southeast-asian-transnational-solidarity-campaign/>

However, during this period, Amnesty International documented how false and misleading information was disseminated to discredit this solidarity effort. For example, on 4 September 2025, an anonymous account on X distorted online calls for donations for LBH Jakarta, an organization that provides legal aid for victims of human rights abuses, including protesters. The account selectively reused posts by other users that contained information on how to donate to LBH Jakarta and presented them as “proof” that the organization was receiving support from foreign “masterminds” to stage “anarchic protests” in Indonesia” (see Sample Post 4).

This X user said:

“The oil and gas mafia and Soros have deployed their foot soldiers in Malaysia to organize demonstrations in Indonesia, to save their operatives in Indonesia. I urge @PPATK and @DivHumas_Polri to investigate the massive flow of funds to LBH Jakarta through donations and PayPal from Malaysia – this could be logistics money for a second round of anarchic protests, even more brutal and larger. It’s becoming clearer that the masterminds are foreign parties and the mafia. That gimmick of ordering food deliveries from Malaysia was just a cover to disguise the transfer of logistics money from their backers in Malaysia to LBH Jakarta for the next round of demonstrations.”¹⁹³

The post did not provide credible evidence to support these allegations. Instead, it relied on decontextualized fundraising information and embedded it within a conspiracy narrative about foreign interference. It further escalated the claim by tagging Indonesia’s Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (PPATK) and the Indonesian National Police, effectively encouraging state scrutiny of CSOs on the basis of an unsubstantiated claim.



Sample Post 4: Tweet making accusations against the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, published on 4 September 2025.

193 PPATK refers to Indonesia’s Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre and DivHumas Polri, the Indonesian National Police’s public relations division. The anonymous account tagged these agencies’ official X account to urge them to see the content and carry out investigations of the regional solidarity initiative in question.

Attacks based on the 'foreign agent' narratives were not limited to organizations providing legal aid or protest support. They also targeted media outlets reporting on politically sensitive issues. During the nationwide protests in August–September 2025, Konde.co, an independent feminist media outlet, was among the platforms documenting women-led mobilizations, police responses to demonstrations and the gendered impacts of state violence under the Prabowo administration.¹⁹⁴ Salsabila Putri Pertiwi, the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Konde.co, told Amnesty International that publicly available information about her outlet's international partnerships, including with USAID, was de-contextualized and twisted to smear the outlet's reputation by accusing them of being a foreign agent.¹⁹⁵

Amnesty International documented instances that aligned with Salsabila's testimony. In one example, an anonymous X account responded to Konde.co's coverage of a protest organized by the Indonesian Women's Alliance (Aliansi Perempuan Indonesia, API). It focused on Konde.co's coverage of the API's call for the withdrawal of military forces from Papua – a region marked by decades of conflict between Papuan pro-independence groups and Indonesian security forces¹⁹⁶ – alleging that Konde.co amplified this call in the interests of foreign powers. The post remained online and accessible as of 20 April 2026 and had reached more than 105,423 users and received 278 retweets and 678 likes (see Sample Post 5).

The post alleged:

“Everyone must be extra careful of this provocation by @konde_co because it is funded by USAID! Their demands have already strayed far from the original protest demands by bringing up Papua. In the end, it's nothing more than typical U.S. methods to regain control over natural resources there. Don't let yourselves be pitted against each other!”

Rather than engaging with the substance of Konde.co's reporting, the response relied on a decontextualized association between the outlet's international partnerships and alleged foreign control. By selectively invoking references to external funding, the post reframed journalistic coverage of a domestic protest as a proxy for foreign interference. Similar to the attacks against LBH Jakarta, this framing mobilized incomplete or selective information to construct narratives that delegitimized civil society actors without addressing the content of their work.

194 See examples of Konde.co's reports about gendered state violence at Luthfi Maulana Adhari, “2025 Year-End Edition: Women's Resistance in the Season of Arrests and the Year of #DemocracyApocalypse”, 6 February 2026, Konde.co, <https://www.konde.co/2026/02/2025-year-end-edition-womens-resistance-in-the-season-of-arrests-and-the-year-of-democracyapocalypse/>; and Anita Dhewy, Luthfi Maulana Adhari and Ika Ariyani, “Sexism in Student Arrests and Maternal Activism Mothers Defend Their Children's Struggles”, 29 August 2025, Konde.co, <https://www.konde.co/2025/08/sexism-in-student-arrests-and-maternal-activism-mothers-defend-their-childrens-struggles/>

195 Interview by video call with Salsabila Putri Pertiwi, Deputy Editor-in-Chief at Konde.co, 15 September 2025.

196 Amnesty International, *Indonesia: Gold Rush: Indonesia's mining plans risk fueling abuses in Papua* (Index: ASA 21/5257/2022), 21 March 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/5257/2022/en/>, p. 10.



Sample Post 5: Tweet making accusations against Konde.co, published on 4 September 2025

The caption said:

“Please be extra careful with provocations from

@konde_co because it’s funded by USAID! Its demands alone have already deviated far from the initial demo demands, dragging in Papua issues. In the end, it’s not far from the typical USA tactics to regain control of natural resources there. Don’t let yourself be pitted against each other!”

In addition to the post described above, Konde.co’s tweet reporting on the API protest attracted multiple other hostile responses that invoked a similar framing (see Sample Posts 6 and 7).



Sample Post 6: Examples of responses to Konde.co’s tweet on the API’s women-led protest.

The account at the top said, “Paid by USAID?”

The second account down the column said, “American puppets”.

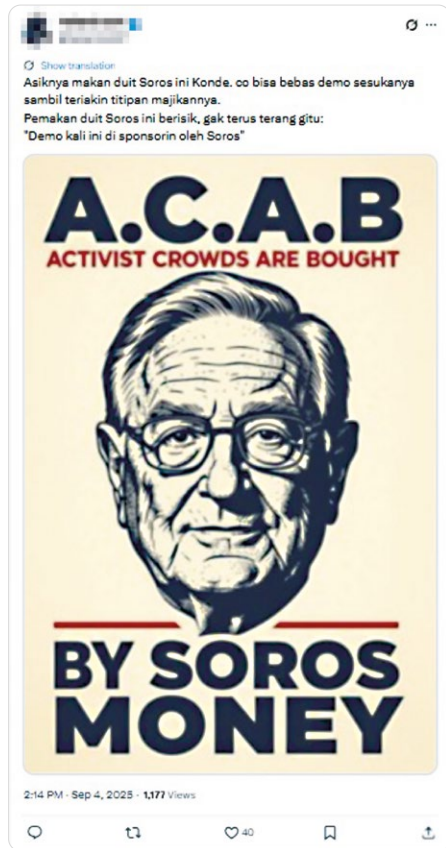
The third one said, “Be wary of groups funded by foreigners. They are the real traitors to the nation.”

The fourth one said, “Is the money from the US tasty, Konde.co?”

The fifth one said, “[Konde.co] is the friend of the dog @VeronicaKoman. Understood. Dollar. USAID...” The tagged account belongs to the woman human rights defender Veronica Koman who also often faced online attacks for her activism.

For example, one anonymous user replied:

“It must be nice eating Soros’s money – Konde.co can protest freely whenever it wants while shouting its boss’s orders. These Soros money-eaters are noisy and dishonest. Why not just admit it: ‘This protest is sponsored by Soros.’” (see Sample Post 7).



Sample Post 7: Tweet discrediting Konde.co and the API’s protest with allegations around funding from George Soros

Salsabila told Amnesty International that this was not the first time Konde.co had been attacked online:

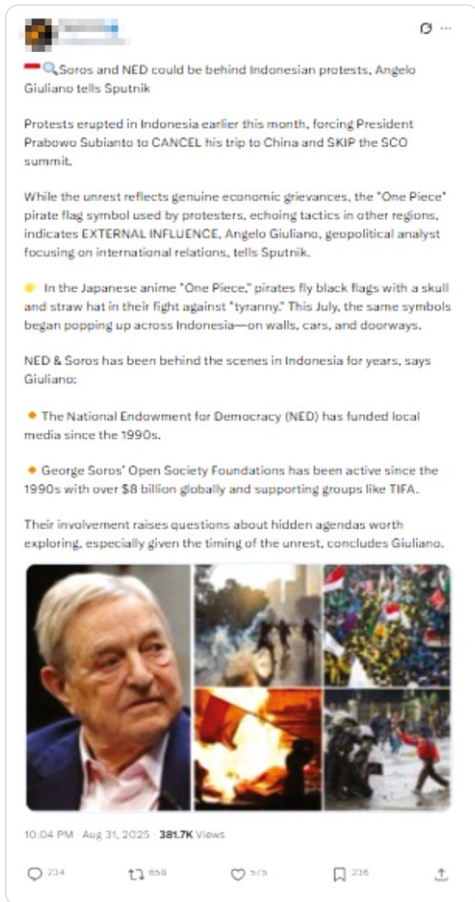
“Since Prabowo took office, these disinformation attacks online became visibly worse. We noticed that the attacks often spiked whenever we reported on protests critical of the government. However, the situation since the recent round of protests broke out [in late August 2025] has reached a point of crisis in terms of online disinformation. One clear difference is that the accusatory language that labels independent media such as Konde.co and other organizations as manipulated by foreign interests and donors became very prominent during this time.”¹⁹⁷

5.2.3 THE SPREAD OF THE ‘COLOUR REVOLUTION’ NARRATIVE AND ITS USE AGAINST CIVIL SOCIETY

During the nationwide demonstrations that began in late August 2025, conspiracy theories circulated widely online portraying the protests as attempts to stage a ‘colour revolution’ orchestrated by external forces. One prominent example involved Sputnik, a Russian state-owned media outlet, which published two posts on its official X account for international audiences (@SputnikInt) on 31 August 2025. These posts foregrounded claims that the protests were influenced or financed by foreign actors, including Soros and the US-based organization National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Both remained online and accessible as of 20 April 2026. One of them had reached more than 381,739 users, while another had reached more than 57,107 users (see Sample Posts 8 and 9).

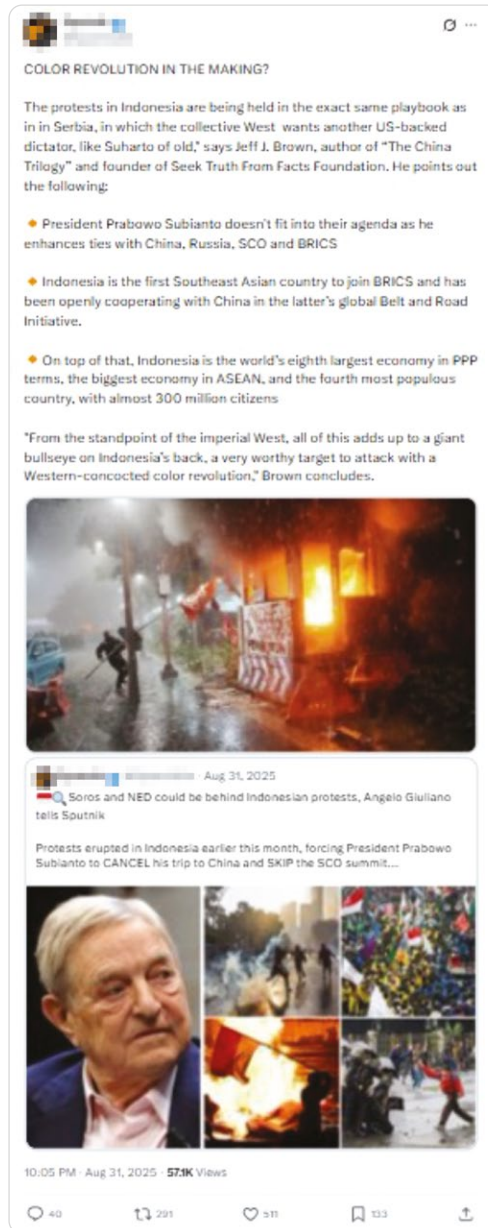
197 Interview with Salsabila Putri Pertiwi (previously cited).

Sputnik presented these claims through quoting commentaries from figures who were presented as political analysts. For example, one of the tweets quoted Angelo Giuliano saying, “NED & Soros [have] been behind the scenes in Indonesia for years.” It also stated: “While the unrest reflects genuine economic grievances, the ‘One Piece’ pirate flag symbol used by protesters, echoing tactics in other regions, indicates EXTERNAL INFLUENCE”, referring to the use of the pirate flag as a symbol of protest in Indonesia (see Sample Post 8).¹⁹⁸ The other tweet stated in its first sentence: “COLOUR REVOLUTION IN THE MAKING?”, followed by the same conspiracy theory (see Sample Post 9).¹⁹⁹ These posts drew on familiar tropes to suggest foreign manipulation without identifying specific organizations or individuals alleged to be involved.



Sample Post 8: Sputnik’s first post on X published on 31 August 2025 at 10:04 pm (GMT+7)

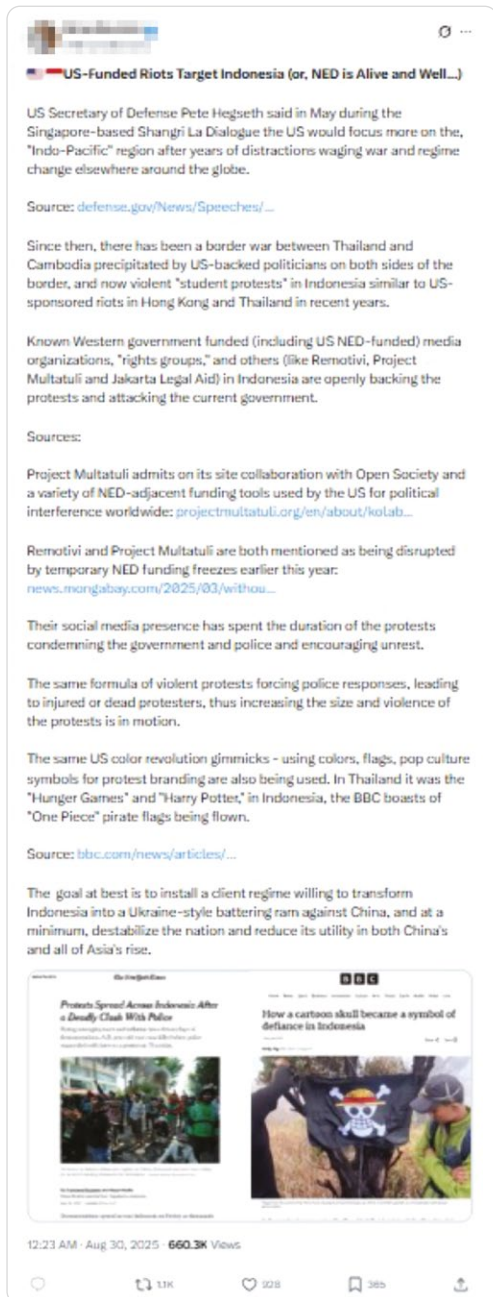
Sample Post 9: Sputnik’s second post on X published on 31 August 2025 at 10:05 pm (GMT+7)



198 Sputnik, X post: “Soros and NED could be behind Indonesian protests, Angelo Giuliano tells Sputnik”, 31 August 2025, <https://archive.ph/ek1vN#selection-561.0-561.81> (accessed on 10 February 2026).

199 Sputnik, X Post: “COLOUR REVOLUTION IN THE MAKING?”, 31 August 2025, <https://archive.ph/z8YIQ> (accessed on 10 February 2026).

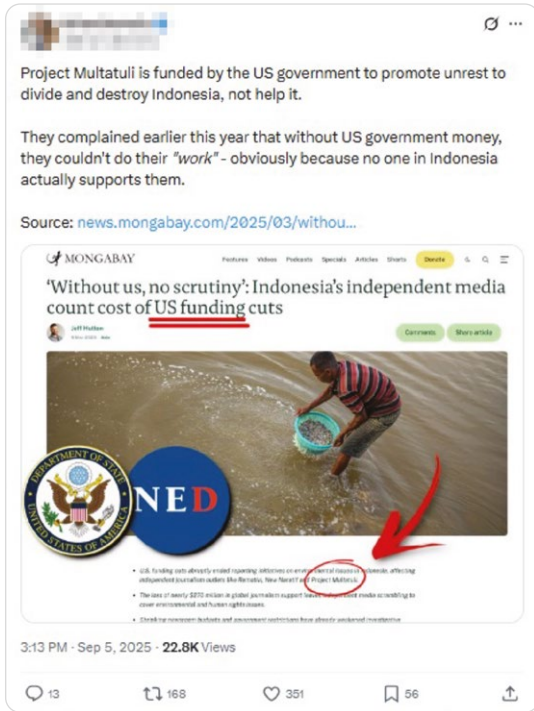
During the same period, other actors online advanced similar narratives in more targeted and accusatory ways. While Sputnik’s posts framed the protests broadly, a number of accounts went further by naming specific CSOs and media outlets as alleged participants in a supposed ‘colour revolution.’



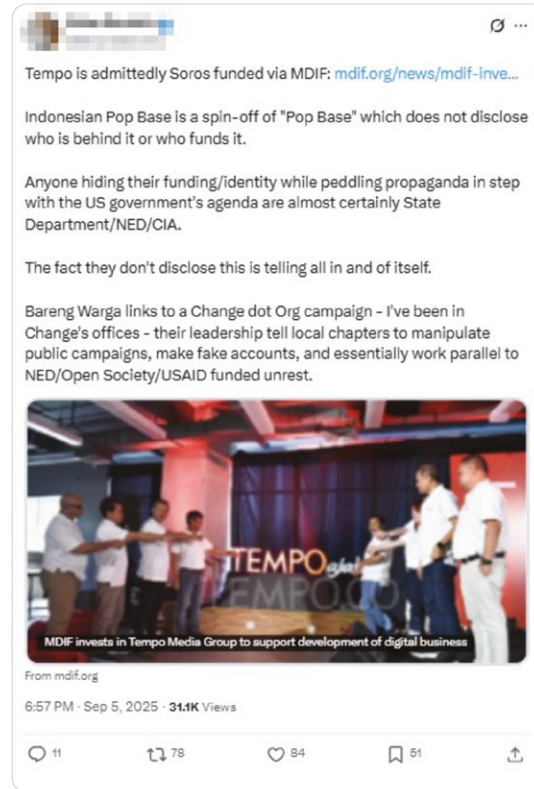
For example, on 30 August 2025, a political influencer with more than 120,000 followers on X published a post titled “US-Funded Riots Target Indonesia (or, NED is Alive and Well...)”. The tweet named several organizations working to report on state violence against protesters or supporting victims of such state violence, including media outlets such as Project Multatuli, Tempo and Remotivi, as well as legal aid organization LBH Jakarta, as part of a network staging a “colour revolution” and “US-funded riots”. The tweet rapidly went viral, reaching over 660,322 views (see Sample Post 10). It remained online and accessible as of 20 April 2026.

Sample Post 10: Tweet making accusations against Project Multatuli, Remotivi, and Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, published on 30 August 2025

In subsequent posts, the same account extended the allegations to other actors involved in documenting or supporting protest-related activities. In two other tweets, the account similarly accused Project Multatuli, as well as Tempo, Bareng Warga and news-sharing Twitter account Indonesia Pop Base, of conspiring to provoke unrest and destabilize the government (see Sample Posts 11 and 12). Both posts remained online and accessible as of 20 April 2026 and received a high number of engagements, with more than 22,895 views for Sample Post 11 and 31,107 for Sample Post 12. Across these posts, the account relied on broad assertions of foreign funding to make allegations that the named organizations were coordinating violent activity or acting under foreign direction.



Sample Post 11: Tweet making accusations against Project Multatuli, published on 5 September 2025



Sample Post 12: Tweet making accusations against Tempo, Indonesia Pop Base, and Bareng Warga, published on 5 September 2025



Another anonymous account echoed this framing while calling for regulatory action against civil society. On 1 September 2025, one account tweeted: “Hopefully, after all this chaos, a law will be enacted that strictly limits NGOs from receiving grants from foreign entities, especially Soros and Ford, so they don’t end up becoming foreign proxies – the root cause of the unrest in Indonesia all this time. They claim to be independent, but it turns out they are pets of foreigners” (see Sample Post 13).

Sample Post 13: Tweet encouraging stringent regulations of foreign-funded NGOs, published on 1 September 2025

Civil society actors targeted by these narratives described the impact as deeply stigmatizing. *Putri*, one of the journalists from an outlet targeted by this wave of attacks told Amnesty International:

“The online attacks mainly chose to single out those most active and visible for their work related to this protest. We were simply doing our work as journalists but somehow became targets.”²⁰⁰

In response to the spread of these claims, Cek Fakta, the fact-checking unit of Tempo, published an article on 11 September 2025 examining and refuting allegations that the use of colours or symbols in the protests was linked to a “colour revolution.”²⁰¹

In this case study, Amnesty International does not reach any conclusions regarding whether the actors described above are linked to one another, share a command structure or acted in deceptive coordination. Rather, this example illustrates how transnational and domestic actors – operating in different contexts – converged around a shared narrative that framed protests as foreign-engineered and civil society as manipulated by foreign powers to undermine Indonesia’s interests. In doing so, their conduct reinforced and extended the ‘foreign agent’ rhetoric that has become engineered by state actors under the Prabowo administration, contributing to the stigmatization of civil society actors during a period of heightened political tension.

5.2.4 UPTICK OF ‘FOREIGN AGENT’ ALLEGATIONS ONLINE IN EARLY 2026

In early 2026, tensions between the Indonesian state and civil society actors increased due to various reasons, including the March 2026 acid attack against HRD Andrie from KontraS (see Section 3.3) and the filing of a judicial review of the Prabowo administration’s flagship programme MBG by CELIOS and other civil society groups the same month.²⁰²

During this period, Amnesty International observed another uptick in ‘foreign agent’ allegations online, including by a state actor. On 6 April 2026, Ulta Levenia, an Expert Staff at the Presidential Staff Office (KSP) posted on her Instagram account a video containing allegations against human rights CSOs of receiving foreign funding for undermining Indonesia and orchestrating violent protests (see Sample Post 14). The video named many organizations, including CELIOS and KontraS. Ulta’s video remained online and publicly accessible and had received 61,500 views as of 20 April 2026.

In this video, Ulta said:

“NGOs are always framed as fighting for civil society, for ordinary people’s rights, and so on. But are they really independent? Or is there someone behind the scenes directing the agendas they carry out in our country? [...] I have compiled data on several NGOs that receive foreign funding, and the amounts are enormous. [...] For example: WALHI [Indonesian NGO] focuses on environmental and agrarian issues; YLBHI focuses on legal aid; CELIOS focuses on economics and public policy; KontraS focuses on human rights and security sector issues [...] Do they have KPIs [key performance indicators]? Are their impacts measured and presented to the public? Or are these funds primarily used to provoke and criticize the government? Or even to orchestrate demonstrations that sometimes lead to riots, arson, and looting?”

200 Interview by video call with *Putri* (Real name withheld for security reasons), journalist 10 September 2025.

201 Tempo, Keliru: Indonesia Jadi Target Revolusi Warna lewat Demonstrasi Agustus 2025, 11 September 2025, https://www.tempo.co/cekfakta/keliru-indonesia-jadi-target-revolusi-warna-lewat-demonstrasi-agustus-2025-2068774#google_vignette (in Indonesian).

202 Centre of Economic and Law, Constitutional Lawsuit on the Governance of the Free Nutritious Meal Program in the State Budget, 11 March 2026, <https://celios.co.id/constitutional-lawsuit-on-the-governance-of-the-free-nutritious-meal-program-in-the-state-budget/#:~:text=We%20have%20submitted%20a%20Judicial.monopolistic%20practices%20in%20program%20implementation..>

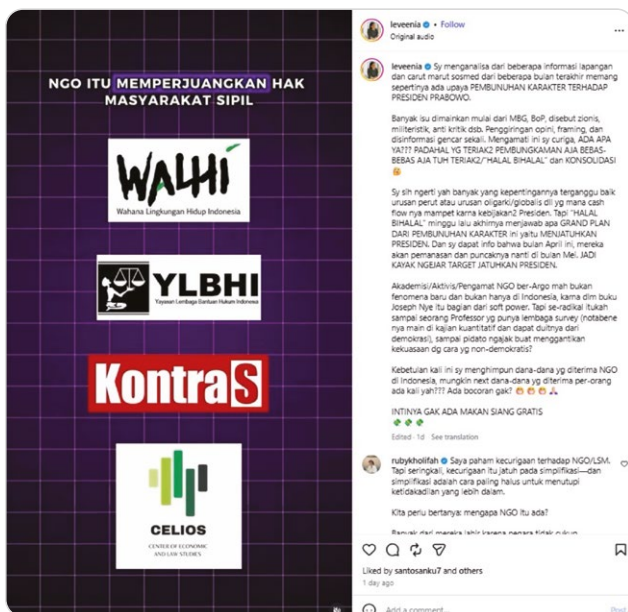
Sample Post 14:

Instagram post by Ulta Levenia, an Expert Staff at the Presidential Staff Office on 6 April 2026.

The caption said:

“From analyzing various on-the-ground information and the chaos on social media over the past few months, it does seem like there is an attempt at character assassination against President Prabowo.

Many issues are being played up—ranging from MBG, BoP, accusations of being Zionist, militaristic, anti-criticism, and so on. Opinion-shaping, framing, and disinformation are happening very intensively. Observing all this, I become suspicious—what is really going on here??? Meanwhile, those who are shouting about repression are still freely shouting, holding “halal bihalal” gatherings, and consolidating



I understand that many people's interests are being disrupted—whether it's livelihood-related or tied to oligarchic/globalist interests whose cash flow has been blocked by the President's policies. But that “halal bihalal” event last week seems to have revealed the grand plan behind this character assassination, which is to bring down the President. And I have information that this April they will start warming up, with the peak coming in May. So it's like they're chasing a target to topple the President.

Academics/activists/NGO observers with certain “agendas” are not a new phenomenon, and not only in Indonesia—because in Joseph Nye's framework, this is part of soft power. But is it really that radical, that a professor who runs a survey institution (which, after all, operates in quantitative research and earns money from democracy) would go as far as giving a speech calling for a change of power through non-democratic means?

Coincidentally, this time I've been compiling data on funds received by NGOs in Indonesia—maybe next we can also look at funds received by individuals??? Any leaks?

THE POINT IS: THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH”

The examples documented in this section show how 'foreign agent' framing was used online to discredit and stigmatize civil society actors during moments of heightened political tension. These posts frequently relied on distorted or decontextualized references to international funding, partnerships or expressions of cross-border solidarity and reframed them as evidence of foreign interference.

As those targeted repeatedly emphasized, the issue is not the existence of foreign funding itself, but how selective or incomplete information about such support is weaponized and distorted to construct misleading narratives of "foreign control". As journalist *Putri* observed:

"It is entirely normal to receive foreign aid. The Indonesian government also receives foreign aid, and so do CSOs. But in the online space, what the buzzers often do is to distort or decontextualize this fact and portray an image that they are 'foreign agents' staging a colour revolution and operating to destroy the country."²⁰³

Although the posts examined above differed in tone, format and reach, they shared a common logic: reframing the legitimate defence of human rights and independent journalism as foreign-driven and illegitimate. The following section builds on these findings by examining instances where similar false and misleading claims were not only present but disseminated in coordinated patterns across multiple accounts and platforms.

5.3 DECEPTIVE COORDINATION SPREADING HARMFUL AND STIGMATIZING DISINFORMATION

Building on the patterns documented in Section 5.2, Amnesty International examined cases in which false and misleading information based on 'foreign agent' allegations was disseminated through coordinated activities. In line with the methodology set out in Chapter 2, the analysis assessed behavioural and content-based indicators. In other words, it examined whether multiple accounts disseminated identical or highly similar narratives and visual materials within short, closely clustered timeframes. Where these indicators appeared together, they provided reasonable grounds to conclude that the dissemination formed part of a deceptively coordinated campaign.

Due to the falsity of the 'foreign agent' allegations circulated and the presence of coordinated dissemination patterns indicating deceptive intent, all campaigns presented in this section meet the definition of disinformation as set out in Chapter 2.

Applying this framework, this section presents four emblematic disinformation campaigns. Three campaigns targeted activists opposing the Military Law revisions or who were linked to, the Indonesia Gelap protest movement and or the media outlet *Tempo*, in which social media accounts that appeared to belong to military units were actively involved. The fourth case concerns disinformation attacks against CELIOS disseminated by anonymous accounts.

203 Interview with *Putri* (previously cited).

5.3.1 DECEPTIVE COORDINATION TARGETING ANTI-MILITARY LAW ACTIVISTS

FIRST VIDEO (16-19 MARCH 2025)

On 14-15 March 2025, the government and the DPR held a closed-door session at the Fairmont Hotel in Jakarta to fast-track deliberations on the Military Law revisions. On 15 March, three human rights activists from the Civil Society Coalition for Security Sector Reform, including Andrie Yunus from KontraS, were present to stage a peaceful protest against the bill due to concerns that it could expand the military's powers and weaken civilian oversight.²⁰⁴

One day after the protest, a video containing false and misleading claims about the activists began circulating across social media platforms. The video showed footage of the three activists protesting the Military Law revisions. It featured superimposed text, casting them as puppets of foreign interests. The video featured text which said, in part:

“Indonesia is in danger: foreign agents are mobilizing! For years they have lived off foreign money; they defend foreign interests. They do not want to see our TNI [National Armed Forces] strong, nor do they want this country to be sovereign. They fear the unity of the TNI and the people. The proposed TNI Law is not a return to ABRI’s [former acronym of the national armed forces] dual-function role from the New Order era; this is a malicious and misleading framing by foreign agents...”

“ABRI’s dual-function role” refers to a New Order doctrine known in Indonesian as “dwifungsi” that gave Indonesia’s armed forces both military and sociopolitical duties and justified their presence in parliament, government and civilian life in the name of national stability.²⁰⁵ The doctrine, which was opposed by many, was formally abolished through political reforms after Suharto’s fall in 1998.²⁰⁶ In 2025, many of the CSOs protesting argued that the revised Military Law sought to bring back this dual-function role for the army.²⁰⁷

Amnesty International’s metadata analysis indicates that the earliest publicly available posting of the video on Instagram was by an account that presented itself as belonging to the Regional Representative Council of Riau Islands Province (@dpdgerindra,peri) on 16 March 2025 at 12.55pm (GMT+7). On this day, another account that appeared to belong to the South Kalimantan Gerindra Regional Leadership Council (@dpd.gerindrakalsel) posted the video at 9.11pm (GMT+7).

On 17 March 2025, an account of a politician affiliated with Gerindra North Sumatra posted the same video on his verified Instagram account, which had received approximately 29,300 views and 5,014 likes as of 20 April 2026 (see Sample Post 15).

204 Indonesia Business Post, “Government, House criticized for ‘exclusive’ TNI Bill deliberation”, 18 March 2025.

205 Kompas, “Kronologi Isu Dwifungsi TNI dari Reformasi hingga Polemik Terkini”, 6 March 2025, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/en-kronologi-isu-dwifungsi-tni-dari-reformasi-hingga-polemik-terkini> (in Indonesian).

206 Kompas, “Kronologi Isu Dwifungsi TNI dari Reformasi hingga Polemik Terkini” (previously cited).

207 Amnesty International, “Hentikan Pembahasan Revisi Undang-Undang TNI yang Menghidupkan Dwifungsi”, 6 March 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/hentikan-pembahasan-revisi-undang-undang-tni-yang-menghidupkan-dwifungsi/03/2025/> (in Indonesian).



Sample Post 15: Instagram post by an account that presents itself as belonging to a local politician affiliated with Gerindra Party in North Sumatra.

The post was captioned: “#tnidarakyatuntukrakyat”. In English, the hashtag means “TNI from the people, for the people”.



Between 17 and 19 March 2025, the video was further amplified by 31 social media accounts, including via Instagram, Facebook, X and YouTube, that appeared to be affiliated with 27 different military units (see the full list at Annex I and examples at Coordinated Posts 1). Amnesty International’s metadata analysis of the timestamp showed that an account that presented itself as the Information Detachment of District Military Command 1510 Sula (Pendim 1510 Sula) posted the video first in the evening of 17 March 2025 at 6.07 pm (GMT+7). Then other accounts followed suit.

These accounts did not have official verification badges – the “blue checks” that social media platforms use to vouch for someone’s identity. However, they displayed official insignia, unit names and identifiable institutional branding in their profile information. Their posting histories also consistently featured content relating to the respective units and broader TNI activities.



Coordinated Posts 1:

Examples of Instagram posts by different military units. The posts featured the same video spreading disinformation against anti-Military Law protesters.

The first Instagram post came from the account that presents itself as belonging to Udayana Regional Military Health Service (@kesdam_9udayana). At the beginning, the caption said: “INDONESIA IS IN DANGER — FOREIGN LACKEYS ARE ON THE MOVE!!! #SaatnyaBersatu (Translation: #TimeToUnite) #SaatnyaMelawan

(Translation: #TimeToFight) #SaveIndonesia #SaveTNI #SaveRakyatIndonesia (Translation: #SaveThePeopleOfIndonesia). The post went on to discuss the benefits of the Military Law revisions. The post was published on 17 March 2025.

The second Instagram post came from the account that presents itself as belonging to TNI’s Legal Development Agency. Similar to the Udayana Regional Military Health Service’s post, this post’s caption discussed the benefits of the Military Law revisions. The post was published on 18 March 2025.

While registered with different social media platforms, the 32 accounts identified all posted the identical video within the three-day period of 17-19 March 2025. At least 18 deployed identical hashtags, including #SaatnyaBersatu (“Time to Unite”), #SaatnyaMelawan (“Time to Fight Back”), #SaveIndonesia, #SaveTNI, and #SaveRakyatIndonesia (“Save the Indonesian People”) – all used in exactly the same order.

Amnesty International verified that, on the 18-month anniversary of the Prabowo administration on 20 April 2026, 30 out of 31 of these posts remained online and publicly accessible. The remaining post was no longer accessible because the Instagram account hosting it appeared to have been deleted or deactivated (see the detailed breakdown of these posts and their status in Annex I).

STRUCTURE OF THE INDONESIAN NATIONAL ARMED FORCES

The Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) have a territory-based command structure. At the top of this chain are Regional Military Commands (Komando Daerah Militer / Kodam), overseeing 21 military units across the country.²⁰⁸ Under each Kodam are Sub-Regional Military Commands (Komando Resor Militer / Korem), and beneath Korem are District Military Commands (Komando Distrik Militer / Kodim), which typically correspond to a district/city level.²⁰⁹ Kodim supervise Sub-District Military Commands (Koramil).²¹⁰

In addition to territorial commands, the army has specialized and functional entities that support operations and administration. These include legal, medical, engineering and military police elements. For example, Badan Pembinaan Hukum or Babinkum is the TNI's body dealing with legal affairs.²¹¹ Meanwhile, Kesehatan Daerah Militer or Kesdam provides health services based in each Kodam unit.²¹² Combat units under the TNI include infantry battalions (Batalyon Infanteri or Yonif) and combat engineer battalions (Batalyon Zeni Tempur or Yonzipur). Military Police units (Polisi Militer) perform military policing and disciplinary functions within the TNI.²¹³

Further, state-aligned accounts – mostly anonymous - also played an important role in amplifying this video. Through a search via the Original Audio feature on Instagram, at least 135 public accounts – mostly anonymous - posted this same video between 16 and 19 March 2025 (see Sample Post 16). Many of these videos received significantly high engagements, including one post that had reached more than 17,300 views as of 20 April 2026 (see Sample Post 17).



Sample Post 16: Screenshot of multiple Instagram posts containing the same video attacking the activists protesting against the Military Law revisions

(original audio page accessed on 10 February 2026).

208 Under the Prabowo administration, the government passed and implemented the Presidential Regulation Number 84 of 2025 concerning the Organizational Structure of the TNI, which increased the number of Kodam from 15 to 21. See Kompas, “Mengapa Struktur Teritorial TNI Makin Membesar?”, 10 August 2025, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/mengapa-struktur-teritorial-tni-makin-membesar> (in Indonesian).

209 Tempo, Mengenal Markas Komando TNI dari Kodam, Korem, Kodim, hingga Koramil, 29 May 2023, <https://www.tempo.co/arsip/mengenal-markas-komando-tni-dari-kodam-korem-kodim-hingga-koramil-182823> (in Indonesian).

210 Tempo, Mengenal Markas Komando TNI dari Kodam, Korem, Kodim, hingga Koramil (previously cited).

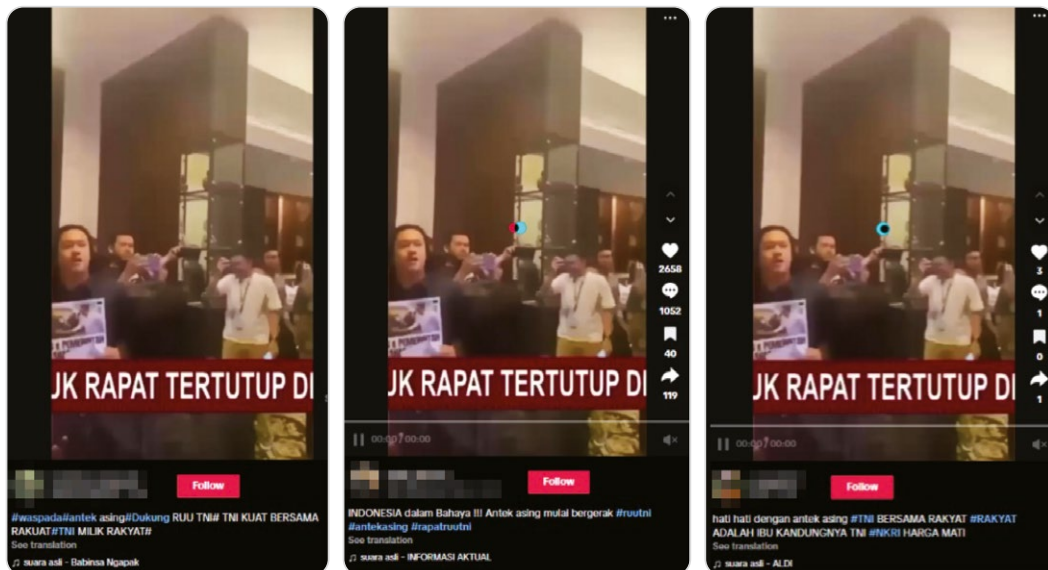
211 Portal Pejabat Pengelola Informasi dan Dokumentasi Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Profil Babinkum TNI, 12 August 2016, <https://ppid.tni.mil.id/view/32435573/profil-babinkum-tni.html> (in Indonesian, accessed on 10 January 2026)..

212 Kesdam IM, Sejarah, <https://www.kesdamim-tniad.info/p/sejarah.html> (in Indonesian, accessed on 10 January 2026).

213 Tempo, Tugas dan Fungsi Polisi Militer di Indonesia, 10 January 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/politik/tugas-dan-fungsi-polisi-militer-di-indonesia-1192237> (in Indonesian).



Sample Post 17: Screenshot of a viral Instagram post containing the same video attacking the activists protesting against the Military Law revisions, that had reached more than 17,300 views as of 20 April 2026.



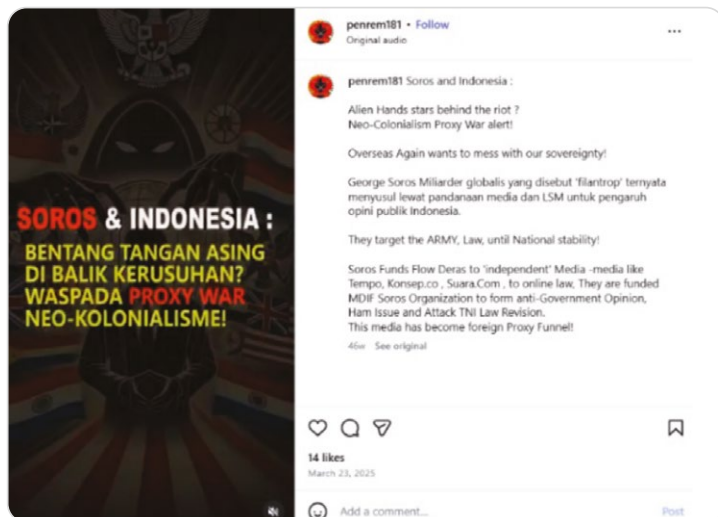
Sample Post 18: Three TikTok posts featured the same video spreading disinformation against anti-Military Law protesters. These videos were posted between 17 and 26 March 2025.

SECOND VIDEO (22- 25 MARCH 2025)

Amnesty International identified another video circulated on Instagram targeting activists opposing the Military Law revisions, as well as human rights CSOs and independent media outlets. This video combined AI-generated imagery with footage of protest activities, including scenes from the Fairmont Hotel protest against the proposed revisions to the Military Law. Its voiceover alleged: “Foreign forces are once again trying to disrupt our sovereignty. George Soros, the globalist billionaire who is called a philanthropist, has in fact infiltrated through media and NGO funding to influence Indonesian public opinion.”

The video identified specific human rights defenders, CSOs and media outlets, claiming that they were paid by Soros to oppose the military and the revision of the Military Law. Those named included Tempo, Suara.com, Konde.co, and Hukum Online, as well as Usman Hadid, Amnesty International Indonesia’s Executive Director, among many others.

At least four Instagram accounts that appeared to belong to the Sub-Regional Commands (Korem) No. 181 Praja Vira (@penrem181), Sub-District Military Command (Koramil) 04 Cikupa (@koramil04_cikupa), Military District Command 1809 Maybrat (@kodim_1809_maybrat) and District Military Command 1810 Tambrauw (@kodim1810_tambrauw) played a role in amplifying this second video. These accounts reposted the video on 23 March 2025 (see the links to these accounts in Annex II and examples at Coordinated Posts 2). As of 20 April 2026, these four posts remained online and accessible.



Coordinated Posts 2:

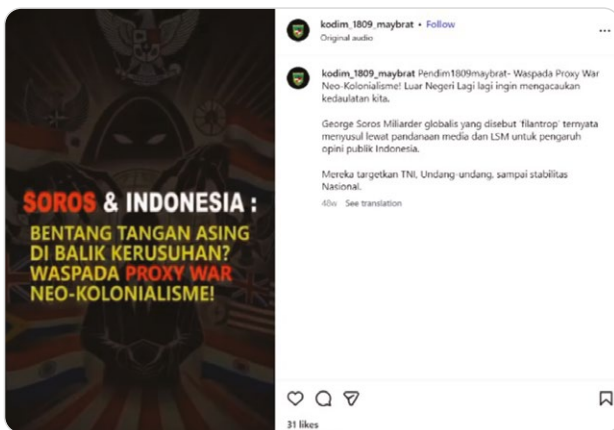
Instagram posts of the same video by accounts that appeared to belong to four military units – all published on 23 March 2025.

This first video was posted by an account that presented itself as belonging to the Sub-Regional Military Command (Korem) No. 181 Praja Vira (@penrem181) at 11:33 AM (GMT+7).

The caption said: “Soros and Indonesia: The Invisible Hand of Foreign Powers Behind the Riots? Beware of Neo-Colonial Proxy Wars! Foreign powers once again want to disrupt our sovereignty. George Soros, the globalist billionaire referred to as a ‘philanthropist,’ is apparently infiltrating through the funding of media and NGOs to influence Indonesian public opinion. They are targeting the TNI [Indonesian National Armed Forces], the laws, and even national stability! Soros’s funds are flowing heavily into “independent” media outlets such as Tempo, Suara.com, Konsep.co, and Hukum Online. They are financed by MDIF, Soros’s organization, to shape anti-government opinion, push human rights issues, and attack the revision of the Military Law. These media outlets have become mouthpieces for foreign proxies.”



The second video was posted by an account that presented itself as belonging to the Sub-District Military Command (Koramil) 04 Cikupa (@koramil04_cikupa) at 15:23 PM (GMT+7). The caption featured the use of multiple hashtags including the following: [#SaatnyaBersatu](#) [#SaatnyaMelawan](#) [#SaveIndonesia](#) [#SaveTNI](#) [#SaveRakyatIndonesia](#).

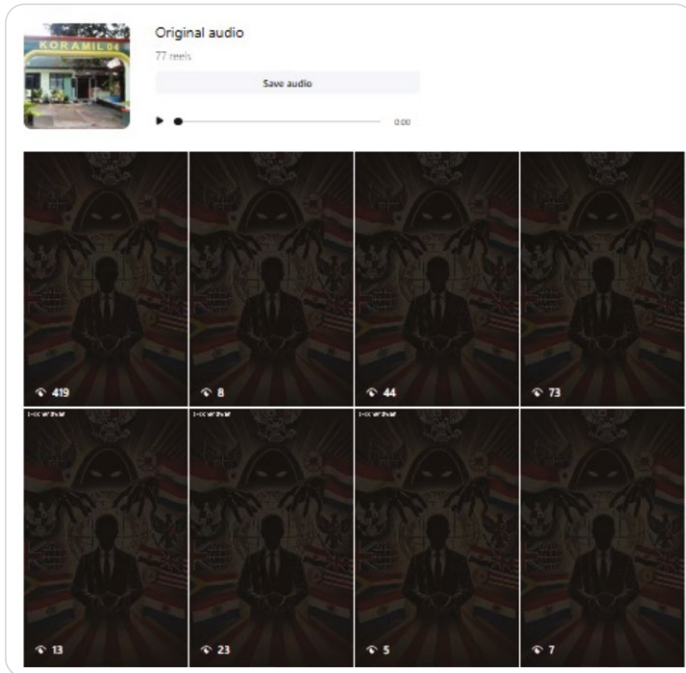


The third video was posted by an account that presented itself as belonging to District Military Command 1809 Maybrat (@kodim_1809_maybrat) at 17:09 PM (GMT+7).

The caption stated: "Information Division of District Military Command 1809/Maybrat - Beware of Neo-Colonial Proxy Wars! Foreign powers once again want to disrupt our sovereignty. George Soros, the globalist billionaire referred to as a 'philanthropist,' is apparently infiltrating through the funding of media and NGOs to influence Indonesian public opinion. They are targeting the TNI [Indonesian National Armed Forces], the laws, and even national stability."



In addition to these accounts that appeared to belong to the military, between 22 and 25 March 2025, Amnesty International identified through Instagram's Original Audio search an additional 53 other public Instagram accounts – mostly anonymous – that posted the same video (see Sample Post 19). One of these videos had received more than 15,900 views as of 20 April 2026 (see Sample Post 20).



Sample Post 19:

Screenshot of multiple Instagram posts containing the same video attacking NGOs and media opposing the Military Law revisions found via Original Audio search (original audio page accessed on 10 February 2026).



Sample Post 20: An Instagram post containing the same video attacking NGOs and media opposing the Military Law revisions had received more than 15,900 views as of 20 April 2026.

Both videos discussed in this section targeted identifiable individuals and organizations. The first focused specifically on the three activists who staged the protest at the Fairmont Hotel, portraying them as ‘foreign agents.’ The second targeted and similarly portrayed as ‘foreign agents’ a wider group of CSOs, journalists and independent media outlets that had publicly criticized the proposed Military Law revisions. In both instances, the content constructed a false and misleading narrative that framed peaceful protests, advocacy and reporting critical of the Military Law revisions as evidence of acting as a foreign agent.

The dissemination pattern of the two videos described above displayed multiple behavioural and content-based indicators of deceptive coordination. In both instances, various accounts, including many seemingly belonging to state actors, posted the same videos during the same short timeframes across platforms. This indicated that the content was not circulating in an isolated manner but appeared to be part of an intentional amplification effort aiming to manipulate and mislead audiences about the named individuals and organizations. In light of these factors, these campaigns amount to disinformation deployed by the state as an authoritarian practice to undermine accountability at a moment of heightened public debate, instead of genuinely engaging with the grievances formulated by protesters against the law reform (see methodological framework set out in Section 2.2).

Andrie from KontraS, one of the three activists who staged the protest at Fairmont Hotel, told Amnesty International:

“The false accusation that we were ‘foreign agents’ served to shift public attention away from the repressive laws and policies that the Prabowo administration has been trying to put in place. We were attacked with this type of disinformation so that the public would focus on the wrong idea of who we were, rather than trying to understand the substance of the law that could infringe on their freedoms.”²¹⁴

5.3.2 DECEPTIVE COORDINATION TARGETING THE INDONESIA GELAP MOVEMENT

The Indonesia Gelap (“Dark Indonesia”) protest movement emerged in multiple regions across Indonesia in February 2025. It became a channel for broad-based expressions of public grievances over budget cuts to government spending related to social and human rights protection, as well as state repression under the Prabowo administration.

The movement originally gained traction in early February 2025 via the hashtag #IndonesiaGelap on X.²¹⁵ In parallel with physical protests, social media users continued to use this hashtag to discuss their concerns over social, political and human rights issues in Indonesia and coordinated physical protests. Amid the emergence of this protest movement, Amnesty International identified two key examples of campaigns of deceptive coordination to discredit and label Indonesia Gelap protesters as ‘foreign agents.’

²¹⁴ Interview in person with Andrie Yunus, activist advocating against the revision of the Military Law, 21 July 2025, Jakarta.

²¹⁵ Muhammad Iqbal Amar and Resa Eka Ayu Sartika Tim Redaksi, “Tagar #IndonesiaGelap Jadi Trending, Bentuk Sentimen Negatif Terhadap Pemerintah?”, 20 February 2025, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2025/02/20/095352665/tagar-indonesiagelap-jadi-trending-bentuk-sentimen-negatif-terhadap> (in Indonesian).

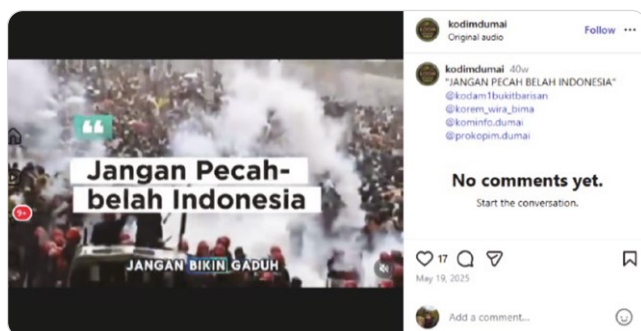
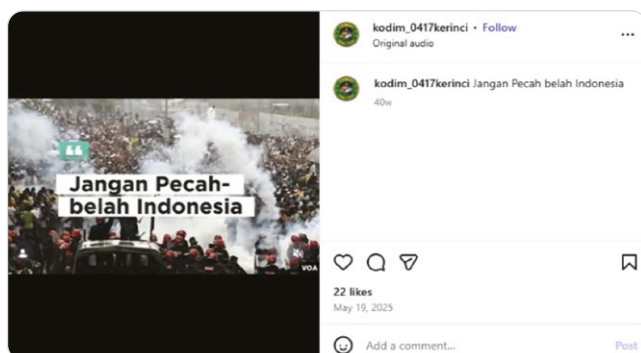
COUNTER-NARRATIVES AND DISINFORMATION BY STATE ACTORS

Amnesty International found that starting on 18 May 2025, many accounts posted an identical video attacking Indonesia Gelap protesters by labelling them as ‘foreign agents’ on Instagram and Facebook. The video featured photos of protesters holding banners that said “Indonesia Gelap”. It included the following superimposed text:

“Do not divide Indonesia. Do not create chaos; let the President work and let the TNI safeguard the government. You who constantly stir up trouble for the government: whose agenda are you serving? When the public shows its appreciation for the TNI in surveys with up to 93% trust, you instead sow discord by throwing out all kinds of weakening accusations. You claim the TNI is attempting to intervene, when in fact the TNI is carrying out its duty to secure the nation’s sovereignty. Who are you speaking for? Don’t let yourselves become foreign interest agents bent on dividing the Indonesian people. We should unite in full support of the legitimate, constitutional government chosen by the people – not undermine it by spreading negative issues and narratives.”

Through Amnesty International’s metadata analysis, it appeared the earliest video posted on Instagram was published by an anonymous state-aligned account on 18 May 2025 at 2.06 pm (GMT+7).

Shortly after, one Facebook and 36 Instagram accounts that appeared to belong to at least 36 military units reposted this video (see the full list in Annex III and examples at Coordinated Posts 3). Similar to the case study presented in Section 5.3.1, these accounts displayed official insignia and unit names in their profile information, with their posting histories consistently featuring content relating to the respective units and broader TNI activities.



Coordinated Posts 3: Examples of Instagram posts by accounts that appeared to belong to different military units. The posts featured the same video spreading disinformation against Indonesia Gelap protesters.

The first post came from the account that presented itself as belonging to District Military Command 0417 Kerinci (@kodim_0417kerinci). The caption said: “Jangan Pecah belah Indonesia. The post was published on 18 May 2025.

The second post came from the account that presented itself as belonging to Cavalry Detachment 4 Simha Pasupati (@denkav4sp). The caption said, “Jangan Pecah belah Indonesia” with the hashtags: #vireels #tniad #military #reelinstagram. The post was published on 18 May 2025.



The third post came from the account that presented itself as belonging to District Military Command 0320 Dumai (@kodimdumai). The caption said, “Jangan Pecah belah Indonesia” and tagged a few other Instagram accounts belonging to different military units. The post was published on 19 May 2025.

These posts appeared to be part of a deceptive coordinated effort involving multiple military-affiliated accounts acting in unison. Every account published the same video and advanced the same misleading narrative portraying Indonesia Gelap protesters as ‘foreign agents’ within a narrow two-day window between 18 and 19 May 2025.

As of 20 April 2026, Amnesty International confirmed that at least 35 of these 37 posts remained online and publicly accessible. The remaining two posts were no longer publicly accessible because one of the Instagram accounts had become private and another Instagram account had been deleted (see the detailed breakdown of these posts and their status in Annex III).

Apart from these posts (listed in Annex III), 28 additional state-aligned accounts – mostly anonymous – posted the same video on Instagram between 18 and 21 May 2025 (see Sample Post 21).



Sample Post 21: Screenshot of multiple Instagram posts containing the same video attacking the Indonesia Gelap protesters (original audio page accessed on 10 February 2026).

The seemingly synchronized timing, identical content and common institutional affiliation across these Instagram accounts point to malicious intent rather than independent posting to express an opinion. Because the claims made in the video were false and relied on unfounded accusations designed to delegitimize peaceful protest, and because the pattern of dissemination demonstrates indicators of deceptive coordination, including between state and state-aligned actors, from which a malicious intent can be inferred, these posts amount to disinformation.

COUNTER-HASHTAG #INDONESIA TERANG AND DISINFORMATION BY STATE-ALIGNED ACTORS

As the movement gained traction, counter-messaging began to appear online. A prominent counter-hashtag, #IndonesiaTerang (“Bright Indonesia”), was promoted by many, including state officials, to challenge the movement’s messages. On 21 February 2025, while the Indonesia Gelap street protests were ongoing, Minister of Forestry Raja Juli Antoni amplified the counter-narrative directly by using this hashtag on X. While shared by just 106 users, the post reached an estimated 47,100 views (see Sample Post 22).



Sample Post 22: Minister Raja Juli Antoni’s tweet, published on 21 February 2025.

The tweet said: “There are too many excuses that can be made up to spark pessimism. It only takes one reason to ignite optimism that Indonesia will become better. #GenerasiOptimis (Optimistic Generation) #IndonesiaTerang (Bright Indonesia) @psi_id @Gerindra”

The promotion of a counter-hashtag is not, in and of itself, evidence of disinformation. However, Amnesty International’s examination of posts using #IndonesiaTerang on X identified deceptive coordination disseminating false and misleading claims portraying the Indonesia Gelap movement as a foreign-engineered operation. In these instances, the counter-hashtag was used, often by anonymous users, to accompany and amplify content that framed lawful protest as evidence of external manipulation.

Amnesty International identified two sets of posts disseminated between 14 and 15 April 2025 that displayed observable indicators of deceptive coordination. In the first example, on 14 April 2025, anonymous accounts on X posted the same image of unidentified protesters with the caption: “Beware! Foreign propaganda is creating Indonesia Gelap to divide our nation” (see Coordinated Posts 4).

Coordinated Posts 4: First group of example tweets engaging in a coordinated disinformation attack against the Indonesia Gelap movement.

The tweet on the top left said, “Beware of foreign propaganda seeking to create a Dark Indonesia #TolakProvokasi #TolakAksiIndonesiaGelap #IndonesiaTerang #IndonesiaMaju. This tweet was posted on 14 April 2025 at 11.21am (GMT+7).

The tweet on the top right said, “Be vigilant! Efforts by foreign actors to spread the ‘Indonesia Gelap’ propaganda are becoming increasingly massive. #TolakProvokasi #TolakAksiIndonesiaGelap #IndonesiaTerang #IndonesiaMaju.” This tweet was posted on 14 April 2025 at 12.10pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom left said, “Beware of foreign propaganda related to ‘Indonesia Gelap.’ #TolakProvokasi #TolakAksiIndonesiaGelap #IndonesiaTerang #IndonesiaMaju.” This tweet was posted on 14 April 2025 at 1.49pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom right said, “Beware of foreign propaganda seeking to create ‘Indonesia Gelap.’ #TolakProvokasi #TolakAksiIndonesiaGelap #IndonesiaTerang #IndonesiaMaju.” This tweet was posted on 14 April 2025 at 2.03pm (GMT+7).

Notably, apart from using the same image, these posts had nearly identical captions. They also used the same hashtags, including #TolakProvokasi (“Reject Provocation”), #TolakAksiIndonesiaGelap (“Reject the Dark Indonesia Action”), #IndonesiaTerang (“Bright Indonesia”) and #IndonesiaMaju (“Advanced Indonesia”). At least seven tweets, which Amnesty International identified to be within this same set of posts, were published on the same day between 8.50am and 4pm (GMT+7).

The second group of posts by anonymous X accounts targeting the Indonesia Gelap protesters were disseminated in a similar manner on 15 April 2025. These posts contained an identical image of protesters holding the banner that said “#IndonesiaGelap”. Under this image was a white box containing the text: “Beware! Foreign propaganda is creating Indonesia Gelap to divide our nation” (see Coordinated Posts 5).

Coordinated Posts 5: Second group of example tweets engaging in a coordinated disinformation attack against the Indonesia Gelap movement.

The tweet on the top left said, “Beware, there is foreign propaganda within the Indonesia Gelap action movement – do not be provoked. #IndonesiaTerang #AntiProvokasi #TolakProvokasi”. This tweet was posted on 15 April 2025 at 11.48am (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “Beware of foreign propaganda to create a ‘Dark Indonesia’ #IndonesiaTerang.” This tweet was posted on 15 April 2025 at 6.12pm (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom left said, “Beware of foreign propaganda that is creating a ‘Dark Indonesia’ in order to divide the nation. #IndonesiaTerang #AntiProvokasi #TolakProvokasi.” This tweet was posted on 15 April 2025 at 7.08pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom right said, “Beware of foreign propaganda that is creating a ‘Dark Indonesia’ #IndonesiaTerang #AntiProvokasi #TolakProvokasi.” This tweet was posted on 15 April 2025 at 9.11pm (GMT+7).

Deceptive coordination operations against the Indonesia Gelap movement were not limited to these two days. In another example, on 22 June 2025 between 8am and 5pm (GMT+7), another operation on X disseminated identical captions across multiple accounts claiming: “The #IndonesiaGelap action is orchestrated by foreigners to undermine trust and create a pessimistic perception among the people towards government policies” (see Coordinated Posts 6).

Coordinated Posts 6: Second group of example tweets engaging in a coordinated disinformation attack against the Indonesia Gelap Movement.

The tweet on the top left said, “Indonesia’s dark action is orchestrated by foreigners to destroy the nation #TolakProvokasi.” This tweet was posted on 22 June 2025 at 8.56am (GMT+7).

The tweet on the top right said, “The #IndonesiaGelap action is orchestrated by foreign actors to undermine trust and to shape a pessimistic public perception towards government policies. #TolakProvokasi #IndonesiaTerang #JanganMauDipecahBelah #IndonesiaMaju.” This tweet was posted on 22 June 2025 at 2.06pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom left said, “The #IndonesiaGelap action is orchestrated by foreign actors to undermine trust and to shape a pessimistic public perception towards government policies. #TolakProvokasi #IndonesiaTerang #JanganMauDipecahBelah #IndonesiaMaju.” This tweet was posted on 22 June 2025 at 2.09pm (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom right said, “The #IndonesiaGelap action is not merely a protest – it is being exploited by foreign interests seeking to undermine public trust and spread pessimism about the nation itself. #JanganMauDipecahBelah #IndonesiaMaju #WaspadaNarasiGelap.” This tweet was posted on 22 June 2025 at 4.43pm (GMT+7).

These tweets used the same photo as that used in the second group of tweets. They also reused the same framing and deployed overlapping hashtags, including #TolakProvokasi (“Reject Provocation”), #IndonesiaTerang (“Bright Indonesia”), #JanganMauDipecahBelah (“Do Not Let Ourselves Be Divided”), and #IndonesiaMaju (“Advanced Indonesia”).

Across the different examples described above, identical or near-identical content was disseminated by multiple accounts within short time intervals. All the posts documented by Amnesty International relied on empty accusations that frame the protest movement as engineered by foreign powers without evidence. Because of the falsity of their content, and the presence of deceptive coordination indicators, these posts amount to disinformation (see the methodological framework set out in Section 2.2).

5.3.3 DECEPTIVE COORDINATION TARGETING TEMPO

Tempo is one of Indonesia’s leading media outlets, founded in 1971. Under Suharto’s New Order, Tempo magazine was banned for two months from March to May 1982 and again in 1994 until 1998 for publishing investigative reports critical of the government.²¹⁶ Editor-in-Chief Setri told Amnesty International that under the Prabowo administration, Tempo has faced increasingly frequent and coordinated attacks.²¹⁷ These attacks from both state and state-aligned actors were primarily based on the allegation that Tempo acted as a “foreign agent,” funded by Soros through the MDIF (see Section 5.1.2 for Tempo’s response to this claim).²¹⁸

Setri added that actors whose interests aligned with the Prabowo administration played a key role in driving such attacks against Tempo.²¹⁹ He particularly referred to the physical protest in April 2025 staged by the mass organization KMPSM in front of the Press Council and Meta’s Jakarta office to call for investigations into Tempo’s funding sources and the blocking of Tempo’s Instagram account (see Section 5.1.2).

Setri also said that many state-aligned actors engaged in spreading online disinformation against Tempo – often through anonymous accounts on social media platforms.²²⁰ He explained that President Prabowo’s public statements using the ‘foreign agent’ rhetoric provided materials for many of these actors to produce false conspiracy narratives against Tempo.²²¹

Consistent with Setri’s testimony, Amnesty International independently identified one prominent example of such a conspiracy narrative gaining traction online and being amplified by accounts that appeared to belong to Indonesian military units. On 12 March 2025, a TikTok video circulated that merged excerpts from President Prabowo’s speech at the 17th anniversary of the Gerindra party on 15 February 2025 (see Section 5.1.1) with a series of conspiratorial allegations against Tempo.

The caption of the post says, “The fundamental mask of Tempo’s independence is starting to be revealed” (see Sample Post 23). The video opens with footage of President Prabowo stating: “If anyone is being incited or trying to incite others, be vigilant. I say this is the work of foreign forces who always want to divide Indonesia.” It then transitions to recounting the allegation that Tempo’s MDIF investment rendered it controlled by George Soros and that this funding source compromised Tempo’s independence. It concludes: “It is abundantly clear that Tempo is a foreign element wrapped in the mask of media independence.” In a span of a few days, the video went viral. As of 20 April 2026, the video had received more than 421,500 views, 31,600 likes, and 3,743 shares, indicating significant reach and engagement.

216 Tempo, “Quick Recap of Government Ban in 1982, 1994”, 6 March 2018, <https://en.tempo.co/read/916362/tempo-anniversary-quick-recap-of-government-ban-in-1982-1994>

217 Interview in-person with Setri Yasra, Editor-in Chief of Tempo, 24 July 2025, Jakarta.

218 Tempo, “Penggunaan Narasi Antek Asing oleh Prabowo”, 24 March 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/politik/penggunaan-narasi-antek-asing-oleh-prabowo-1223654> (in Indonesian).

219 Interview in-person with Setri Yasra (previously cited).

220 Interview in-person with Setri Yasra (previously cited).

221 Interview in-person with Setri Yasra (previously cited).



Sample Post 23: Video of conspiratorial narratives attacking Tempo's independence with claims related to its funding from MDIF.

The video was published on TikTok on 12 March 2025.

Amnesty International found other Instagram accounts, which appeared to belong to at least three military units, that were involved in amplifying this misleading content by posting it simultaneously, days later, on 23 March 2025. The military units identified included the Sub-Regional Military Command 181 Praja Vira (@penrem181) and the District Military Command 1809 Maybrat (@kodim_1809_maybrat) and District Military Command 1810 Tambrauw (@kodim1810_tambrauw) (see the links to these posts in Annex IV).

The first two accounts (@penrem181 and @kodim1810_tambrauw) used the exact same caption: "President Prabowo emphasizes media and NGOs in foreign financing to divide the nation, Tempo receives investment from MDIF and George Soros, hindering progress and provoking nationwide division" (see Coordinated Posts 7).

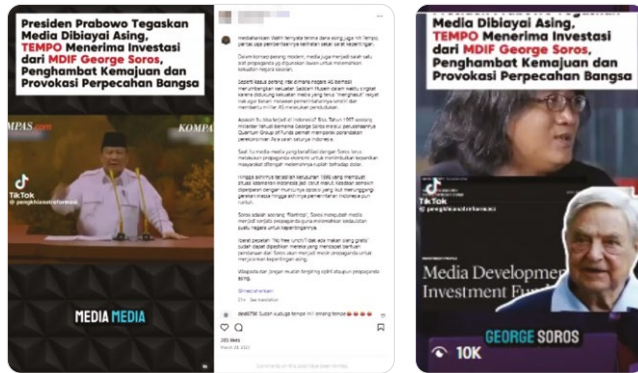


Coordinated Posts 7: Video reposted from TikTok via the Instagram accounts that presented themselves as belonging to the Sub-Regional Commands 181 Praja Vira (Penrem 181), Military District Command 1809 Maybrat (Kodim 1809 Maybrat) and District Military Command 1810 Tambrauw (@kodim1810_tambrauw).

The three accounts posted on 23 March 2025 at 10.48 am (GMT+7), 2.54 pm (GMT+7) and 5.45 pm (GMT+7), respectively.

Amnesty International verified that, on the 18-month anniversary of the Prabowo administration on 20 April 2026, all three of these Instagram posts by accounts appearing to belong to the military remained online and publicly accessible.

Further, at least nine additional Instagram accounts – mostly anonymous – also posted the same video on their accounts between 22 and 24 March 2025.²²² One of these posts had received more than 10,000 views (see Sample Post 24).



Sample Post 24: Instagram post containing the same video of conspiratorial narratives attacking Tempo’s independence with claims related to its funding from MDIF. The video was published on 24 March 2025 by an account posing as a media channel with 69,700 followers, receiving more than 10,000 views as of 20 April 2026.

Tempo issued a public clarification addressing the nature of its MDIF funding and reaffirming its editorial independence. However, the clarification did little to counter the tide of attacks amounting to deceptive coordination.²²³

Amnesty International found what appeared to be a coordinated campaign against Tempo through examining the use of the hashtag #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa (“Tempo Media – the Nation’s Betrayer”) on X. Multiple sets of posts with this hashtag were published within the same short timeframes, which is an indicator of deceptive coordination.

First, between 11.30 am and 12.30 pm (GMT+7) on 17 May 2025, numerous anonymous accounts posted the same graphic titled “Tempo Then vs Tempo Now” (see Coordinated Posts 8). The left panel labelled “Tempo Then” featured the caption “Voicing the oppressed,” depicting Tempo as a defender of marginalized communities in the past. In contrast, the right panel, labelled “Tempo Now,” described the outlet as a “Misleading media full of hoaxes,” accompanied by smaller text alleging it was “Injected with 20 billion rupiah in foreign funds.” Although the accompanying captions varied slightly, each post advanced similar accusations using ‘foreign agent’ rhetoric. The posts consistently concluded with the hashtag #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa and the phrase “Media Pemusnah Fakta Nyata” (“Media Destroyer of Real Facts”).

222 On file with Amnesty International.

223 Tempo, “Fakta-Fakta Investasi MDIF ke Tempo”, 3 March 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/politik/fakta-fakta-investasi-mdif-ke-tempo-1214498> (in Indonesian).

Coordinated Posts 8: First group of example tweets engaging in a coordinated disinformation attack against Tempo.

The tweet on the top left said, “No one is neutral – it’s just opinions being arranged for certain purposes. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 11.52 am (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “The public deserves the truth, not commissioned news wrapped in fake ethics. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 11.53 am (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom left said, “Don’t even talk about being independent – Tempo now, every article that comes out carries the smell of foreign money. So, it can’t be trusted. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.02 pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom right said, “You think it’s media, but it’s actually uniformed provocateurs. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.08 pm (GMT+7).

Second, another set of tweets from different anonymous X accounts was published within the same one-hour window on 17 May 2025, featuring an identical graphic depicting a large portrait of Soros looming over the Tempo office building (see Coordinated Posts 9). The image carried the headline, “The irony of Tempo: Claims to have independence,” followed by the subtext, “But Soros’s agenda always enters the narrative.” Although the accompanying captions varied slightly, they reproduced the same ‘foreign agent’ rhetoric and, as in the first set, ended with the hashtag #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa and the phrase “Media Pemusnah Fakta Nyata” (“Media Destroyer of Real Facts”).

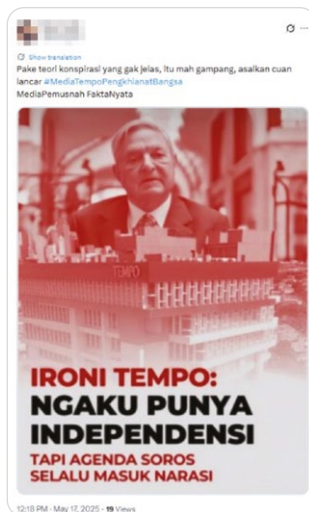
Coordinated Posts 9: Second group of tweets engaging in a coordinated disinformation attack against Tempo.

The tweet on the top left said, “Crazy – Tempo used to be seen as a hero, now it’s become a guard for foreign interests. Reports that were supposed to challenge power have instead turned into propaganda tools. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.”

The tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 11.50 am (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “Is there still anyone who sees Tempo as an independent media outlet? They’ve long since shifted into being agents supporting foreign interests. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” The tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.02 pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom left said, “Tempo – the word ‘independent’ has become a boomerang because of the foreign money coming in. The news is no longer neutral, just about making a profit. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” The tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.03 pm (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom right said, “Using vague conspiracy theories – that’s easy, as long as the money keeps flowing. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” The tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.18 pm (GMT+7).

In addition, a third set of posts was disseminated during the same period on 17 May 2025. Multiple anonymous accounts on X shared an identical image featuring a black-and-white portrait of Soros with a hand positioned above the word “TEMPO” as though manipulating it like a puppet (see Coordinated Posts 10). Beneath the image, the text read: “From bombastic headlines to dramatic narratives... Sometimes it feels less like journalism and more like someone’s agenda. Do you still believe Tempo’s news represents the people’s voice?!”

Coordinated Posts 10: Third group of example tweets engaging in a coordinated disinformation attack against Tempo.

The tweet on the top left said, “They used to move people because they were brave; now they just turn people off because they’re paid. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.01pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “They say it’s for the public, but it’s really for the big bosses. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.12am (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom left said, “It’s better to stop calling yourselves independent if all the news is just covering up foreign interests coming in. #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.14pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom right said, “Tempo, if this continues, you’ll just become a propaganda tool controlled by outside parties. Do you even realize that? #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.20pm (GMT+7).

All the posts above were considered to be false or misleading because they presented Tempo’s MDIF investment as evidence of foreign control without credible evidence that MDIF exercised editorial influence or ownership over Tempo’s reporting.

Further, these examples displayed multiple behavioural and content-based indicators of deceptive coordination. Timestamp analysis of posts published on 17 May 2025 showed dissemination within the same one-hour window. Identical visual materials were circulated across numerous accounts, accompanied by consistent claims portraying Tempo as controlled by foreign interests. The uniform deployment of the hashtag #MediaTempoPengkhanatBangsa further reinforced amplification.

The use of deceptive coordination spreading disinformation against Tempo followed the same pattern observed in the attacks against anti-Military Law activists and the Indonesia Gelap movement. These observable patterns strongly suggest a malicious intent and deceptive coordination, which characterize disinformation, in order to target the media outlet as a 'foreign agent'.

5.3.4 DECEPTIVE COORDINATION TARGETING CELIOS

CELIOS is an independent research institute that is a key voice on issues related to the negative impacts of Indonesia's socio-economic and environmental policies. Under the Prabowo administration, CELIOS has criticized many government flagship policies, including the Food Estate Project, the free nutritious meals programme and policies related to extractive industries.²²⁴

Due to its work, the organization became the target of attacks based on 'foreign agent' allegations (see Section 5.2.2). Online attacks intensified in March 2026 when CELIOS, together with other CSOs, filed a lawsuit at the Constitutional Court about the state's use of budget for the free nutritious meals programme.²²⁵ During this period, Bhima Yudhistira, an economist serving as CELIOS's Executive Director, stated that he received threats of attack via messages to his social media account.²²⁶

In one message, the sender invoked the same 'foreign agent' narrative, stating: "Bro, are you ready to be made a sacrificial pawn by George Soros? Heard he's selecting again now which of his pawns will be splashed [with acid]. Looks like you're in the top 10, since you're the loudest and most influential in society. Be careful... your family too. If you eat dirty/haram money, you have to be ready to become a sacrifice."²²⁷

Bhima told Amnesty International:

"To my knowledge, this is the first time that economists like us have been subjected to this level of threat in Indonesia since the Reformasi [the political reforms starting in 1998 after the downfall of President Suharto] just for doing research that is considered critical of the government's policies. I suspect that it could be because our research touched directly on the fundamental problem of President Prabowo's administration, which was the increasing roles of the military in implementing economic policies such as the MBG [free nutritious meals programme]."²²⁸

He added that CELIOS's Instagram account had seen floods of comments accusing the organization and Bhima himself as "unpatriotic" and 'foreign agents'.²²⁹

In the same period, Amnesty International found an online campaign spreading disinformation against CELIOS on 24 March 2026 relying on the same language used in the threat message described above. Anonymous X accounts posted nearly identical content attacking CELIOS as a 'foreign agent', using the same hashtag: #CELIOSAntekSoros (meaning in English, CELIOS, Soros's lackey).

The content included an identical AI-generated image of George Soros as a puppet master holding strings over CELIOS's director Bhima Yudhistira. The image contained the text: "CELIOS is flooded with funds from the Open Society Foundations. Proof that George Soros is trying to destabilize Indonesia." All of these posts were published within a narrowly clustered timeframe of 8 - 9.30 pm (GMT+7), indicating a coordinated dissemination pattern (see Coordinated Posts 11).

224 Interview by video with Bhima Yudhistira Adhinegara, economist and executive director of the Centre of Economic and Law Studies (CELIOS), 9 April 2026.

225 Centre of Economic and Law, Constitutional Lawsuit on the Governance of the Free Nutritious Meal Program in the State Budget (previously cited).

226 Faisal Irfani, "Mengapa air keras dipakai untuk menyerang Andrie Yunus dan dua aktivis lain?" (previously cited).

227 Faisal Irfani, "Mengapa air keras dipakai untuk menyerang Andrie Yunus dan dua aktivis lain?" (previously cited).

228 Interview by video with Bhima Yudhistira Adhinegara (previously cited).

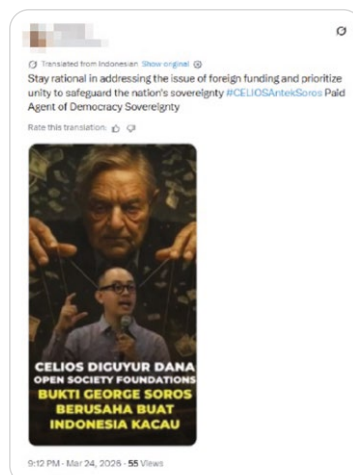
229 Interview by video with Bhima Yudhistira Adhinegara (previously cited).

Coordinated Posts 11: First group of example tweets engaging in coordinated disinformation attacks against CELIOS.

The tweet on the top left said, “I see this as a structured effort, not just ordinary opinion, because there are indications that paid agents are using “democracy” to weaken sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 8.20 pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “Paid agents may be behind democracy narratives that undermine sovereignty – protect democracy, protect our sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 8.23 pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom left said, “Maintain common sense amid the flood of information; continue to prioritize unity and the sovereignty of the Indonesian nation. Paid agents, democracy, sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros Agen Bayaran Demokrasi Kedaulatan.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 9.09 pm (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom right said, “Remain rational in responding to the issue of foreign funding, and prioritize unity to safeguard national sovereignty. Paid agents, democracy, sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 9.12 pm (GMT+7).

In another example, one group of X posts used the same image: George Soros with his hands clasped, with the CELIOS logo on his left side and dollar bills flying in the background (see Coordinated Posts 12). Similar to the first group of posts described above, these tweets were posted within the same short timeframe of 8 - 9.30 pm (GMT+7).

Coordinated Posts 12: Second group of example tweets engaging in coordinated disinformation attacks against CELIOS.

The tweet on the top left said, “Negative narratives that are repeatedly circulated can become tools for paid agents to exploit “democracy” in order to undermine national sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 8.18 pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “The public must realize that not all criticism is constructive; some is directed by paid agents to weaken the legitimacy of democratic leadership and national sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros. This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 8.50 pm (GMT+7).



The tweet on the bottom left said, “The public should be more discerning in evaluating criticism – whether it is genuinely part of democracy or driven by paid agents with interests that disturb national sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 9.25 pm (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom right said, “Our democracy must be protected from the influence of paid agents – do not believe narratives that damage our country’s sovereignty. #CELIOSAntekSoros.” This tweet was posted on 24 March 2026 at 9.28 pm (GMT+7).

The material documented above indicates that the online campaign targeting CELIOS relied on an unfounded allegation linking the research institute to George Soros in order to portray it as a “foreign agent.” The campaign exhibited clear indicators of coordination: identical or near-identical visual content and captions were disseminated by numerous anonymous accounts

on X within narrowly clustered timeframes. The combination of false claims and synchronized posting patterns suggests that these activities are not organic but rather constitute a coordinated disinformation campaign.

In conclusion, these four case studies indicate that false and misleading information targeting civil society actors was not circulated in isolation and as an expression of specific opinions, but rather that various actors, including state actors involved in the first three cases, actively took part in producing, circulating and amplifying disinformation, which resulted in harmful and stigmatizing effects on civil society actors.

5.4 COMPOUNDED STIGMATIZATION

The use of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation based on ‘foreign agent’ narratives during Prabowo’s presidency has often operated alongside other stigmatizing labels that intersect with the personal identities of those targeted, including ethnicity, gender, age and activism focus. By layering multiple pejorative framings and leveraging pre-existing social prejudices and discrimination, state-aligned actors have compounded the grounds on which critics have been discredited. These narratives have often been replicated and amplified by individual users on social media platforms.

5.4.1 ATTACKS AGAINST GREENPEACE AND THE SAVE RAJA AMPAT MOVEMENT

In early June 2025, Greenpeace Indonesia activists, together with Papuan youth, staged a peaceful protest at the Indonesia Critical Minerals Conference in Jakarta against the government’s mining activities in Raja Ampat, West Papua.²³⁰ On 5 June 2025, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Bahlil Lahadalia responded by accusing Greenpeace of acting on behalf of foreign interests, stating:

“There are foreign parties who are unhappy or disapproving of this downstreaming project.”²³¹

During this time, the protest hashtag #SaveRajaAmpat quickly went viral.²³² The public support triggered a wave of mis- and disinformation targeting Greenpeace as an organization and individual activists involved in the protest. Greenpeace Indonesia’s Climate and Energy Manager Iqbal Damanik, who led the protest, told Amnesty International that those involved in the campaign, including himself, were both falsely labelled as ‘foreign agents’ and linked to separatist groups in West Papua.²³³

230 Greenpeace Southeast Asia, “Greenpeace and Raja Ampat Youth Confront Nickel Industry during Conference”, 3 June 2025, <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/press/66998/greenpeace-and-raja-ampat-youth-confront-nickel-industry-during-conference/>.

231 CNN Indonesia, “Bahlil Duga Ada Campur Tangan Asing dalam Polemik Tambang Raja Ampat”, 7 June 2025, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/ekonomi/20250607094822-85-1237371/bahlil-duga-ada-campur-tangan-asing-dalam-polemik-tambang-raja-ampat> (in Indonesian).

232 According to Drone Emprit, an Indonesian organization that identifies trends and public sentiments on social media, recorded 23,600 mentions and more than 4,000 articles between 1–9 June 2025 with that hashtag. Drone Emprit, “Sentimen Publik Terhadap Hilirisasi Raja Ampat”, 10 June 2025, <https://pers.droneemprit.id/sentimen-publik-terhadap-hilirisasi-raja-ampat/> (in Indonesian).

233 Interview in person with Iqbal Damanik, Greenpeace campaigner, 22 July 2025, Jakarta.

PAPUA: CONFLICT AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Papua refers to the western half of the New Guinea island.²³⁴ The region hosts Melanesian Indigenous communities, and its majority population are Christians – a minority region in Indonesia.²³⁵ Papua's history has been marked by a decades-long conflict between Papuan pro-independence movements and Indonesian security forces due to various factors, including discrimination against Indigenous Papuans and Indonesian state violence, as well as exploitations of the region's natural resources through extractive industries.²³⁶

Papua's pro-independence movements include both peaceful and armed groups.²³⁷ One of the key actors include the Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, OPM), which serves an umbrella movement calling for independence for Papua. Meanwhile, the West Papua National Liberation Army (Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat, TPNPB) serves as the movement's armed wing. In the past, authorities used to label OPM as armed criminal group (Kelompok Kriminal Bersenjata, KKB).²³⁸ In 2024, the Indonesian army decided to relinquish the label of KKB and instead use OPM to assert that the movement's members were not mere criminals but combatants.²³⁹

Amnesty International has extensively documented human rights violations resulted from Indonesian security forces' responses to the conflict, including unlawful killings, torture and other ill-treatments.²⁴⁰ Peaceful expressions and protests, not only by pro-independence political activists but also others advocating for other issues not related to independence, also often met with criminalization and use of force by state officials.²⁴¹

At the height of the Save Raja Ampat campaign in early June 2025, anonymous accounts increased attacks against Greenpeace and the activists involved in the protest. For example, on 9 June 2025, one account on X accused Greenpeace of disguising itself as environmental activism while allegedly advancing the agendas of the Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, OPM) and the West Papua National Liberation Army (Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat, TPNPB). The tweet said: "It's clear who is behind the hashtag #SaveRajaAmpat – @GreenpeaceID – a foreign proxy agent disguised as environmental activists. The most dangerous part is that armed criminal groups [Kelompok Kriminal Bersenjata, KKB] and the OPM pretend to be Greenpeace activists and then call for independence, exploiting this issue" (see Sample Post 25).

234 Amnesty International, Indonesia: Gold Rush: Indonesia's mining plans risk fueling abuses in Papua (previously cited), p. 15.

235 Amnesty International, Indonesia: Gold Rush: Indonesia's mining plans risk fueling abuses in Papua (previously cited).

236 Amnesty International, Indonesia: Gold Rush: Indonesia's mining plans risk fueling abuses in Papua (previously cited), p. 11.

237 Amnesty International, "Don't bother, just let him die": Killing with impunity in Papua (Index ASA 21/8198/2018), 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ASA2181982018ENGLISH.pdf>, p. 16.

238 See also about authorities' frequent conflation between peaceful demands for freedom and armed activities in Papua at Usman Hamid, "Accuracy in Legal and Policy Orientation in Papua", 5 January 2022, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/accuracy-in-legal-and-policy-orientation-in-papua>.

239 Tempo, "TNI changes the term 'KKB', soldiers will not hesitate to take firm actions against OPM members", 12 April 2024, <https://en.tempo.co/read/1856001/tni-changes-the-term-kkb-soldiers-will-not-hesitate-to-take-firm-action-against-opm-members>.

240 See for example, Amnesty International, "Don't bother, just let him die": Killing with impunity in Papua (previously cited); Amnesty International, Indonesia: Gold Rush: Indonesia's mining plans risk fueling abuses in Papua (previously cited); Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Prisoners of conscience being tortured" (Index ASA 21/020/2014), 8 August 2014, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/020/2014/en/>; Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Independently investigate the torture and unlawful killing of man in Papua" (Index ASA 21/7535/2017), 2 December 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/ru/documents/asa21/7535/2017/en/>.

241 Amnesty International, Indonesia: Papuan protesters shot, beaten and racially abused by security forces – new research, 20 August 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/08/indonesia-papuan-protesters-shot-beaten-and-racially-abused-by-security-forces-new-research/>. See also Amnesty International, "Don't bother, just let him die": Killing with impunity in Papua (previously cited); and Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Further information: Grave health fears for detained Papuan activist: Victor Yeimo" (Index ASA 21/4632/2021), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/4632/2021/en/>.



Sample Post 25: Tweet accusing Greenpeace of being foreign agent working with armed groups in Papua to spread the hashtag #SaveRajaAmpat. The tweet was published on 9 June 2025.

Another tweet by the same user directly targeted Greenpeace campaigner Iqbal. The tweet shared several videos and images, including the photo of Iqbal leading a protest movement against nickel mining in Raja Ampat (see Sample Post 26). The tweet said: “The most dangerous thing is that armed criminal groups (KKB) and the OPM pretend to be Greenpeace activists and then call for independence, exploiting this issue. #SaveRajaAmpat. The government must take firm action against this propaganda.”

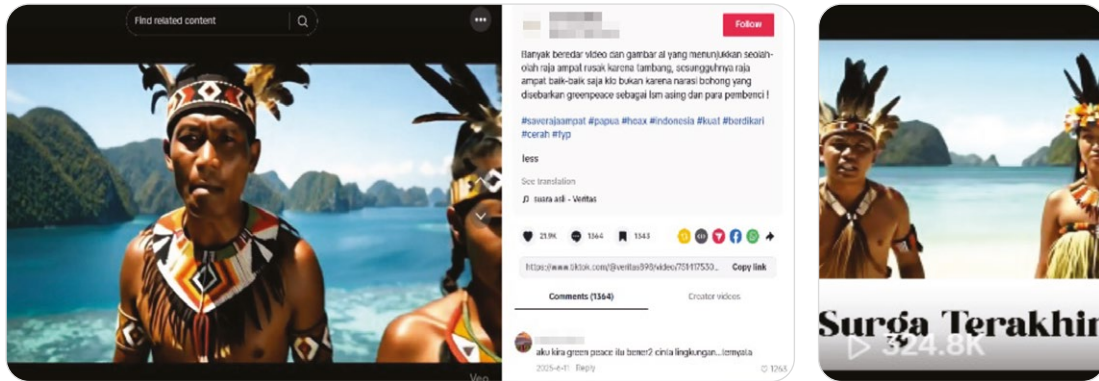


Sample Post 26: Tweet accusing Greenpeace campaigner Iqbal Damanik of being affiliated with armed groups in Papua. The tweet was published on 7 June 2025.

In another example, on 10 June 2025, a TikTok user published an AI-generated video of a man and a woman who appeared to be wearing traditional Indigenous clothes and standing on a beach. The video called Greenpeace a ‘foreign agent’ and stated the false allegation that Greenpeace spread “hoaxes” about Raja Ampat by using AI-generated

photos (see Sample Post 27). Although Tempo’s fact-checking team debunked the claim and verified the authenticity of Greenpeace’s materials,²⁴² the smear had already gained significant traction. As of 20 April 2026, the video remained online and publicly accessible, receiving more than 324,800 views, 21,900 likes and 1,273 shares.

242 Tempo CekFakta, “Keliru: Greenpeace Sebarkan Konten Raja Ampat Buatan AI”, 19 June 2025, <https://cekfakta.tempo.co/fakta/3662/keliru-greenpeace-sebarkan-konten-raja-ampat-buatan-ai> (in Indonesian).



Sample Post 27: TikTok video attacking Greenpeace and the Save Raja Ampat campaign. The video was published on 10 June 2025.

The caption said: “Many AI-generated videos and images are circulating that make it seem as though Raja Ampat has been damaged by mining. In reality, Raja Ampat is doing just fine – if not for the false narratives spread by Greenpeace as a foreign NGO and haters!”

Amnesty International further detected a cross-platform campaign of deceptive coordination through social media posts accusing the broader Save Raja Ampat movement of being influenced by OPM. These posts appeared on X, Instagram and Facebook on 12 and 17 June 2025. All of them used the same image of Save Raja Ampat protesters with the text “Save Raja Ampat Demonstration in Sorong City Controlled by OPM: OPM Sympathizers Use Raja Ampat Issue to Discredit the Government” (see Coordinated Posts 13 and 14).



Coordinated Posts 13: Examples of posts attacking the Save Raja Ampat movement that were published on 12 June 2025.

The first two posts came from Facebook and Instagram, respectively. They also have the same caption as the tweets above. The Facebook post was published at 8.33 am (GMT+7) and the Instagram post at 8.34 am (GMT+7).

The two posts at the bottom came from X. They shared the same caption “The Save Raja Ampat protest is being hijacked by the OPM.” The one on the left was posted at 8.34 am (GMT+7) and the one on the right at 8.50 am (GMT+7).



Coordinated Posts 14:

Examples of posts attacking the Save Raja Ampat movement that were published on 17 June 2025. All of them shared the exact same caption: “The Save Raja Ampat protest is being hijacked by the OPM.”

The first two posts came from Instagram. Both posts were published at 8.37am (GMT+7).

The two posts at the bottom came from Twitter. The one on the left was posted at 8.36am (GMT+7) and the one on the right at 8.37am (GMT+7).



Timestamps identified in Coordinated Posts 13 and 14 show that posts within the same cluster were published only minutes apart, indicating a highly synchronized pattern of amplification. This level of simultaneity provides reasonable grounds to infer deceptive intent. This campaign to spread false and misleading information conflating the Save Raja Ampat movement with the OPM movement, therefore, amounts to disinformation.

Iqbal described how the attacks quickly escalated:

“My personal account received so many direct messages from anonymous users. I assume they are the ones who believe the disinformation out there about me. They said horrible things about me or said they would be waiting for me in Raja Ampat. They said they wanted to fight with me one-on-one. Some threatened to kill me. One of them said, ‘Your head will fall to the ground.’”²⁴³

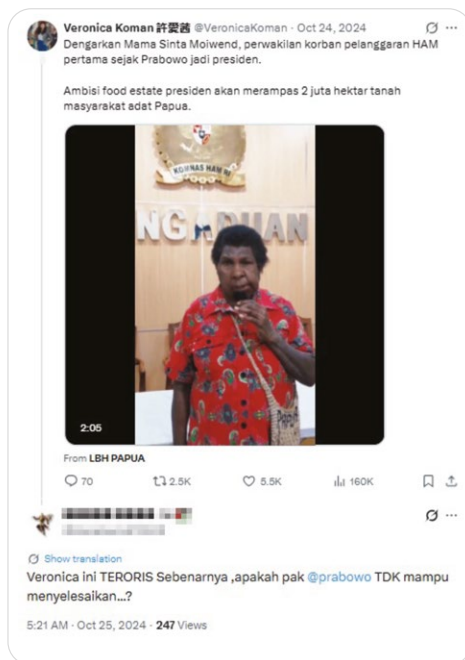
243 Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

5.4.2 ATTACKS AGAINST VERONICA KOMAN

Human rights lawyer Veronica Koman, who has been living in exile in Australia since 2019, informed Amnesty International that she has long advocated against human rights violations in Papua and faced various forms of intimidation and harassment due to her activism.²⁴⁴ She reported continuously facing abusive verbal attacks and threats that drew on her Chinese ethnicity, gender and activism. During the interview with Amnesty International, she provided examples of being accused of being a “Western foreign agent” and a “Chinese foreign agent” and routinely linked to separatist groups. Beyond that, she further described being the target of racist abuses and threats of gender-based violence. She added:

“They say that I have ‘traitor blood’ ... I also get a lot of rape threats, reminding me of the traumatic history of May 1998 when there was riot targeting Chinese Indonesians, including mass rape,” (see more about the 1998 mass sexual violence in Section 5.1.1).²⁴⁵

Veronica told Amnesty International that, under the Prabowo administration, she has continued using her social media platforms, particularly X, to criticize or express opinions about government policies, especially those impacting the rights of Papuans, including the Military Law revisions and the government flagship free nutritious meals programme and the Food Estate Project. Because of her online activism, she told Amnesty International, she has received many attacks based on the ‘foreign agent’ allegations against her (see examples in Sample Posts 28 to 31).



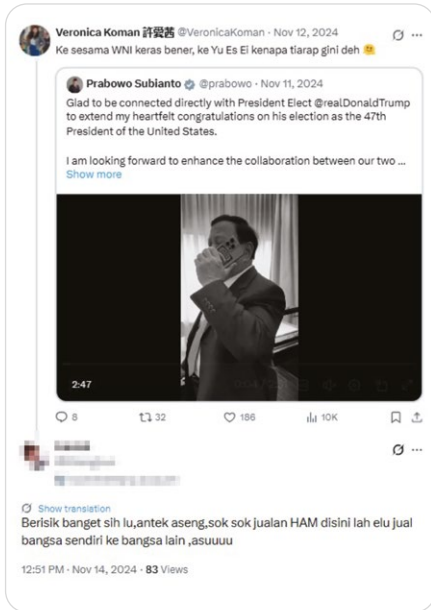
Sample Post 28: 1st example of attacks against Veronica on X.

This is an image of an online interaction between Veronica and an anonymous account. On 24 October 2024, Veronica tweeted about the human rights violations against Indigenous communities in Papua by the Prabowo administration’s Food Estate Project.

In response, an anonymous X user said: “Veronica is actually a TERRORIST. Is Mr. @prabowo unable to deal with this...?”

244 Interview by video call with Veronica Koman, woman human rights defender, 26 July 2025. See also a record of threats and harassment against Veronica at Frontline Defenders, “Threats against and judicial harassment of human rights lawyer Veronica Koman”, <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/threats-against-and-judicial-harassment-human-rights-lawyer-veronica-koman> (accessed on 10 February 2026).

245 Interview with Veronica Koman (previously cited).



Sample Post 29: Second example of attacks against Veronica on X.

This is an image of an online interaction between Veronica and an anonymous account. On 12 November 2024, Veronica tweeted about President Prabowo’s engagement with US President Donald Trump, saying, “So tough towards fellow Indonesians, but why so submissive towards the US?”

An anonymous account responded to her tweet, using racist slurs and stating: “You’re so damn noisy, you Chinese lackey, pretending to sell human rights here when you’re the one selling out your own nation to another country.”



Sample Post 30: Third example of attacks against Veronica on X.

This is an image of an online interaction between Veronica and an anonymous account. On 3 February 2025, Veronica tweeted about the prevailing distrust among Papuans of Indonesian authorities that could cause widespread rejection of the Prabowo administration’s free nutritious meals flagship policy.

In response, an anonymous X user said: “Foreign agents want to divide the Republic of Indonesia.”



Sample Post 31: Fourth example of attacks against Veronica on X.

This is an image of an online interaction between Veronica and an anonymous account. Amid public debates about the Indonesian military’s increasing powers under the Prabowo administration, Veronica tweeted on 29 August 2025 praising civil society’s street protests calling for the military to stay out of civilian affairs, saying, “Solid spirit. The military really needs to be handled like this by civilians. Don’t go praising and encouraging them to meddle in civilian affairs instead. Spread this exemplary example!”

In response, an anonymous X user used misogynistic slurs, combined with allegations about her alleged affiliation with an armed group in Papua to attack her: “Hey you OPM wh*re, don’t interfere in Indonesia’s affairs – whoever the President is, you’re just a traitor.”

These online attacks sought not to challenge the accuracy of Veronica’s human rights advocacy, but to undermine her character and legitimacy. Reflecting on the personal toll, Veronica said: “There was a point when I started to doubt myself because of all the disinformation attacks. But at this point, I feel numb.”²⁴⁶

5.4.3 ATTACKS AGAINST STUDENT ACTIVISTS

Student activists were frequently labelled “mahasewa”, a derogatory play on the Indonesian word mahasiswa (university student). By replacing the final -siswa (student) with -sewa (rent), the term implies that students participating in demonstrations are “rented” or paid to protest. Deployed alongside the ‘foreign agent’ narrative, the “mahasewa” label served to delegitimize youth activism by portraying students as naïve, disloyal or incapable of independent political thought.

Muhammad Fawwaz Farhan Farabi, a law student at the University of Indonesia, petitioned the Constitutional Court in March 2025 to review the constitutionality of the Military Law revisions. He described to Amnesty International how disinformation narratives targeted him directly:

“I see so much injustice that could have immediate impacts on our lives since President Prabowo took office, so I decided to engage in different actions. However, whenever I took public actions or spoke out against the government online, I received a number of comments accusing me of being a foreign agent or a mahasewa.”²⁴⁷

The label “mahasewa” was repeatedly used to infantilize his activism, portraying him not as an engaged citizen but as a pawn too naïve to act independently. Fawwaz recalled that commenters often dismissed him with remarks such as he should “just go back to study” instead of participating in politics.²⁴⁸ For instance, an Instagram post featuring Fawwaz’s interview about the student protest movement, which Amnesty International reviewed, received several comments using this type of language (see Sample Posts 32 to 34).



Sample Post 32: First example of the use of the label “mahasewa” in a response to an Instagram post published by Fawwaz on 19 February 2025.

The comment on the top right said: “You ‘mahasewa’ who like to protest and make noises are causing investors to run away and no longer want to invest in Indonesia.”

246 Interview with Veronica Koman (previously cited).

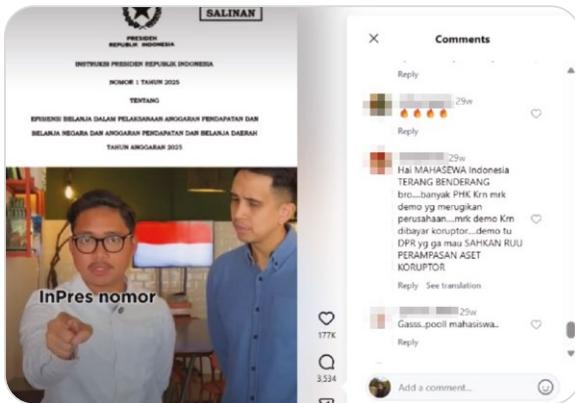
247 Interview in person with Muhammad Fawwaz Farhan Farabi, Student activist, 29 July 2025, Jakarta.

248 Interview with Muhammad Fawwaz Farhan Farabi (previously cited).



Sample Post 33: Second example of comments attacking Fawwaz using the label “mahasewa”. These were comments for the same Instagram post in Sample Post 32.

The comment said: “[The student movement] was paid for and mobilized by Marcella Santoso who is now handcuffed and imprisoned, and who has admitted that the #IndonesiaGelas hashtag was masterminded by her, having received orders and payment from corrupt individuals backed by foreign actors, in order to damage the image of the Prabowo–Gibran administration so that the people could be incited and divided to impeach and replace the President and Vice President who were lawfully elected by the majority of the Indonesian people.”



Sample Post 34: Third example of comments attacking Fawwaz using the label “mahasewa”. These were comments for the same Instagram post in Sample Post 32.

The comment said: “Hey ‘mahasewa’ Indonesia is bright and clear, bro... there have been many layoffs because of your protests that harmed companies... You protest because they’re paid by corruptors...”

Across these cases, the ‘foreign agent’ allegation was layered with other stigmatizing tropes, including accusations of separatism, racist abuse, gender-based harassment and age-based stereotypes, as well as threats of violence. These intersecting narratives appeared to undermine those accused of being a foreign agent and also intensified harassment by drawing on pre-existing social prejudices and discrimination.

5.5 INTERPLAY WITH OFFLINE HARMS

Amnesty International observed an interplay between mis- and disinformation and offline harms. In the cases documented below, online content portrayed civil society actors as ‘foreign agents’ through false and misleading claims while also contributing to a broader environment in which intimidation, arbitrary arrest and excessive use of force by police were normalized, trivialized or openly endorsed.

5.5.1 VIOLENCE AGAINST THOSE PROTESTING AGAINST THE REVISIONS OF THE MILITARY LAW

The most prominent case exemplifying the interplay between disinformation and offline harms documented in this report is the targeting of Andrie Yunus, a deputy coordinator of KontraS. As detailed in Section 5.3.1, Andrie was directly targeted in a deceptively coordinated disinformation campaign in March 2025 that portrayed him as a ‘foreign agent’ and positioned him as the public face of the protest at the Fairmont Hotel in Jakarta against the Military Law revisions.

While the coordinated disinformation attacks took place in the immediate aftermath of the Fairmont Hotel protest, Andrie continued to carry out his activism publicly and vocally in the months that followed. This included sustained advocacy against the Military Law revisions and other repressive measures under President Prabowo, as well as criticism of state violence in the authorities’ response to protests.

According to Andrie, in the weeks after the protest, military officers and unidentified individuals conducted surveillance at the office of KontraS where he works at least 22 times.²⁴⁹ He explained to Amnesty International that these individuals parked in front of his office in Jakarta and took photos:

“Our staff members knew it would be part of their jobs to face this type of dirty tactic, but they are still cautious because the military would stop at nothing to silence us.”²⁵⁰

Andrie’s point about the military’s relentless efforts to silence dissent soon became clear. In early March 2026, Andrie was reportedly stalked by unknown men at locations where he frequented. Eventually, as documented in Section 3.3, he was subjected to an acid attack on 12 March 2026. According to available information from official investigations, the suspects identified in the acid attack are military officers.

Online disinformation campaigns against Andrie did not stop after the acid attack. Amnesty International discovered a high number of social media posts after 12 March targeting Andrie by minimizing the attacks against him or using ‘foreign agent’ allegations to smear his status as a human rights defender. For instance, in late March 2026, one video circulated online accusing Andrie of staging the acid attack to receive foreign funding. The video further suggested that Andrie should face jail time under Article 195 of the new Criminal Code, which prohibits receiving money from foreign individuals or organizations to overthrow the government.²⁵¹

Parts of the transcript said:

“... Under the new Criminal Code, Andrie Yunus could face up to 10 years in prison. Where are the police? Instead, he’s trying to ‘play victim’ in an acid attack. But it turns out, guys, that clever Indonesian ‘netizens’ have managed to expose the truth. Who is Andrie Yunus really? This KontraS activist, who supposedly has a special hatred for the military [TNI], turns out – well, it turns out, guys – that he has consistently received financial support worth billions of rupiah from George Soros’ organization through the Kurawal Foundation. One of its targets and roles is to build negative narratives against the Prabowo government in order to eventually bring it down. This clearly amounts to actions leading towards a coup. As clearly stated in the new Criminal Code that will come into force in 2026, Article 195 provides that anyone who receives money, goods, or anything that can be used to disrupt state sovereignty or overthrow the government can face up to 10 years in prison...”

249 Interview with Andrie Yunus (previously cited).

250 Interview with Andrie Yunus (previously cited).

251 Indonesia, Criminal Code, Article 195 (previously cited).

Amnesty International found that the same video was posted online mostly between 27 and 29 March 2026 by various accounts across TikTok, Instagram and Facebook. The reposting of identical content across multiple platforms within closely clustered timeframe indicates a pattern consistent with deceptive coordination, amounting to disinformation (see examples in Coordinated Posts 15). All these videos remained online and publicly accessible as of 20 April 2026.

Coordinated Posts 15: Examples of posts on Instagram and TikTok accusing Andrie of staging the acid attack.

The first TikTok post was posted on 28 March 2026 at 8.23 pm (GMT+7).

The second TikTok post was posted on 28 March 2026 at 8.41 pm (GMT+7).



The third Instagram post was posted on 28 March 2026 at 9.16 pm (GMT+7). The caption said: "Can he really face up to 10 years in prison?" The name Andre Yunus from KontraS has come under scrutiny in relation to potential charges under the new Criminal Code. The public is awaiting clarity on the facts and a transparent legal process."



The fourth Instagram post was posted on 28 March 2026 at 9.33 pm (GMT+7). This post had the same caption as the post above.

All the posts listed below were published within a narrow timeframe of 8.23-9.33 pm (GMT+7).



In another example, in early April 2026, a video accusing Andrie of covertly receiving foreign funding to undermine the Indonesian government was circulated widely and went viral across TikTok, Instagram and X (see Coordinated Posts 16). The video alleged:

“Andrie Yunus, a KontraS activist, under the guise of fighting for democracy, secretly receives funds from American Jews... Through local proxies... and local NGOs like KontraS and YLBHI... they have received more than USD 5.4 million... The money is usually used for research, activist training, and media framing narratives. Because it comes through social and grassroots activities, ordinary people are unaware that they are actually being ridden by foreign interests. A condition of the funding is to follow donor instructions to build negative sentiment against the government’s performance and continuously provoke the public throughout the year. Andrie Yunus, have you had enough of this ‘dirty money’? Repent now, or do you want everything to be exposed one by one?”

According to metadata analysis, the original video seemed to be posted on an anonymous account on TikTok on 5 April 2026 at 13:06 pm GMT+7. As of 20 April 2026, the video remained online and publicly accessible and received more than 303,800 views, 10,900 likes and 1,763 shares. Later on, Amnesty International found the same video posted by six other anonymous accounts on TikTok, one account on X and three accounts on Instagram between 5 and 7 April 2026. Similar to the case study above, this pattern is consistent with deceptive coordination and, therefore, amounts to disinformation.



Coordinated Posts 16:

Original TikTok post that attacked and labeled Andrie as a foreign agent. The post was published on 5 April 2026.

The caption said: “Andrie Yunus, a KontraS activist, DISGUISED as a democracy fighter, secretly receives funds from American Jews.

Curious?? Watch this video until the end.

#andrieyunus
#kontras
#foreignstooge
#osf
#soros”

The case of Andrie Yunus illustrates a clear pattern in which a human rights defender was repeatedly targeted through sustained disinformation campaigns, alongside persistent offline intimidation. From March 2025 onwards, Andrie was singled out as a target in online campaigns that framed his activism as foreign-directed and illegitimate. These attacks coincided with reports of prolonged surveillance, harassment and physical intimidation. This trajectory culminated in the acid attack against Andrie in March 2026.

While authorities have initiated and made progress in investigating this attack and identifying potential perpetrators, Andrie has continued to be subjected to further disinformation campaigns based on ‘foreign agent’ allegations seeking to downplay the violence and cast doubt on his victimhood, and to imply that, therefore, the attack was justified. The sequence demonstrates how online disinformation and offline repression can reinforce one another, blurring the line between rhetorical attacks and physical harm.

Andrie’s case does not stand in isolation. Following the protests against the Military Law revisions in March 2025, Amnesty International documented additional instances in which anonymous accounts used similar narratives to justify, minimize or legitimize violence and intimidation against other protesters and critics.

For instance, one widely circulated tweet commended police and military excessive use of force against demonstrators stating: “Arrest and dump them in Papua, sir,” referring to the students protesting against the Military Law revisions (see Sample Post 35).²⁵² This post further said: “Thank you to the army and police for taking firm and appropriate repressive action against the students who committed criminal and terror acts. Hopefully this does not stop with the students but also leads to the arrests of masterminds of the rebellion from NGOs and foreign media”. It named Tempo and KontraS as the “masterminds”. The tweet remained online and accessible as of 20 April 2026 and was viewed more than 43,800 times.



Sample Post 35: Tweet commending the authorities for using force excessively against protesters, published on 26 March 2025.

Another X user reposted a video capturing what appears to be an arrest of anti-Military Law protesters in Kendiri – a city in East Java – on 27 March 2025. The tweet said: “No compromise with rioters, provocateurs, and instigators, foreign agents who are increasingly brutal” (see Sample Post 36).

252 The reference to “dump them in Papua” carries particular significance in the Indonesian context. Papua has long experienced armed conflict, heavy military presence, and documented human rights violations. The phrase may imply banishment to a conflict-affected region, exposure to violence, or punitive deployment to a militarized area.



Sample Post 36: Tweet commenting on an arrest of a protesters, published on 28 March 2025.

In both examples, the use of ‘foreign agent’ reframed protesters not as rights holders exercising peaceful assembly, but as external threats warranting repression. The rhetoric served to further delegitimize protest activities and to legitimize a security response.

5.5.2 INTIMIDATION AGAINST TEMPO

From March to May 2025, Tempo faced repeated intimidation. On 19 March 2025, Fransisca Christy Rosana, Tempo’s political reporter who hosts the outlet’s popular political podcast Bocor Alus Politik, received a package containing a severed pig’s head with both ears cut off at Tempo’s office.²⁵³ Tempo indicated that it was the first time the outlet faced intimidation through the use of an animal carcass.²⁵⁴

On 21 March, an anonymous account sent a threatening message to Tempo’s official Instagram account stating:

“Hello, not enough pork? If your building burns down, they’ll call you anarchists, but you idiots don’t realize you’re being watched because you like spreading provocative news to cause conflict between the people and the government. The terror will continue until your office is destroyed.”²⁵⁵

On 22 March, another package was delivered to Tempo’s editorial office. This package contained six decapitated rats.²⁵⁶

253 Tempo, “Teror Kepala Babi, Polisi Sebut Kurir Gojek Dapat Barang dari Driver Grab”, 10 April 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/teror-kepala-babi-polisi-sebut-kurir-gojek-dapat-barang-dari-driver-grab-1229774> (in Indonesian).

254 Tempo, “Kronologi Detail Teror Kepala Babi dan Bangkai Tikus untuk Redaksi Tempo”, 28 March 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/politik/kronologi-detail-teror-kepala-babi-dan-bangkai-tikus-untuk-redaksi-tempo-1225227> (in Indonesian).

255 Tempo, “Kronologi Detail Teror Kepala Babi dan Bangkai Tikus untuk Redaksi Tempo” (previously cited).

256 Tempo, “Kronologi Detail Teror Kepala Babi dan Bangkai Tikus untuk Redaksi Tempo” (previously cited).

Komnas HAM confirmed that these incidents constituted a “violation of human rights and press freedom” guaranteed under the constitution.²⁵⁷ On 21 March, the Head of the Presidential Communication Office, Hasan Nasbi, stated that the incidents against Tempo did not constitute a threat and dismissed it with a joke: “Just cook it.”²⁵⁸ This statement reflected the Indonesian authorities’ lack of political will to investigate this incident. Despite Komnas HAM’s statement, and Tempo reporting the incident to the National Police Headquarters’ Criminal Investigation Agency, the investigation into the case had made no progress at the time of writing, raising concerns regarding its effectiveness.²⁵⁹

Following these acts of intimidation, Amnesty International documented online content that sought to minimize or ridicule the threats against Tempo by reframing them as staged incidents intended to attract foreign funding.

For example, on 20 March 2025, one anonymous X user tweeted: “Foreign media @tempodotco affiliated with USAID – a global criminal and terrorist organization aimed at creating uprisings in various countries – is staging a DRAMA of playing the victim during the revision of the TNI Law.” The tweet included a picture of the pig’s head that Tempo received, with the superimposed text that said: “The Tempo office received a delivery of a pig’s head.”

This account also tagged the official accounts of President Prabowo and of the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs and urged them to shut down Tempo and the outlet’s podcast Bocor Alus Politik. This tweet remained online for many months and had garnered more than 21,500 views as of January 2026 before it was removed (see Sample Post 37).



Sample Post 37: Tweet by an anonymous user published on 20 March 2025.

The post said: “Foreign media @tempodotco

affiliated with USAID — a global criminal and terrorist organization aimed at creating uprisings in various countries — is staging a DRAMA of playing the victim during the revision of the TNI Law.

@prabowo @kemkomdigi should shut down Tempo and Bocor Alus.”

257 CNN Indonesia, Komnas HAM Tegaskan Teror ke Tempo Langgar Hak Asasi Manusia, 28 March 2025, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20250328050335-20-1213916/komnas-ham-tegaskan-teror-ke-tempo-langgar-hak-asasi-manusia> (in Indonesian).

258 Tempo, “Prabowo Urged to Review Hasan Nasbi’s Position After Insensitive Remark on Pig’s Head Threat to Tempo”, 22 March 2025, <https://en.tempo.co/read/1989406/prabowo-urged-to-review-hasan-nasbi-position-after-insensitive-remark-on-pigs-head-threat-to-tempo> (in Indonesian).

259 Tempo, “Setelah 125 Hari Teror Kepala Babi dan Bangkai Tikus kepada Tempo”, 26 July 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/setelah-125-hari-teror-kepala-babi-dan-bangkai-tikus-kepada-tempo--2051399> (in Indonesian).

Another X user tweeted along a similar line, calling Tempo the “enemy of the Indonesian nation” and a “foreign lackey” and saying the outlet deserved to be attacked (see Sample Post 38).



Sample Post 38: Tweet by an anonymous user published on 25 March 2025.

The post said: “@tempodotco @korantempo turn out to be ENEMIES OF THE INDONESIAN NATION, FOREIGN LACKEYS whose job is to create chaos everywhere.

Be grateful that they were only sent a pig and rats – they should have been sent 1,000 trucks of garbage to bury the Tempo office.”

In addition to these individual posts, a set of posts was published on 17 May 2025 that displayed indicators of deceptive coordination (see Coordinated Posts 17). At least seven anonymous X accounts posted an identical graphic criticizing Tempo within a one-hour interval between 11.30 am and 12.30 pm (GMT+7). The text accused Tempo of deliberately manufacturing “narratives of hatred towards the government” to generate subscriptions and earn money for foreign donors, and alleged that the outlet was “glorifying” the pig’s head incident for sympathy and financial gain.

The full text said:

“AN IRONY: As a media outlet that claims to be independent and credible, Tempo continues to consistently create narratives for public consumption. Yes, Tempo consistently produces narratives of hatred towards the government. Starting from narratives that make the public fearful, such as the revival of ABRI’s dual function, defamatory narratives linking high-ranking officials to online gambling, narratives that discredit institutions such as the presidential communications office, or the glorification of the pig’s head terror – all with the aim of making the public angry and then generating sympathy for Tempo. From such heated narratives, Tempo hopes that members of the public who are already angry will become subscribers to its products. The money flows, bills to Soros can be paid in instalments, business runs smoothly, and public sympathy swells. FYI, Tempo uses a subscription system to access its heated narratives.”

Coordinated Posts 17: Third group of example tweets attacking Tempo in a manner that appeared coordinated.

The tweet on the top left said, “Tempo only spreads lies for profit, not to spread the truth. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 11.56 am (GMT+7).



The tweet on the top right said, “Whenever there’s an uproar, they immediately spread it, without caring whether it’s true or not. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.14 pm (GMT+7).

The tweet on the bottom left said, “What you’re defending isn’t the truth, but interests that are more profitable.



The tweet on the bottom right said, “What’s dangerous isn’t hoaxes from social media, but hoaxes from major media outlets. #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa Media Destroyer of Real Facts.” This tweet was posted on 17 May 2025 at 12.06 pm (GMT+7).

As with the deceptive coordinated campaign described in Section 5.3.3, these posts relied on identical visual materials, near-identical captions and consistent use of the hashtag #MediaTempoPengkhiranBangsa (“Tempo Media – the Nation’s Betrayer”) and the phrase “Media Destroyer of Real Facts.”

By portraying Tempo as a foreign-funded provocateur, these posts, which amount to disinformation, reframed a documented act of intimidation as either fabricated or deserved. In doing so, they contributed to an environment in which threats against journalists were trivialized and condoned.

5.5.3 ARREST AND DETENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER

The convergence of disinformation online and intimidation offline also defined the arrest of Delpedro Marhaen, director of the Lokataru Foundation – a Jakarta-based human rights CSO – and seven other activists engaged in protests between late August and early September 2025. During this period of protests, Amnesty International recorded widespread use of arbitrary arrest, intimidation and physical violence against protesters.²⁶⁰

Delpedro faced allegations that he incited riots and encouraged children to participate in the protests through the Lokataru Foundation’s social media platforms, which police authorities described as “anarchic actions.”²⁶¹ On 1 September 2025, the Metro Jaya Police arrested Delpedro at the office of Lokataru Foundation.²⁶² Three days later, police raided and searched Delpedro’s home and the Lokataru Foundation office late at night.²⁶³

Shortly after Delpedro’s arrest and the raid, a series of online attacks against him show signs of deceptive coordination. On 3 September 2025, a TikTok user posted a video containing false and misleading information that accused Delpedro of being a ‘foreign agent’ (see Sample Post 39). The video opened with footage showing Delpedro’s face and immediately framed his arrest within a broader conspiracy narrative. It asserted: “Lokataru does not stand alone” and claimed that its members were “connected to USAID and the Open Society Foundation owned by Soros,” further alleging that “the people within Lokataru have long been networked with NGOs that essentially live off foreign donors.” The video concluded:

“It is reasonable to see Delpedro as more than just an activist. Given his network is linked to NGOs funded by foreign actors, he is also a [foreign] proxy. He speaks about human rights on the surface, but in reality, he is destabilizing the [Indonesian] state.”

This original video was posted on TikTok. Shortly afterwards, many other social media users followed suit, reposting the same video on TikTok, as well as on X and Instagram (see Sample Posts 40 to 42). As of 20 April 2026, the original video had received more than 170,200 views, 4,584 likes and 1,242 shares.

260 Amnesty International, *Indonesia: Activists face criminal charges for peaceful protests* (Index: ASA 21/0391/2025), 10 October 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/0391/2025/en/>

261 Whiteboard Journal, *Delpedro’s Arrest Is a Wake-Up Call: Our Freedom Is Under Attack*, 4 September 2025, <https://whiteboardjournal.com/column/delpedros-arrest-is-a-wake-up-call-our-freedom-is-under-attack/>; and Forum-Asia, “[Joint statement] Indonesia: Government must quash charges against Delpedro Marhaen and human rights defenders, uphold freedom of expression”, 5 March 2026, <https://forum-asia.org/indonesia-delpedro-hrds/>

262 BBC News Indonesia, “Aktivis Lokataru ditangkap buntut gelombang demonstrasi Agustus – ‘Pola yang berulang usai unjuk rasa besar’”, 3 September 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cm212l5nyy2o> (in Indonesian).

263 Rhama Purna Jati, “Police Search of Lokataru Foundation Office Deemed Haphazard”, Kompas.id, 7 September 2025, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/en-penggeledahan-di-kantor-lokataru-dinilai-serampangan>



Sample Post 39: Original video posted on TikTok on 3 September 2025.

The caption said: “Delpedro Marhaen and Lokataru have been arrested. If we trace it back, there is a network of local NGOs funded by USAID and George Soros. From KontraS to YLBHI, the pattern of foreign donors is clearly visible. Just like 1998, just like the Middle East. Is Indonesia being tested again? #ProxyWar #GeopolitikIndonesia #MalesMikirAI #KonspirasiGlobal (“Global conspiracy”) #SejarahBerulang” (“History repeats”).”



Sample Post 40: Instagram post re-publishing the TikTok video spreading disinformation against Delpedro. This post was published on 3 September 2025.

The post’s caption said: “Turns out he’s also a hater of Mr. Jokowi

He claims to be an activist, has been active for a long time, and already has many loyal followers (students – school students).

His NGO works in the field of law and human rights, but it’s no secret that many NGOs are funded by foreign sources.

And it’s no secret either that whenever there is unrest, there is always foreign involvement.”



Sample Post 41: TikTok post re-publishing the original video spreading disinformation against Delpedro. This post was published on 5 September 2025.

The caption said: “The unrest during demonstrations in several cities in Indonesia has been infiltrated by irresponsible parties seeking to pit the people against the government. The demonstrations are no longer purely driven by the people’s demands. The arrest of Delpedro by the police deserves appreciation, as it has reduced the intensity of the protest unrest.

President Prabowo, during the commemoration of Pancasila Day on 2 June 2025, once again reminded the public that many local NGOs receive funding from foreign parties for improper purposes. President Prabowo appealed to the people to safeguard Indonesia’s unity and remain vigilant.”



Sample Post 42: Tweet republishing the TikTok video spreading disinformation against Delpedro. This post was published on 6 September 2025.

The post’s caption said: “It’s good that more and more people are starting to campaign about the masterminds being foreign actors and their foot soldiers acting as foreign proxies in Indonesia. The biggest weakness of a Colour Revolution, based on historical examples around the world, is this: if the government can prove that the movement’s masterminds are foreign actors and that it is funded from abroad, then their legitimacy in claiming to act in the name of ‘the people’ will disappear and be replaced with the label ‘traitors to the nation.’

Fortunately, during the Suharto era, this anti-foreign lackey sentiment grew very strong and remains strong to this day. Now we just wait for the government to act – to prove that they are masterminded and funded by foreign actors. As long as there is evidence of foreign money flows – the amounts, the recipients – and it is campaigned massively and widely, then the ‘Colour Revolution’ will completely fail. It would be even better if how the money was used and who received it on the ground could also be exposed. And those who still insist on continuing the Colour Revolution, by constantly changing protest colours and using gimmick flags, will be labelled traitors to the nation and the state by society.”

In this case, the reposts did not display the tightly synchronized timing compared to the earlier case studies. However, they all engaged in circulating the same content and captions to amplify the same narrative framing Delpedro’s arrest as a justified response to alleged foreign interference, which suggests a possibility of deceptive coordination.

On 27 February 2026, the public prosecutor demanded two years’ imprisonment for Delpedro and three other activists under the charge of incitement to commit crimes under Article 246 of the new Criminal Code, which came into force in January 2026.²⁶⁴

264 Initially, the public prosecutor indicted the four activists under various charges, including Article 160 of the old Criminal Code (Incitement), Articles 28 Paragraph 2 and 45(A) Paragraph 3 of the EIT Law (Dissemination of false information that incites hatred), and multiple provisions under the Child Protection Act, including Article 76 H, Articles 15 and 87 that prohibit the recruitment of children for military purposes, political activities, armed conflicts or riots. See Amnesty International, “Prosecutor’s demand for Delpedro et al justifies ‘silencing operation’ of criticism”, 27 February 2026, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/tuntutan-jaksa-atas-delpedro-dkk-benarkan-operasi-pembungkaman-kritik/02/2026/>

Amnesty International noted the positive development when the Central Jakarta District Court acquitted Delpedro and three other activists of all charges on 6 March 2026.²⁶⁵ However, the four activists had already spent six months in pre-trial detention.²⁶⁶

This episode formed part of a broader pattern in which ‘foreign agent’ allegations were used to justify state violence against civil society actors, revealing how such rhetoric can contribute to legitimizing punitive state responses against these activists even though they were not committing any crime and were merely exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

The cases discussed above included false and misleading ‘foreign agent’ allegations circulated online with simultaneous acts of intimidation, coercive law enforcement measures or physical threats. This interplay demonstrates that mis- and disinformation in these cases functioned not only as a reputational attack but as a harm multiplier, reinforcing hostile environments and contributing to conditions in which violence and repression were framed as legitimate.

THE NARRATIVE PARADOX OF HARMFUL AND STIGMATIZING MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

A central paradox lies at the heart of the government’s approach to mis- and disinformation. On the one hand, as illustrated in the case studies above, state and state-aligned actors were themselves responsible for disseminating harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation targeting civil society. On the other hand, the government worked to cast protesters and civil society groups as the originators of “hoaxes” or “foreign propaganda,” presenting itself as the actor safeguarding the public from disinformation. This framing coincided with the government’s decision to summon TikTok and Meta to call for stricter moderation of what it claimed was “disinformation” instigating protests (see Section 3.3).

This contradictory dynamic has gained institutional expression in the government’s current efforts to draft a Bill on Countering Disinformation and Foreign Propaganda (RUU Penanggulangan Disinformasi dan Propaganda Asing). While the official draft of this bill had not been made public as of 20 April 2026, many CSOs have raised concerns that this law could be used to silence critics and further restrict freedom of expression, given the ongoing pattern of disinformation branding critics as ‘foreign agents’ under the Prabowo administration.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Amnesty International, “Vonis hakim menerangi kegelapan politik Indonesia”, 6 March 2026, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/vonis-hakim-menerangi-kegelapan-politik-indonesia/03/2026/>

²⁶⁶ Ade Ridwan Yandwiputra, “Court Acquits Delpedro and Activists; ICW Slams Criminalization Attempt”, 6 March 2026, Tempo, <https://en.tempo.co/read/2091137/court-acquits-delpedro-and-activists-icw-slams-criminalization-attempt>

²⁶⁷ See, for example, LBH Press, “Respon LBH Pers terhadap RUU Penanggulangan Disinformasi dan Propaganda Asing: Potensi Overkriminalisasi dan Cara Negara Ciptakan Narasi Tunggal”, 19 January 2026, <https://lbhpers.org/respon-lbh-pers-terhadap-ruu-penanggulangan-disinformasi-dan-propaganda-asing-potensi-overkriminalisasi-dan-cara-negara-ciptakan-narasi-tunggal/> (in Indonesian); and Amnesty International, “Hentikan penyusunan RUU Penanggulangan Disinformasi dan Propaganda Asing”, 23 January 2026, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/hentikan-penyusunan-ruu-penanggulangan-disinformasi-dan-propaganda-asing/01/2026> (in Indonesian).

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS

6.1 CHILLING EFFECT

Mis- and disinformation based on the ‘foreign agent’ narrative and allegations documented in Chapter 5 have resulted in human rights abuses, including creating a widespread chilling effect on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, as well as the right to defend human rights.

A “chilling effect”, as articulated by Professor Laurent Pech, entails:

“... the negative effect any state action has on natural and/or legal persons, and which results in pre-emptively dissuading them from exercising their rights or fulfilling their professional obligations, for fear of being subject to formal state proceedings which could lead to sanctions or informal consequences such as threats, attacks or smear campaigns.”²⁶⁸

Amnesty International found that many of those interviewed who had been targeted with disinformation, and in some instances with harmful misinformation, both online and offline, experienced strong fear and anxiety that they could face further human rights abuses if they pursued their activism or work. For example, Iqbal, a campaigner from Greenpeace who faced coordinated attacks online due to the Save Raja Ampat campaign (see Section 5.4), captured the threat as follows:

“I take Prabowo speeches and all those disinformation attacks against us as the warning signs. These signs are warning us to keep silent or else.”²⁶⁹

Iqbal explained that these warnings are not abstract: they are underpinned by legal instruments that the government has repeatedly weaponized against dissent. Chief among these is the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (EIT Law), regularly used to prosecute critics under allegations of spreading fake news (see Chapter 7).²⁷⁰

Salsabila from Konde.co shared her concerns regarding similar risks:

“Our concerns are not unfounded. We have already seen many activists who were accused of being ‘foreign agents’ and then charged with incitement or offences under the EIT law. This type of disinformation does not stop at the online world but could also become a way to justify criminalization against us.”²⁷¹

She also referred to the example of the director of Lokataru Foundation, Delpedro (see Section 5.5.3). In his case, the use of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation overlapped with criminalization.

²⁶⁸ Laurent Pech, *The Concept of Chilling Effect: Its Untapped Potential to Better Protect Democracy, The Rule of Law, and Fundamental Rights in the EU*, March 2021, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/publications/the-concept-of-chilling-effect>, p. 4.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

²⁷⁰ Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

²⁷¹ Interview with Salsabila Putri Pertiwi (previously cited).

Fear extended beyond legal sanction to the risk of social hostility and violence. Andrie from KontraS directly linked Indonesia's current human rights landscape to the country's violent past:

“The attacks accusing us as ‘foreign agents’ reminded me that not that many years ago, the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation’s office was attacked by a violent mob because they were accused of being communist sympathizers. We are worried that the history might repeat itself.”²⁷²

Similar concerns were echoed by Setri from Tempo, who noted that his newsroom had already been confronted by mobs mobilized by allegations that they were acting as ‘foreign agents.’²⁷³ Overall, those targeted shared fears that the increasing use of ‘foreign agent’ allegations under the Prabowo administration could be a prelude to other forms of violence. Accordingly, many of them were dissuaded from fully exercising their rights, particularly the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and the right to defend human rights.

6.2 IMPACT ON THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Disinformation undermines the right to freely impart information and communicate opinions, including those that are most critical of governmental policies, because it can pave the way not only to further online and offline attacks but also to the criminalization of civil society actors, as some of the cases in this report show. Misinformation may also have a harmful intent and facilitate human rights violations, especially in the Indonesia context where misinformation often replicates the same narratives underpinning disinformation, such as the ‘foreign agent’ narratives against civil society actors.

Multiple interviewees, especially journalists, described to Amnesty International that they felt compelled to modify their expressions and self-censor in their journalistic practices.

Salsabila shared that the online attacks against her media outlet Konde.co forced her and her fellow journalists to be extra cautious in reporting human rights issues:

“Admittedly, the disinformation attacks made us anxious. We sometimes had to tone down our reporting because we are under threat not just of being attacked by disinformation but also of further facing criminalization.”²⁷⁴

Even some of those who may not be the direct target of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation decided to censor themselves. Journalist *Fatima*, who asked Amnesty International to use a pseudonym for fear of reprisals, said that she had witnessed the decline of press freedom in Indonesia over the past year alongside the increasing disinformation used to label journalists as ‘foreign agents.’ Such observations led to pressure on her newsroom to instruct journalists to “take extra caution” and “refrain from reporting issues too critical of the government.”²⁷⁵ *Fatima* said,

“What the government is doing is an effort to monopolize information and narrative. If we let this type of misinformation and disinformation continue, soon we will no longer be able to report on any different points of view.”²⁷⁶

272 Interview with Andrie Yunus (previously cited).

273 Interview with Setri Yasra (previously cited).

274 Interview with Salsabila Putri Pertiwi (previously cited).

275 Interview with *Fatima* (real name withheld for security reasons), journalist, 29 August 2025.

276 Interview with *Fatima* (previously cited).

A senior journalist articulated the long-term danger of this trend in the declining freedom of expression for the future of media under the Prabowo administration:

“This is dangerous for all of us. If we all become afraid of being labelled ‘foreign agents’ and stop reporting news or any stories critical of the government, then we are back to the authoritarian atmosphere of the past.”²⁷⁷

6.3 IMPACT ON THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

The ‘foreign agent’ allegations also deterred participation in protests and other public assemblies. Student activist Fawwaz described how accusations of being a foreign agent made mobilization increasingly difficult:

“This is more than just intimidation – it’s systematic repression. It’s been growing under President Prabowo. More and more people believe we’re backed by foreigners. It is becoming harder for us to mobilize for human rights.”²⁷⁸

Speaking of the Indonesia Gelap protest movement, a Bareng Warga representative similarly emphasized:

“This is not just one person spreading fake news. It’s a coordinated movement of disinformation aimed at discrediting activists and protesters. Our strongest concern is that the disinformation would sway people’s opinion based on false accusations that we are agents of foreigners.”²⁷⁹

They added:

“It’s not that we are scared. However, the disinformation emotionally overwhelmed us. It forced many of us to take a break from pursuing activism or joining protests, even though we should not have to.”²⁸⁰



277 Interview with a senior journalist (previously cited).

278 Interview with Muhammad Fawwaz Farhan Farabi (previously cited).

279 Interview with two representatives from Bareng Warga (previously cited).

280 Interview with two representatives from Bareng Warga (previously cited).

6.4 IMPACT ON THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

The chilling effect has undermined coalition building and organizational collaboration among civil society groups. For example, Greenpeace reported that partner organizations became reluctant to collaborate with them, fearing collateral damage from coordinated attacks online.²⁸¹ Iqbal said:

“Understandably, sometimes when other organizations partnered with us, they also faced the same accusations around being a foreign agent, so we noticed that there have been certain groups that distanced themselves from us potentially for this reason.”²⁸²

Marginalized groups and people living with multiple identities fear taking collective public action against the rising harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation against civil society. One activist working on the rights of religious minorities explained:

“My network would like to show our solidarity with different movements such as the anti-Military Law protests because we know that every person in the country is affected. However, religious minorities are already in a vulnerable situation in this country, so we could not risk taking any public actions that could expose us to that kind of risk. As you have seen, anyone saying critical things against the government [has] now been accused of being manipulated by foreign powers.”²⁸³

Similarly, representatives from an umbrella organization of LGBTI groups across Indonesia shared with Amnesty International that visibility in public civil society actions had become a big risk for them since President Prabowo took office: One representative said:

“We had to decide to stop publicly endorsing civil society actions, even though they aligned with our values. The best you could do now is to provide behind-the-scenes support. It is hard enough to work on LGBTI issues as we are subjected to crackdowns all the time, so we cannot afford to face any further disinformation that we are also ‘foreign agents’.”²⁸⁴

Such distancing reflected the increasing risks faced by civil society, where collaboration with those labelled by disinformation as ‘foreign agents’ became reputationally and materially dangerous. This dynamic fragmented civil society networks and weakened their ability to participate in collective actions to pursue common interests, which is at the heart of the right to freedom of association.

The stigmatization of foreign funding deepened this effect. Although IHRL and other international standards protect the right of associations to seek and receive resources, the online disinformation documented in this report often presented any international link as suspicious at best, or evidence of subversion or other malicious intents. Student activist Fawwaz, for instance, said:

281 Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

282 Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

283 Interview by video call with an activist working on the right to freedom of religion and belief (name withheld for security reasons), 2 August 2025.

284 Interview in person with two representatives from an LGBTI group (names withheld for security reasons), 26 July 2025, Jakarta.

“These online attacks kept trying to brand activists just based on the assumption that they received foreign funding. In fact, any organizations or movements should not be stigmatized or face false accusations just because they sought out resources to fund activities in line with their values.”²⁸⁵

Andrie from KontraS raised concerns with Amnesty International that the narratives falsely equating foreign funding to acting as a ‘foreign agent’ had been gaining traction online, and could be used by authorities to justify further tightening regulations around foreign funding.²⁸⁶ Similarly, Iqbal from Greenpeace pointed out the possibility that authorities might try to use Law No. 17/2013 on Societal Organizations and its supplementary regulation Perppu No. 2/2017, which grants the executive excessive discretion for regulating civil society activities, to further control CSOs labelled as ‘foreign agents’ (see Section 3.1).²⁸⁷

These concerns are consistent with patterns Amnesty International has documented online, where disinformation campaigns have explicitly instrumentalized legal frameworks to amplify fear. As outlined in Section 5.5.1, disinformation circulated online claimed that Andrie could face up to 10 years’ imprisonment under Article 195 of the new Criminal Code for allegedly receiving overseas funding to “overthrow the government.” This convergence between online disinformation and the anticipated misuse of laws regulating foreign funding reinforces the credibility of interviewees’ testimonies and signals a tangible risk that online mis- and disinformation based on ‘foreign agent’ allegations may be operationalized to further restrict civil society.

6.5 IMPACT ON THE RIGHT TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to defend human rights requires a safe and enabling environment in which individuals and organizations can carry out legitimate work without fear of retaliation. However, the testimonies documented in this report indicate that such an environment has been significantly undermined under the Prabowo administration.

As described in Sections 6.1 to 6.4, many human rights defenders, activists and journalists have deliberately toned down their advocacy, refrained from joining coalitions or limited their public visibility due to fear of being labelled as ‘foreign agents’. This highlights the hostile environment in which human rights defenders feel obliged to constantly calculate personal, legal and reputational risks before engaging in legitimate human rights work.

The online attacks have also had serious psychological consequences. Iqbal stated:

“It impacted me a lot because I started blaming myself. Sometimes, I try not to think about the comments I got via Instagram or direct messages. These buzzers don’t understand that their words could escalate violence.”²⁸⁸

He also described sleeplessness, stress and the need to distance himself from social media.²⁸⁹

Setri from Tempo similarly described the impact on his personal life:

“I’m scared. My family is scared too.”²⁹⁰

²⁸⁵ Interview with Muhammad Fawwaz Farhan Farabi (previously cited).

²⁸⁶ Interview with Andrie Yunus (previously cited).

²⁸⁷ Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

²⁸⁸ Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

²⁸⁹ Interview with Iqbal Damanik (previously cited).

²⁹⁰ Interview with Setri Yasra (previously cited).

While many of those interviewed remain resilient and continue their activism, the risks documented throughout this report demonstrate that the right to defend human rights is seriously threatened by disinformation based on ‘foreign agent’ allegations, as well as by, to some extent at least, instances of amplified online misinformation based on the same narratives.

RESILIENCE AMID REPRESSION

Despite these harms, resilience shines through. Rather than capitulating to fear, journalists and activists have developed strategies for mutual care and solidarity. Setri from Tempo said:

“The upside of these disinformation attacks is that they have also created a sense of solidarity within the newsroom. People are watching out for each other.”²⁹¹

Executive Director of CELIOS Bhima shared that his organization turned a crisis into an opportunity amid increasing disinformation attacks. He told Amnesty International:

“These attacks directed more public attention towards us. We used this opportunity to continue presenting our research findings. It is a deliberate decision to send a message to the perpetrators that we are still standing tall, despite their efforts to bring us down.”²⁹²

Journalist “Putri” told Amnesty International that journalists in her organization have taken this opportunity to increase their digital security.

“We do what we can through what is [in] our control. We remind each other to check digital hygiene and distribute free VPN access. We just need to do our best to protect each other despite limited resources.”²⁹³

Similarly, Bareng Warga activists described their “culture of care,” built around regular check-ins, shared resources on how to handle disinformation, and practices to protect each other’s well-being.²⁹⁴ One of them explained:

“We are in the same boat that’s about to sink, and we have to keep fighting to keep it afloat, despite all the risks.”²⁹⁵

Across the testimonies documented in this research, false and misleading information grounded in ‘foreign agent’ allegations – whether disseminated as misinformation or through deliberately orchestrated disinformation – have generated a pervasive chilling effect on civil society. These narratives have curtailed speech, deterred assemblies, fragmented coalitions and made human rights work increasingly risky, contributing to a contraction of civic space. At the same time, the disinformation documented in this report functioned as an authoritarian practice. It was deliberately deployed to stifle dissent, undermine accountability and entrench power, particularly at moments when public criticism intensified.

291 Interview with Setri Yasra (previously cited).

292 Interview by video call with Bhima Yudhistira Adhinegara (previously cited).

293 Interview by video call with “Putri” (previously cited).

294 Interview with two representatives from Bareng Warga (previously cited).

295 Interview with two representatives from Bareng Warga (previously cited).

7. ASSESSMENT OF STATE OBLIGATIONS

During the Universal Periodic Review's fourth cycle in November 2022, Indonesia received at least 14 recommendations directly on the protection of civil society actors.²⁹⁶ The government supported 13 of them, including recommendations to “[c]reate a conducive environment for freedom of expression so that civil society activists and journalists are protected from violence and harassment for defending and exercising human rights”,²⁹⁷ “[e]nsure that all attacks, threats and intimidation towards civil society organizations and human rights defenders are investigated promptly, independently, impartially and effectively”,²⁹⁸ and “[a]dopt a comprehensive policy and legal framework for the protection of human rights defenders that provides for a preventive protection mechanism.”²⁹⁹

As a state party to the ICCPR, Indonesia also received many recommendations from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) during its most recent review on civil and political rights in 2024. The Committee called on the government to “[a]dopt measures to effectively protect individuals exercising their freedom of expression, including the adoption of legislation to protect human rights defenders, and to guarantee their rights, including their right to effective remedies;” and “[c]onduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into all reports of harassment, intimidation and reprisals against human rights defenders, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice and, if convicted, punished with penalties commensurate with the seriousness of the offence, and that human rights defenders are able to carry out their work in a safe and enabling environment.”³⁰⁰

These calls by international human rights bodies stand in stark contrast to Indonesia's actions or lack thereof with regard to the protection of civil society actors from mis- and disinformation based on the ‘foreign agent’ allegations, especially given that state actors actively used disinformation. This chapter evaluates how Indonesia's legal and institutional framework can be leveraged to address the human rights abuses caused by mis- and disinformation. It then assesses the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for seeking remedy in practice, before evaluating Indonesia's compliance with its obligations under IHRL. This analysis shows a wide gap between Indonesia's formal commitments and the realities of implementation, revealing structural deficiencies that have left civil society actors without meaningful protection.

THIS CHAPTER EVALUATES HOW INDONESIA'S LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK CAN BE LEVERAGED TO ADDRESS THE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES CAUSED BY MIS- AND DISINFORMATION



296 Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (WG UPR), Report: Indonesia, 17 March 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/52/8/Add.1, recommendations 140.53-55 (Costa Rica, Switzerland and Romania), 140.95-102 (Greece, Uruguay, Belgium, Norway, Netherlands, Germany, Estonia and Italy), 140.114 (Malawi), and 140.121 (Latvia).

297 WG UPR, Report: Indonesia, recommendation 140.114 (Malawi) (previously cited).

298 WG UPR, Report: Indonesia, recommendation 140.97 (Belgium) (previously cited).

299 WG UPR, Report: Indonesia, recommendation 140.54 (Switzerland) (previously cited).

300 HRC, Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Indonesia, 3 May 2024, UN Doc. CCPR/C/IDN/CO/2, para. 33 (a) and (b).

7.1 DOMESTIC LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ITS SHORTCOMINGS

7.1.1 CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS

Indonesia's 1945 Constitution establishes a legal framework for the protection of various human rights that could be negatively affected by mis- and disinformation. Article 28E (3) explicitly protects freedom of expression, stating: "Every person shall have the right to the freedom to associate, to assemble and to express opinions."³⁰¹ Article 28F complements this by protecting the right to communicate and obtain information, including the rights "to communicate and to obtain information for the purpose of the development of him/herself and social environment," as well as the right to "seek, obtain, possess, store, process and convey information by employing all available types of channels."³⁰²

In March 2024, the Constitutional Court reinforced these protections by striking down Articles 14 and 15 on "fake news" and Article 310 (1) on defamation in the Criminal Code, ruling them unconstitutional for lacking clear parameters and risking infringement on freedom of expression.³⁰³ The judgment was intended to curb the weaponization of such provisions against legitimate criticism of the government.³⁰⁴

In addition, Article 28C (2) of the Constitution provides a legal basis for the right to defend human rights, affirming: "Every person has the right to advance himself in fighting for his rights collectively to develop his society, nation and state."³⁰⁵ Article 28G (1) protects against the chilling effect of intimidation and threats by guaranteeing security of the person, honour and dignity: "Every person shall have the right to protection of his/herself, family, honour, dignity, and property, and shall have the right to feel secure and to be protected against the threat of fear to do or not to do something that is a human right."³⁰⁶

7.1.2 ELECTRONIC INFORMATION AND TRANSACTIONS LAW AND RELATED REGULATIONS

CRIMINALIZATION APPROACH

Indonesian authorities rely primarily on the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (the EIT Law), which was enacted in 2008 and amended in 2016 and 2024, to police online speech. The Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs (Komdigi), formerly known as the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, is primarily responsible for overseeing the implementation of this law.

While intended to curb mis- and disinformation, the sweeping provisions of the EIT Law and its derivative regulations enable punitive and disproportionate restrictions on the right to freedom of expression, in violation of IHRL and standards. The law contains overly broad and ambiguous provisions criminalizing the spread of supposedly illegal content online. For example, Article 27 (1) bans the intentional and unauthorized distribution of electronic material that "violates decency".³⁰⁷ Article 27A criminalizes content that "attacks the honour or good name of another person" through accusations.³⁰⁸

301 Indonesia, Constitution, 1945, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Indonesia_2002, Article 28E (3).

302 Indonesia, Constitution (previously cited), Article 28F.

303 Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, "Articles on fake news and defamation in the Criminal Code have been declared unconstitutional by the Indonesian Constitutional Court", 14 April 2024, <https://aji.or.id/informasi/articles-fake-news-and-defamation-criminal-code-have-been-declared-unconstitutional>

304 Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia Court Ruling a Boon for Free Expression", 1 May 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/05/01/indonesia-court-ruling-boon-free-expression>

305 Indonesia, Constitution (previously cited), Article 28C (2).

306 Indonesia, Constitution (previously cited), Article 28G (1).

307 Indonesia, Law No. 11 of 2008 regarding Electronic Information and Transactions (EIT Law), 2008, <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/details/274494/uuno-1-tahun-2024>, Article 27(1) (as amended on 2 January 2024).

308 Indonesia, EIT Law (previously cited), Article 27A.

Article 28 (2) penalizes information inciting hostility towards specific groups based on protected characteristics such as race, religion, gender or disability.³⁰⁹ Moreover, Article 28 (3) prohibits spreading “false news that causes unrest”.³¹⁰ Violators face up to six years in prison and/or fines reaching IDR 1 billion (about USD 59,220).³¹¹ Amnesty International has previously documented the misuse of the EIT Law to prosecute critics.³¹²

In April 2025, the Constitutional Court delivered a landmark ruling banning government agencies, institutions and corporations from filing defamation lawsuits under the EIT Law.³¹³ Despite this positive step, authorities frequently bypass this restriction by charging critics with alternative offences under this law.³¹⁴ Between October 2024 and April 2026, Amnesty International documented at least 50 cases involving 65 individuals charged under the EIT Law.³¹⁵

As discussed in Chapter 4, IHRL requires that states only use criminal sanctions in the most serious instances of advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence. More broadly, any restrictions on freedom of expression must meet the strict three-part test of legality, legitimate aim, and necessity and proportionality. Despite this, the EIT Law relies on vaguely worded provisions and applies criminal penalties broadly in an unnecessary and disproportionate manner, allowing for the criminalization of protected online expressions.³¹⁶ Accordingly, the UN’s Human Rights Committee has repeatedly urged Indonesia to revise this law and ensure its compliance with Article 19 (3) of the ICCPR.³¹⁷

REPRESSIVE CONTROL OVER CONTENT TAKEDOWN PROCEDURES

Beyond individual criminalization, the EIT Law and Komdigi’s subsequent regulations impose repressive control over social media platforms’ content takedown procedures. Together with Komdigi, the Indonesian National Police set up the Virtual Police (Polisi Virtual) as a taskforce for monitoring online activities in violation of the EIT Law.³¹⁸

Article 40 of the EIT Law grants Komdigi authority to instruct platforms to carry out content moderation of illegal content.³¹⁹ To execute this provision, the government has issued multiple regulations outlining strict rules on online content removal, including:

- 1** Government Regulation No. 71 of 2019 (PP 71/2019). This regulation grants powers to Komdigi to order Electronic System Operators (ESOs), including social media platforms, to remove various types of prohibited content.³²⁰ Article 96 of the regulation defines prohibited information vaguely and expansively, covering content that violates Indonesian law, “causing public unrest and disturbing public order,” or facilitates access to prohibited material.³²¹

309 Indonesia, EIT Law (previously cited), Article 28 (2).

310 Indonesia, EIT Law (previously cited), Article 28 (3).

311 Indonesia, EIT Law (previously cited), Article 45.

312 Amnesty International, *Silencing voices, suppressing criticism* (previously cited), p. 18.

313 Amnesty International, “Putusan MK jadi momentum revisi menyeluruh pasal-pasal bermasalah UU ITE”, 30 April 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/putusan-mk-jadi-momentum-revisi-menyeluruh-pasal-pasal-bermasalah-uu-ite/04/2025>. See also Amnesty International, *Dissent on trial: strategies to counter rising criminalization of activism* (Index: POL 40/0502/2025), 25 November 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/pol40/0502/2025/en/>

314 Amnesty International, “Refleksi HUT ke-80 RI: Kemerdekaan 903 orang dijerat UU ITE dan Makar sejak 2018,” 15 August 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/refleksi-hut-ke-80-ri-kemerdekaan-903-orang-dijerat-uu-ite-dan-makar-sejak-2018/08/2025/>.

315 On file with Amnesty International.

316 International Commission of Jurists, “Indonesia: Newly revised ITE Law threatens freedom of expression and must be amended”, 6 December 2023, <https://www.icj.org/indonesia-newly-revised-ite-law-threatens-freedom-of-expression-and-must-be-amended/>

317 The HRC repeated this call in both rounds of reviewing Indonesia’s compliance with the ICCPR. See HRC, Concluding observations on the initial report of Indonesia, UN Doc. CCPR/C/IDN/CO/1, para. 27; and HRC, Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Indonesia (previously cited), para. 33 (c).

318 Amnesty International, *Silencing voices, suppressing criticism* (previously cited), p. 19.

319 Indonesia, EIT Law (previously cited), Article 40.

320 ABRN Law, Indonesia Issues Important New Regulation on Electronic (Network and Information) Systems, 30 October 2019, <https://www.abrnlaw.com/news/indonesia-issues-important-new-regulation-on-electronic-network-and-information-systems>.

321 Indonesia, Government Regulation No. 71 of 2019, 2019, <https://peraturan.go.id/files/LN185-PP71.pdf>, Article 96.

The regulation's official explanatory notes expand upon this, stating that such prohibited content includes "slander and/or defamation" and "false information/facts".³²²

- 2** Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics No. 5 of 2020 concerning the Private Electronic System Operators (MR 5/2020). Article 16 grants broad authority to the government to compel ESOs to remove "prohibited content", as defined by PP 71/2019, within 24 hours of receiving a government order or public complaint, or within just four hours in cases deemed "urgent."³²³

The Regulation specifies that content causing "public unrest and disturbing public order" qualifies as materials that need to be taken down urgently within four hours yet provides no precise definition or criteria of what constitutes such content.³²⁴

- 3** Minister of Communication and Informatics Decree No. 522 of 2024. This decree introduced SAMAN or the National Moderation and Complaint Administration System. Implemented in February 2025, SAMAN streamlines the enforcement of MR 5/2020 by imposing heavy administrative fines on social media platforms for non-compliance.³²⁵

While states must ensure that social media companies respect human rights, they should not directly order companies to block or remove content,³²⁶ because of the risks of abuse of power and violations of the right to freedom of expression. During their review of Indonesia's second periodic report on the implementation of the ICCPR in March 2024, the UNHRC raised concerns over the use of MR 5/2020 to block nearly 300,000 webpages, including around 2,000 that the government had ordered to be blocked with the broad justification that they were "negative content".³²⁷

During the Prabowo administration, civil society has raised serious concerns about the arbitrary removal of online content expressing legitimate public grievances under these overly broad and repressive regulations. Key examples include Komdigi's orders to social media platforms to remove content related to: (1) the 1998 mass rapes that targeted Chinese Indonesian women; (2) the environmental impacts of nickel mining in Raja Ampat; and (3) expressions linked to anti-government protests in late August 2025.³²⁸ On 3 April 2026, Komdigi ordered the "geoblocking" of content from the Instagram account of online media outlet Magdalene, making their posts inaccessible in Indonesia, after Magdalene published findings of an independent civil society-led investigation into the acid attack against Andrie from KontraS (see Sections 3.3 and 5.5.1).³²⁹ Komdigi's representative stated that

322 Indonesia, Elucidation of Government Regulation No. 71 of 2019, 2019, <https://peraturan.go.id/files/TLN-6400+PP71.pdf>, Article 96, paras a and b.

323 Article 19, Indonesia: Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics Number 5 of 2020 on Private Electronic System Operators (Ministerial Regulation 5), September 2021, <https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Legal-Analysis-Indonesia-Ministerial-Regulation-5.pdf>, p. 13.

324 Article 19, Indonesia: Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics Number 5 of 2020 on Private Electronic System Operators (Ministerial Regulation 5) (previously cited).

325 Muhammad Nidhal, Rasya Athalla and Aldrich Alfarisi, "Shadows of Censorship: Indonesia's Content Moderation Policy Development", Centre for Indonesian Policy Studies, July 2025, <https://repository.cips-indonesia.org/media/publications/619819-shadows-of-censorship-indonesias-content-bad635c0.pdf>, p. 3.

326 As described in Chapter 4, IHRL and standards require that regulations of social media platforms focus on mandatory human rights due diligence, transparency and remediation mechanisms. See UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *The negative impacts of gendered disinformation* (previously cited), para. 130; and UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, *Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression* (previously cited), para. 90.

327 HRC, Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Indonesia (previously cited), para. 32.

328 SAFEnet, "International civil society strongly condemn digital crackdown by the Government of Indonesia and Big Tech", 10 September 2025, <https://safenet.or.id/2025/09/international-civil-society-strongly-condemn-digital-crackdown-by-the-government-of-indonesia-and-big-tech/>; and Fadiyah Alaidrus, "Harmful Content or Hard Truths?", 29 September 2025, Global Press Journal, <https://globalpressjournal.com/asia/indonesia/harmful-content-hard-truths/index.html>

329 LBH Pers, Komdigi Blokir Konten Berita Investigasi: Praktik Penghalang-halangan terhadap Akses Informasi, Pengungkapan Fakta dan Proses Pencarian Keadilan, 8 April 2026, <https://lbhpers.org/komdigi-blokir-konten-berita-investigasi-praktik-penghalang-halangan-terhadap-akses-informasi-pengungkapan-fakta-dan-proses-pencarian-keadilan/> (in Indonesian).

the action taken was “solely [as] a follow-up to an official complaint letter from the public reporting specific content that is suspected of potentially containing disinformation and provocative content.”³³⁰

None of the interviewees sought protection from the state through existing mechanisms, as they expressed a fundamental disagreement with the state’s approach to addressing online mis- and disinformation, which they viewed as inconsistent with IHRL. Further, civil society within and beyond Indonesia has repeatedly called for amendments to the EIT Law and its related regulations to ensure compliance with IHRL standards.³³¹

7.1.3 INEFFECTIVENESS OF EXISTING DOMESTIC FRAMEWORKS

Although individuals targeted by ‘foreign agent’ allegations could, in theory, file complaints against those spreading harmful content or request takedowns, many interviewees deliberately avoided doing so as they are aware of how laws have historically been used by the Indonesian government to criminalize and censor civil society actors rather than protect them.

For example, Andrie of KontraS noted:

“In Indonesia, authorities deal with disinformation through problematic laws that undermine public discourses. If we use these laws, we will also end up contributing to stifling conversations in the society.”³³²

Riska Carolina, an LGBTI activist and advocacy officer from the ASEAN SOGIE caucus shared a similar perspective on the limitations of accessing legal remedies when experiencing harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation:

“Laws like the EIT law have been used disproportionately to silence activists, journalists, and marginalized voices, including those in the LGBTI community... Pursuing charges through this framework might reinforce a system that already criminalizes dissent and vulnerable groups like us.”³³³

This distrust is especially acute when state actors themselves appear complicit in spreading harmful and stigmatizing disinformation. A representative from Bareng Warga observed:

“While we do not believe in the approach of criminalizing expressions, state officials who took part in spreading disinformation should face consequences for their actions. Still, in our context, the disinformation came from the highest office. There is no point in even bothering to file a complaint.”³³⁴

Past failures to investigate intimidation online and offline further erode trust in these systems. Setri from Tempo, who filed a complaint with the police about the physical intimidation suffered by Tempo’s journalists, echoed the same concern borne in part by the authorities’ failure to identify any perpetrators in that case.³³⁵

330 Caecilia Mediana, “Tanggapi Konten Magdalene, Kemenkomdigi Siap Dialog dengan Komunitas Pers”, 7 April 2026, Kompas, <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/en-tanggapi-pembatasan-akses-konten-magdalene-komdigi-sebut-siap-dialog-dengan-komunitas-pers>.

331 Amnesty International, “Putusan MK jadi momentum revisi menyeluruh pasal-pasal bermasalah UU ITE” (previously cited).

332 Interview with Andrie Yunus (previously cited).

333 Interview by video call with Riska Carolina, LGBTI activist and advocacy officer from ASEAN SOGIE caucus, 11 September 2025.

334 Interview in person with two representatives from Bareng Warga (previously cited).

335 Interview with Setri Yasra (previously cited).

Similarly, journalist *Putri* told Amnesty International,

“First, they came for Tempo, and the police did nothing to protect them. Now that we are facing the same attacks, I highly doubt police would help us.”³³⁶

Another journalist, *Fatima*, referred to a research finding by the Indonesian Alliance of Independent Journalists that between January and March 2025, there were 22 cases of intimidation and violence against journalists, but there was no accountability in the majority of these cases.³³⁷ She reflected how the pattern of impunity reinforced perception that complaints are futile,

“Given this trend, many journalists including myself do not want to file any complaints and instead rely on our civil society networks to receive support.”³³⁸

These testimonies point to a structural failure by the authorities to respond effectively to both online and offline harms. In the context of online mis- and disinformation, authorities have relied on punitive and content-removal mechanisms under the EIT Law to target critics instead of holding accountable state actors behind disinformation campaigns. At the same time, when online mis- and disinformation escalates into offline intimidation or physical attacks, authorities’ past record of failure to hold perpetrators accountable has deeply undermined trust in law enforcement. As a result, despite constitutional protection, many civil society actors have been effectively disenfranchised and have struggled to access justice.

7.2 STATE FAILURE TO MEET INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS AND COMMITMENTS

Under IHRL, Indonesia has the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and the right to defend human rights, as outlined in Chapter 4. To respect these rights, the state must refrain from unnecessarily or disproportionately restricting these expressions. To protect them, it must prevent and remedy abuses committed by third parties, including those perpetrated through harmful and stigmatizing disinformation. To fulfil these rights, the authorities must take positive steps to create an enabling environment in which civil society actors, journalists, and human rights defenders can safely carry out their work. The findings of this research demonstrate that the Indonesian government has failed to do this.

International law explicitly prohibits states from spreading mis- and disinformation against critics or engaging in cyberattacks against those involved in organizing peaceful assemblies. The case studies highlighted in this report demonstrate how Prabowo and other high-level state officials engaged in public speeches and media interviews that spread harmful and stigmatizing narratives that labelled CSOs, media and protesters as ‘foreign agents’ (see Section 5.1.1).

336 Interview with “Putri” (previously cited).

337 Interview with “Fatima” (previously cited). See also the research findings at CNN Indonesia, 22 Kasus Kekerasan Jurnalis di 2025, Aji Soroti Budaya Impunitas, 24 March 2025, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20250323174232-12-1212132/22-kasus-kekerasan-jurnalis-di-2025-aji-soroti-budaya-impunitas> (in Indonesian).

338 Interview with “Fatima” (previously cited).

In the online space, accounts that appeared to belong to military units directly used such narratives to engage in deceptive coordinated campaigns spreading disinformation against human rights defenders protesting the Military Law revisions, the Indonesia Gelap protesters and the media outlet Tempo (see Sections 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3). Amnesty International wrote to the Government of Indonesia on 24 April 2026 to seek clarification as to whether these accounts were officially affiliated with the military but received no response. Even if these accounts were not formally operated by state institutions, the authorities have clearly failed to prevent actors from presenting themselves as official military entities and using that appearance of authority to spread harmful disinformation.

The government also has obligations under IHRL to protect individuals from harmful and stigmatizing disinformation from third parties. The government must not engage in encouraging or sponsoring disinformation. Furthermore, in line with the UNHRC's recommendations set out at the beginning of this chapter, the government must conduct independent, prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into all instances where online disinformation is associated with physical attacks against civil society actors. This obligation is particularly acute in light of the acid attack against KontraS's deputy coordinator Andrie, which occurred in tandem with sustained disinformation campaigns targeting him. Even though official investigations into the attack have started, disinformation campaigns attacking and discrediting Andrie continue to circulate unchecked online (see Sections 3.3 and 5.5.1), underscoring the authorities' failure to effectively prevent, mitigate or respond to the convergence of online incitement and offline violence.

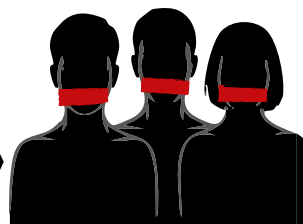
Further, as documented in Section 7.1, instead of providing protection, authorities have consistently used the EIT Law to prosecute and criminalize civil society actors. The broad and imprecise provisions under related regulations also enable systematic censorship of content by civil society actors through takedown requirements. Such structural deficiencies in the current legal framework and its implementation approach obstruct rather than facilitate civil society actors to access justice, especially when harmful content originates from state or state-aligned actors.

Ongoing efforts to draft a bill on countering disinformation and foreign propaganda raise further concerns that, if passed, this law could be used to silence critics and further restrict freedom of expression, given the ongoing pattern of disinformation branding critics as 'foreign agents.' These patterns further reflect how the government actively promoted and amplified their own narratives through disinformation campaigns while suppressing alternative expressions and critical voices.

Although civil society actors were merely exercising their legitimate right under IHRL to seek, receive and use resources, including foreign funding, the government failed to uphold its positive obligation to ensure a safe and enabling environment for them. Instead, as Amnesty International's findings demonstrate, authorities made use of disinformation that framed civil society actors as 'foreign agents' by conflating their international partnerships or collaboration as evidence of foreign manipulation. At the same time, this research documented numerous instances in which anonymous accounts actively engaged in similar disinformation campaigns online. Rather than countering or addressing such conduct, the state condoned it through silence and inaction, allowing these narratives to proliferate unchecked. This failure to intervene – and the consistency between official rhetoric and online disinformation – emboldened private individuals to continue spreading harmful and stigmatizing content throughout the first 18 months of the Prabowo administration, reinforcing and amplifying the state's own framing.

ONGOING EFFORTS TO DRAFT A BILL ON **COUNTERING DISINFORMATION AND FOREIGN PROPAGANDA** RAISE FURTHER CONCERNS THAT, IF PASSED,

THIS LAW COULD BE USED TO SILENCE CRITICS AND FURTHER RESTRICT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, GIVEN THE ONGOING PATTERN OF DISINFORMATION **BRANDING CRITICS AS 'FOREIGN AGENTS.'**



As documented in Chapter 6, these dynamics generated a widespread chilling effect on civil society actors in the exercise of their rights. By enabling – and in some instances actively participating in – disinformation, the government not only failed to meet its obligation to protect civil society from intimidation and stigmatization, but also actively fueled the hostile environment driving this chilling effect.

While single instances of misinformation shared by private individuals are generally protected under the right to freedom of expression, the misinformation documented in this report – including false and misleading content for which Amnesty International did not identify indicators of deceptive coordination – produced harmful and stigmatizing effects. As illustrated throughout Chapter 5, such misinformation often reinforced and operated in close alignment with narratives disseminated by state officials and through coordinated disinformation campaigns.

One of the strongest antidotes to such harmful and stigmatizing misinformation, as well as disinformation, is a safe and enabling environment for media, in which the public can access diverse and reliable information, as well as fact-checking and independent journalism capable of scrutinizing and correcting false or misleading claims. The Indonesian state has a positive obligation to secure such an environment. However, the case studies in this report show that journalists were themselves subjected to severe online attacks for reporting on issues perceived as critical of the government. As detailed in Chapter 6, many journalists described how these attacks obstructed their ability to work independently and compelled them to self-censor, underscoring the unsafe and hostile conditions in which they continued to operate without adequate protection from the state.

For these reasons, Amnesty International concludes that Indonesia has failed to respect, protect and fulfil its obligations regarding freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, as well as the right to defend human rights, in relation to disinformation targeting civil society actors.

8. ASSESSMENT OF PLATFORM RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 FAILURE TO MODERATE CONTENT WITH HARMFUL AND STIGMATIZING MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

The four companies whose platforms were used in the cases in this report – X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Meta and YouTube – have adopted various policies and guidelines related to mis- and disinformation. However, in the specific instances detailed in Sections 5.2 to 5.5, Amnesty International found significant gaps between these companies’ policy commitments and their actual enforcement practices. Most of the harmful content targeting civil society actors remained online and publicly accessible as of 20 April 2026 or continued circulating for extended periods, thereby amplifying stigmatizing narratives and contributing to human rights harms identified in Chapter 6.

8.1.1 META

Meta’s policies state that the company’s platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, “remove misinformation where it is likely to directly contribute to the risk of imminent physical harm” and “remove content that is likely to directly contribute to interference with the functioning of political processes”.³³⁹ It also partners with “third-party fact-checking organizations” to “review and rate the accuracy of the most viral content.”³⁴⁰

The company prohibits “coordinated inauthentic behavior” on its platforms, including “where adversarial threat actors use fake accounts to engage in sophisticated inauthentic tactics in order to influence public debate.”³⁴¹ This includes the prohibition of engaging in “government interference” which Meta defines as “coordinated inauthentic behavior where the operation is attributable to a government actor.”³⁴²

Meta extends heightened protections against harassment to “public figures who have become famous involuntarily,” which it states include journalists and human rights defenders.³⁴³ Its policies claim to “remove state-linked and adversarial networks of accounts, pages and groups that work together to harass or silence people, for example a state-sponsored organization using closed private groups to coordinate mass posting on dissident profiles.”³⁴⁴

339 Meta, “Misinformation”, <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/policies/community-standards/misinformation/> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

340 Meta, “Misinformation” (previously cited).

341 Meta, “Inauthentic Behavior”, <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/policies/community-standards/inauthentic-behavior/> (accessed on 10 September 2025).

342 Meta, “Inauthentic Behavior” (previously cited).

343 Meta, “Advancing Online Bullying & Harassment Policies”, 13 October 2021, <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/10/advancing-online-bullying-harassment-policies/>

344 Meta, “Advancing Online Bullying & Harassment Policies” (previously cited).

Amnesty International wrote to Meta on 9 February 2026 to request more information regarding the steps Meta had taken to prevent, mitigate or respond to harmful content against civil society actors amounting to “misinformation”, “coordinated inauthentic behaviours” or “online bullying and harassment” as defined under Meta’s policies.³⁴⁵ In a written response to Amnesty International, Meta highlighted the company’s engagement with civil society actors in Indonesia: “We engage with a broad range of Indonesian stakeholders, including civil society organizations and Trusted Partners, who bring context to our policies and processes and have a special reporting channel. We engage them to identify trends and violations of our Community Standards, better understand the impact of online content and behavior on local communities, and explore how we can strengthen our escalation channels.”³⁴⁶ Meta’s response also stated, “Those engagements have informed our work – for instance, our Indonesian Trusted Partners supported our integrity elections efforts in 2024, including by flagging hateful conduct and bullying targeting female and LGBTQ+ candidates.”³⁴⁷

In 2019, Meta published reports on the company’s takedown of 207 Facebook pages, 800 Facebook accounts, 546 Facebook groups, and 208 Instagram accounts linked to online syndicate group Saracen.³⁴⁸ Later, between 2019 and 2020, it removed hundreds of Facebook accounts and pages and Instagram accounts posting about West Papua.³⁴⁹ The company also reported having taken down a mass reporting network targeting the Wahhabi Muslim community in the second quarter of 2022,³⁵⁰ as well as a criminal network impersonating Indonesian law enforcement and government officials in 2025.³⁵¹

Meta’s letter to Amnesty International added: “We continue to use both automated tools and expert investigations to catch efforts by previously-removed networks to reconstitute on platform. We continue to monitor for and seek to disrupt [coordinated inauthentic behaviours] operations, via a combination of manual investigations and automated detection” (see the full response in Annex V).

Despite the steps Meta outlined in its response, Amnesty International concludes that Meta failed to act in line with their content moderation policies in several documented instances by not removing the following harmful and stigmatizing disinformation from its platforms:

- The video that was part of a deceptive coordinated campaign attacking anti-Military Law protesters, including posts by accounts that appeared to belong to military units and members of the Gerindra party on Facebook and Instagram (see Section 5.3.1).
- The video that was part of a deceptive coordinated campaign attacking Indonesia Gelap protesters, including posts by accounts that appeared to belong to military units on Instagram (see Section 5.3.2).
- The video that was part of a deceptive coordinated campaign attacking the media outlet Tempo, including posts by Instagram accounts that appeared to belong to military units (see Section 5.3.3).

345 Amnesty International, electronic letter to Meta, Bangkok, 9 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

346 Frederick Rawski, Meta’s Head of Human Rights Policy – APAC, Singapore, electronic letter to Amnesty International, 25 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

347 Frederick Rawski, Meta’s Head of Human Rights Policy – APAC, Singapore, electronic letter to Amnesty International (previously cited).

348 Meta, “Taking Down Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior in Indonesia”, <https://about.fb.com/news/2019/01/taking-down-coordinated-inauthentic-behavior-in-indonesia/> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

349 Meta, “Removing Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior in UAE, Nigeria, Indonesia and Egypt”, <https://about.fb.com/news/2019/10/removing-coordinated-inauthentic-behavior-in-uae-nigeria-indonesia-and-egypt/> (accessed on 10 January 2026); and Meta, “December 2020 Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior Report”, <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/01/december-2020-coordinated-inauthentic-behavior-report/> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

350 Meta, Quarterly Adversarial Threat Report (August 2022), <https://about.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Quarterly-Adversarial-Threat-Report-Q2-2022.pdf> (accessed on 26 February 2026).

351 Meta, Adversarial Threat Report (Second–Third Quarter December 2025), <https://transparency.meta.com/sr/Q2-Q3-2025-Adversarial-threat-report/> (accessed on 26 February 2026).

- The posts on Instagram and Facebook that were part of a deceptive coordinated campaign accusing the Save Raja Ampat movement of being controlled by the Free Papua Movement (OPM) (see Section 5.4.1).
- Videos on Instagram attacking Andrie Yunus and accusing him of staging an acid attack (see Section 5.5.1).
- The viral TikTok-originated video attacking Delpedro Marhaen, director of the Lokataru Foundation (see Section 5.5.3).

As indicated in Section 5.3, as of 20 April 2026, almost all Facebook and Instagram posts identified in this report and published by accounts that appeared to belong to the military remained online and publicly accessible, with the exception of three accounts that appeared to have been deleted or made private. In the case studies in Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.3, the posts remained available on the platforms for over one year and one month, while in the case study in Section 5.3.2, the posts had remained online for over 11 months.

According to Meta’s own definitions, these cases fall squarely within “state-linked and adversarial networks of accounts... that work together to harass or silence people.” The failure to remove or meaningfully limit these posts reflects inadequate enforcement of Meta’s stated policies.³⁵²

Amnesty International wrote to Meta again on 23 April 2026 to share the findings above, including the list of content that remained online on the platforms, and provide the company an opportunity to respond to the allegations included in this report. Meta did not provide any response.

8.1.2 YOUTUBE

YouTube does not allow “[c]ertain types of misleading or deceptive content with serious risk of egregious harm” under its Misinformation policies.³⁵³ This includes “misinformation that can cause real-world harm, certain types of technically manipulated content, or content interfering with democratic processes.”³⁵⁴

The platform also has a set of policies against harassment and cyberbullying. These policies prohibit “content that targets someone with prolonged insults or slurs based on their physical traits or protected group status.”³⁵⁵ However, its list of protected attributes does not include one’s status as a journalist, activist or human rights defender.

Despite these policies, YouTube hosted the video that attacked activists protesting the revision of the Military Law, which was posted by the accounts of two entities affiliated with the army – the 741st Infantry Battalion Garuda Nusantara and Udayana Level II Army Hospital (see Section 5.3.1). The content amounts to disinformation, as they are part of a deceptive coordinated campaign that portrayed the activists as foreign-backed agitators and framed them as threats to national stability.

352 Meta, “Advancing Online Bullying & Harassment Policies” (previously cited).

353 YouTube, “Misleading content & manipulated media policy” <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10834785?hl=en#zippy=%2Cmanipulated-content> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

354 YouTube, “Misleading content & manipulated media policy” (previously cited).

355 YouTube, “Harassment / Hateful content policy — protected groups” https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2801939?sjid=3523970571888947542-NC#protected_group (accessed on 10 January 2026).

Given the broader context of intimidation and criminalization against activists, this content could reasonably be considered “misleading or deceptive content with serious risk of egregious harm” under YouTube’s own standards.³⁵⁶ However, YouTube still allowed the video to remain online for a period of more than one year and one month of 20 April 2026.

Amnesty International wrote to YouTube on 9 February 2026 to request more information regarding the steps YouTube had taken to prevent, mitigate or respond to harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation against civil society actors amounting to harmful misleading content and harassment as defined by YouTube’s policies.³⁵⁷ However, at the time of publication, YouTube had not yet responded.

Amnesty International wrote to YouTube again on 23 April 2026 to share the findings above, including the list of content that remained online on the platform, and provide the company an opportunity to respond to the allegations included in this report. YouTube did not provide any substantive response to these findings.

8.1.3 X

X does not explicitly ban mis- or disinformation. The company only has a policy on “civic integrity” where it applies a label to “misleading content that could affect participation in elections or other civic processes”.³⁵⁸ X defines “civic processes” as “events or procedures mandated, organized, and conducted by the governing and/or electoral body of a country, state, region, district, or municipality to address a matter of common concern through public participation.”³⁵⁹

X’s “authenticity” policy bans “unauthorized automation”, “fake personas” and “impersonation” amongst other things.³⁶⁰ This policy includes the prohibition of “content spam”, which includes “using trending or popular hashtags with an intent to subvert or manipulate a conversation or to drive traffic or attention to accounts, websites, products, services, or initiatives.”³⁶¹

The company also has published “abuse and harassment” policies that prohibit “behavior and content that harasses, shames, or degrades others. In addition to posing risks to people’s safety, these types of behavior may also lead to physical and emotional hardship for those affected.”³⁶² It also does not allow “behavior that encourages others to harass or target specific individuals or groups of people with abuse. This includes but is not limited to calls to target people with abuse or harassment online and behavior that urges offline action, such as physical harassment.”³⁶³ However, the policy does not make any references to the specific situation of human rights defenders or other marginalized groups.

The cases documented in this report demonstrate both enforcement failures and structural gaps in X’s framework.

Section 5.5 provides many examples of tweets that justified or encouraged the targeting of civil society activists offline. Such posts could fall under X’s “abuse and harassment policies.”³⁶⁴

356 YouTube, “Misleading content & manipulated media policy” (previously cited).

357 Amnesty International, Electronic letter to YouTube, Bangkok, 9 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

358 X, “Civic Integrity Policy”, <https://help.x.com/en/rules-and-policies/election-integrity-policy> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

359 X, “Civic Integrity Policy” (previously cited).

360 X, “Authenticity Policy”, <https://help.x.com/en/rules-and-policies/authenticity> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

361 X, “Authenticity Policy” (previously cited).

362 X, “Abusive Behavior Policy”, <https://help.x.com/en/rules-and-policies/abusive-behavior> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

363 X, “Abusive Behavior Policy” (previously cited).

364 X, “Abusive Behavior Policy” (previously cited).

At the same time, a significant gap persists in X's existing framework because the platform only applies restrictions on "misleading" information narrowly defined around "civic processes".³⁶⁵ Under this definition, many forms of activity that would ordinarily be understood as "civic" when undertaken by non-governmental actors, such as peaceful protest, may be excluded by definition under X's framework. Accordingly, much of the harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation documented in this research might be considered to fall outside the scope of this policy, such as:

- tweets falsely labelling specific civil society actors as 'foreign agents' through conspiracy theories related to foreign funding (see Section 5.2);
- the video that was part of a deceptive coordinated campaign attacking anti-Military Law protesters by an account presenting itself as the District Military Command 1620 Loteng (see Section 5.3.1); and
- tweets that were part of deceptive coordinated campaigns spreading disinformation against the Indonesia Gelap movement, Tempo and CELIOS (see Sections 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4).

As documented in Sections 5.2 and 5.3, much of the content analysed on X remained online and publicly accessible for extended periods. Many viral tweets stayed accessible for more than six months, while a video posted by an X account presenting itself as belonging to the military remained online for over one year and one month as of 20 April 2026. Most X accounts involved in the deceptive coordinated campaigns identified in Sections 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 also remained accessible.

X's policy limitation, combined with inconsistent enforcement of harassment rules, allowed 'foreign agent' allegations to proliferate largely unchecked. Amnesty International wrote to X on 9 February 2026 to request more information regarding the steps X had taken to prevent, mitigate or respond to harmful content against civil society actors amounting to harms against civic integrity and online abuse, authenticity, and harassment as defined by X's policies.³⁶⁶ However, at time of publication, X has not yet responded.

Amnesty International wrote to X again on 23 April 2026 to share the findings above, including the list of content that remained online on the platform, and provide the company an opportunity to respond to the allegations included in this report. X did not provide any response.

8.1.4 TIKTOK

TikTok has a policy on "integrity and authenticity" which does not allow "misinformation that could cause significant harm to individuals or society, no matter the intent of the person posting it. This includes hoaxes, misleading AIGC [AI-generated content], harmful conspiracy theories, and other false information related to public safety, crises, or major civic events – when such content may lead to violence or cause public panic."³⁶⁷

The same policy also prohibits "accounts that mislead or try to manipulate our platform, or the trade of services that artificially boost engagement or trick the recommendation system."³⁶⁸ This includes "covert influence operations", which are defined as operations where "networks of accounts work together to mislead people or our systems and try to strategically influence public discussion."³⁶⁹

365 X, "Civic Integrity Policy" (previously cited).

366 Amnesty International, Electronic letter to X, Bangkok, 9 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

367 TikTok, "Integrity & Authenticity Community Guideline", <https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines/en/integrity-authenticity?cgversion=2025H2update> (accessed on 10 September 2025).

368 TikTok, "Integrity & Authenticity Community Guideline" (previously cited).

369 TikTok, "Countering Influence Operations", <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/en-us/countering-influence-operations/> (accessed on 10 September 2025).

Under its policy on “safety and civility”, the company allows “some negative or critical comments or images about public figures” but “remove[s] content that violates other policies (such as violent threats, hate speech, or sexual exploitation), as well as serious forms of harassment (such as doxxing or expressing a desire that someone experience[s] serious physical harm)”.³⁷⁰ It also prohibits “content that attacks people based on protected attributes like race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.”³⁷¹ However, the policy does not make any reference to human rights defenders or other civil society actors.

Amnesty International wrote to TikTok on 9 February 2026 to request more information regarding the steps TikTok had taken to prevent, mitigate or respond to harmful content against civil society actors amounting to misinformation, coordinated inauthentic behaviours or online bullying and harassment.³⁷² TikTok responded and explained that the company has been working with “global safety partners,” including many Indonesian CSOs, who could access the Community Partner Channel to report “potentially violative content to us directly for review” (see the full response in Annex V).³⁷³

In the past, TikTok publicly disclosed the removal of several “covert influence operations” – which the company defines as “coordinated, inauthentic behavior where networks of accounts work together to mislead people or our systems and influence public discussion on important social issues, including elections”.³⁷⁴ This included one network with 109 accounts and 1,086,821 total followers in October 2024; two networks (one with 323 accounts and 41,584 total followers and the other with 117 accounts and 63,765 followers) in December 2024; and one network with 83 accounts and 212,114 total followers in April 2025.³⁷⁵ For all the networks, TikTok specified that they comprise “accounts targeting political discourse in Indonesia.”

Despite TikTok’s policies, channels for engagement with Indonesian CSOs and past record of taking down networks involved in “covert influence operations”, TikTok failed to remove multiple videos documented in this report, including:

- the video that was part of a deceptive coordinated campaign attacking anti-Military Law protesters (see Section 5.3.1);
- the video that was part of a deceptive coordinated campaign accusing Tempo of fabricating intimidation incidents and acting as a foreign proxy (see Section 5.3.2);
- the AI-generated video claiming Greenpeace spread hoaxes about Raja Ampat (see Section 5.4.1);
- videos attacking Andrie Yunus and accusing him of staging an acid attack (see Section 5.5.1); and
- the viral video attacking Delpedro Marhaen (see Section 5.5.3).

All the TikTok videos identified in this research across Chapter 5 remained online and publicly accessible as of 20 April 2026. This included viral videos in Sections 5.3.2, 5.4.1 and 5.5.3 containing disinformation targeting Tempo, Greenpeace and HRD Delpedro, respectively.

370 TikTok, “Safety & Civility Community Guideline”, <https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines/en/safety-civility> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

371 TikTok, “Safety & Civility Community Guideline” (previously cited).

372 Amnesty International, electronic letter to TikTok, Bangkok, 9 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

373 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International, 23 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

374 TikTok, “Covert Influence Operations”, <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/en/covert-influence-operations> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

375 TikTok, “Covert Influence Operations” (previously cited).

While TikTok does not have specific policies on the protection of human rights defenders, the platform should not have allowed such videos because they contained “misinformation that could cause significant harm to individuals or society, no matter the intent of the person posting it” as per the company’s policy, on “integrity and authenticity”.³⁷⁶

Amnesty International wrote to TikTok again on 23 April 2026 to share the findings above, including the list of content that remained online on the platform, and provide the company an opportunity to respond to the allegations included in this report. TikTok’s response, dated 7 May 2026, stated: “We’ve reviewed the content you shared, and we have made it ineligible for recommendation to the For You feed. Some of the content identified in your letter is no longer accessible.”³⁷⁷

In addition, TikTok’s response indicated: “Protecting the integrity of our platform is a fundamental part of how we empower our community around the world to discover, connect and create on TikTok. While we remove harmful misinformation, as explained in our Community Guidelines, we also reduce the reach of content that may not be suitable to a broad audience by making it ineligible for recommendation to the For You feed. This includes, for example, content containing conspiracy theories that may undermine public trust or the integrity of the information ecosystem.”³⁷⁸ It also added: “As we learn more, we do more, which is also why our teams have set up additional monitoring for this specific issue and will take further action as needed. More generally, we regularly review and strengthen our policies and how we enforce them as we continue to protect our community around the world.”³⁷⁹

Amnesty International’s subsequent review after receiving the response from TikTok found that while two of the 10 posts Amnesty International sent to TikTok as examples of mis- and disinformation had become inaccessible as of 7 May 2026, the remaining posts, including content linked to coordinated disinformation campaigns, remained publicly accessible.

In line with the company’s responsibility under the UN Guiding Principles, demoting content containing misinformation by reducing its visibility in the “For You” recommender feed can be considered a proportionate response. However, TikTok should also have removed content that formed part of coordinated campaigns and amounted to disinformation, such as the videos described in Sections 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.5.1, many of which remained online. The continued presence of such disinformation indicated that TikTok’s existing efforts have not adequately mitigated risks to civil society actors.

376 TikTok, “Integrity & Authenticity Community Guideline”, <https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines/en/integrity-authenticity?cgversion=2025H2update> (accessed on 10 January 2026).

377 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International, 7 May 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

378 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International (previously cited).

379 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International (previously cited).

8.2 VIRALITY OF MIS- AND DISINFORMATION AND PLATFORMS' SURVEILLANCE-BASED BUSINESS MODEL

In many instances, social media posts documented in this research went viral and exposed hundreds of thousands of users to harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation. Such viral posts were found on Instagram (see Sample Posts 14, 16, 19 and 22), X (see Sample Posts 5 and 8-12) and TikTok (see Sample Posts 21, 25 and 37). Several of them were part of what appeared to be disinformation campaigns based on deceptive coordination.

Amnesty International has previously built up a body of research on social media platforms' use of the "surveillance-based business model" – defined as a business model based on the massive collection, storage, analysis and ultimate exploitation of data relating to users who are tracked across the web, through the apps on their phones, and in the physical world, as well through the expansion of the "internet of things" as they go about their daily activities.³⁸⁰ The social media companies then use extensive users' personal data to analyse and make predictions about their interests and characters primarily so they can use these insights to target the users with specific advertisements and generate revenue.³⁸¹ This business model personalizes content for users and seeks to maximize user engagement with the goal to ensure users stay on the platforms for as long as possible in order to help the companies collect more of their data.³⁸²

This surveillance-based business model provides a basis for the training of algorithms with user data to shape specific content recommended for each user.³⁸³ These algorithms can serve to build an echo chamber that reinforces individuals' pre-existing beliefs or prioritizes the promotion of inflammatory content that could attract viral engagements.³⁸⁴ Content recommender systems based on these algorithms could contribute to the dissemination and amplification of harmful content in situations of political violence.³⁸⁵ The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression stated in a 2021 report on disinformation: "False information is amplified by algorithms and business models that are designed to promote sensational content that keep users engaged on platforms. Disinformation thrives in an online environment that encourages amplification while reducing accessibility to plural and diverse sources of information."³⁸⁶

Previous research by Amnesty International into Meta, X and TikTok found that all three companies rely heavily on surveillance-based business models and their recommender systems tend to spread and amplify harmful content in pursuit of user engagement.³⁸⁷ For example, Amnesty International documented how Meta's business model played an important role in amplifying content inciting violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar, as well as contributing to human rights violations against the Tigrayan community in Ethiopia.³⁸⁸ In another report issued in September 2025, Amnesty International

380 Amnesty International, "I feel exposed": Caught in TikTok's Surveillance Web (Index: POL 40/7349/2023), 7 November 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/POL40/7349/2023/en/>, p. 15.

381 Amnesty International, "I feel exposed": Caught in TikTok's Surveillance Web (previously cited), p. 16.

382 Amnesty International, *Driven into the darkness: How TikTok's 'For You' feed encourages self-harm and suicidal ideation* (Index: POL 40/7350/2023), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/POL4073502023ENGLISH.pdf>, p. 30.

383 Amnesty International, *The social atrocity: Meta and the right to remedy for the Rohingya* (Index: ASA 16/5933/2022), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA16/5933/2022/en/>, p. 21.

384 Amnesty International, *The social atrocity* (previously cited).

385 Amnesty International, *Driven into the darkness* (previously cited), pp. 36-40.

386 A/HRC/47/25, para. 16.

387 See Amnesty International, *The social atrocity* (previously cited); Amnesty International, "A thousand cuts": technology-facilitated gender-based violence against Poland's LGBTI community on X (Index: EUR 37/0098/2025), 1 September 2025, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur37/0098/2025/en/>; and Amnesty International, *Driven into the darkness* (previously cited).

388 Amnesty International, "A death sentence for my father": Meta's contribution to human rights abuses in northern Ethiopia (Index: AFR 25/7292/2023), 31 October 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr25/7292/2023/en/>

identified that X's recommender system, which prioritizes user engagement, could algorithmically amplify technology-facilitated gender-based violence against LGBTI communities in Poland.³⁸⁹ Further, Amnesty International's 2023 research on the role of TikTok and mental health harms for young people shows that TikTok's "For You" page is powered by an algorithmic recommender system that can push users down a "rabbit hole", repeatedly recommending and amplifying potentially harmful content once they show interest in similar material – prioritizing engagement over safety.³⁹⁰

While this research does not provide an in-depth analysis of each platform's algorithms and their recommender systems, it is plausible that such platform design features contributed to the virality of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation targeting civil society actors in Indonesia. The examples of viral content documented in this report raise serious questions about whether the problems extend beyond ineffective content moderation to deeper, structural issues embedded in the design choices and business models of these social media companies.

8.3 COMPANIES' FAILURE TO ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS RISKS AND IMPACTS

Under the UN Guiding Principles, companies should carry out human rights due diligence (HRDD) to assess the actual and potential human rights impacts of their operations and business models and ensure that the process is ongoing, context-specific and responsive to evolving human rights risks.³⁹¹ The content moderation failures identified in Section 8.1 and the risks associated with the platforms' surveillance-based business model, particularly its potential role in driving the virality of mis- and disinformation, as set out in Section 8.2, raise broader concerns as to whether the platforms undertook adequate HRDD in accordance with this principle.

On 9 February 2026, Amnesty International wrote to these four companies to request more information on whether they had conducted HRDD on their operations in Indonesia in light of heightened human rights risks linked to deceptive coordinated campaigns under the Prabowo administration.³⁹²

TikTok responded in writing on 23 February 2026 indicating that: "[TikTok] partnered with Article One, a business and human rights consultancy, to conduct a human rights impact assessment (HRIA) of our trust and safety operations, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.³⁹³ This assessment identified several key areas of focus for our human rights strategy within Trust and Safety, including aligning operational approaches to managing human rights and enhancing language coverage for content moderation. TikTok has taken a number of steps to align with the recommendations from the assessment, including developing a framework to assess country risk based on short- and long-term risk and expanding global fact-checking coverage."³⁹⁴ However, TikTok's response, as well as the platform's public page summarizing the HRIA findings,³⁹⁵ specified neither when the HRIA was conducted nor whether it covered Indonesia during Prabowo's administration or included any Indonesia-specific HRDD, which would be contrary to the basic tenets of HRDD as laid out in international human rights law and standards.

389 Amnesty International, "A thousand cuts" (previously cited), p. 73.

390 Amnesty International, *Driven into the darkness* (previously cited).

391 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 17 including Commentary. See also OHCHR, "The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights" (previously cited), p. 33.

392 Amnesty International, electronic letter to Meta, X, YouTube and TikTok, Bangkok, 9 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

393 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International, 23 February 2026, on file with Amnesty International.

394 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International (previously cited). See the publicly available summary of the human rights impact assessment provided to Amnesty International via the e-mail at TikTok, Upholding human rights, <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/en/upholding-human-rights> (accessed on 23 February 2026).

395 TikTok, Upholding human rights (previously cited).

Meta responded on 25 February 2026 stating: “We published our Comprehensive Human Rights Salient Risk Assessment in 2022,³⁹⁶ which we have regularly updated in our annual human rights reporting (see references to Indonesia in our 2024 report).³⁹⁷ Although we haven’t published integrated due diligence on Indonesia since the 2018 Human Rights Impact Assessment, our policies continue to be informed by those findings. In addition to the measures that we disclose publicly, we also have robust internal risk management and tracking systems in place to measure and assess the effectiveness of our mitigations.”³⁹⁸ However, Amnesty International notes that Meta’s letter, including the links attached, still did not provide information on whether the company has undertaken an Indonesia-specific HRDD since the start of the Prabowo administration in October 2024.

X and YouTube did not provide any response to Amnesty International.

Under the UN Guiding Principles, the absence of a context-specific, time-sensitive HRDD for these four companies is particularly concerning given the high-risk context under the Prabowo administration described in Sections 5 and 6 above. HRDD is a crucial process for companies to know and show that they are respecting human rights. Through such HRDD, the four companies would have been able to identify and address content moderation failures and determine whether and how their algorithmic systems boosted the virality of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation.

Amnesty International wrote to the four companies again on 23 April 2026 to provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their future commitments to conduct an HRDD in light of this research’s findings. Only TikTok responded, stating: “[W]e continually review our safety strategies and may take additional action. We regularly review and update our Community Guidelines in order to ensure that these rules are responsive to the evolving landscape of online content, including new trends and emerging issues.”(see the full response in Annex V).³⁹⁹

8.4 SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS’ CONTRIBUTION TO ADVERSE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACTS

A business contributes to an adverse human rights impact when its activities or omissions materially increase the risk of the specific impact that occurred or may occur, even though their actions or lack thereof did not alone result in that impact.⁴⁰⁰ The UN Guiding Principles require that businesses “avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities,” and address such impacts where they occur.⁴⁰¹ An adverse human rights impact as defined by the UN Guiding Principles includes both actual impacts (those that have occurred or are occurring) and potential impacts (those that may occur but have not yet materialized).⁴⁰²

396 See the link to Meta’s Comprehensive Human Rights Salient Risk Assessment at Meta, *Human rights report: Insight and actions 2022*, <https://humanrights.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2022-Meta-Human-Rights-Report.pdf>. This link was provided by Meta in the company’s letter to Amnesty International dated 25 February 2026.

397 See the link to Meta’s publication at Meta, *Human rights report: Insight and actions 2024*, <https://humanrights.fb.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2024-Meta-Human-Rights-Report.pdf>. This link was provided by Meta in the company’s letter to Amnesty International dated 25 February 2026.

398 Frederick Rawski, Meta’s Head of Human Rights Policy – APAC, Singapore, electronic letter to Amnesty International (previously cited).

399 Liz Woolery, TikTok, Washington D.C., e-mail to Amnesty International (previously cited).

400 Debevoise Business Integrity Group and Enodo Rights, *Practical Definitions of Cause, Contribute, and Directly Linked to Inform Business Respect for Human Rights*, 9 February 2017, <https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/files/documents/Debevoise-Enodo-Practical-Meaning-of-Involvement-Draft-2017-02-09.pdf>, p. 8.

401 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 13 including Commentary.

402 OHCHR, “The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights” (previously cited), pp. 15 and 18.

Consistent with the conceptual framework explained in Chapter 4, Amnesty International does not advocate for platforms to remove content solely based on their falsity. IHRL protects freedom of expression broadly, including inaccurate expressions. Rather, Amnesty International focuses on whether the platforms' actions or omissions materially increased the risk of harm to the enjoyment of protected rights.

Amnesty International's findings show that mis- and disinformation grounded in 'foreign agent' allegations contributed to human rights risks and impacts. Sections 6.2 to 6.5 demonstrate that such mis- and disinformation has already generated negative impacts on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and the right to defend human rights. Section 6.1 further showed that those targeted expressed credible concerns that these attacks created a widespread chilling effect and could discourage exercise of those rights by the targeted individuals and by others or even serve as a precursor to other forms of state repression, including intimidation and criminalization.

While social media platforms did not themselves produce the harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation documented in this research - that is, they did not directly "cause" the impacts - the case studies in this report show that the companies made various omissions that played a significant role in amplifying the harms and increasing the risks of further impacts. They:

- allowed harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation portraying civil society actors as 'foreign agents' to remain online for extended periods and, in some cases, became viral in the cases of Instagram, X and TikTok possibly due to algorithmic amplification;
- failed to consistently apply their own content moderation policies in ways that could have mitigated human rights risks and prevented harms;
- in the case of X, maintained a policy framework that does not meaningfully address harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation outside narrowly defined electoral contexts; and
- failed to conduct adequate HRDD, which could or should have identified heightened risks in Indonesia and led the company to prevent potential human rights harms, particularly during a period of escalating repression under the Prabowo administration.

These failures enabled harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation to thrive on the companies' platforms, facilitating both state and state-aligned actors to disseminate similar content targeting civil society since the presidential inauguration of Prabowo. In light of these findings, Amnesty International concludes that the four companies contributed to the human rights harms documented in this research.

8.5 CEASE, PREVENT AND REMEDY

In light of the contribution identified in Section 8.3, X, TikTok, Meta and YouTube have the responsibility to cease, prevent and remedy the impacts they contributed to, as well as use or seek leverage to mitigate any remaining adverse impacts.⁴⁰³

In order to address the actual impacts, the four companies should immediately stop allowing harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation to thrive on their platforms and to impair the enjoyment of human rights of those targeted. They should identify campaigns of disinformation and the networks involved in spreading them, including but not limited to cases documented in this report, and proactively remove them to prevent further harms. In cases of harmful misinformation, especially those that had gone viral, platforms should also take proportionate measures, which may include demoting such content.

Additionally, the four companies have the responsibility to provide remediation to those targeted by harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation.⁴⁰⁴ As indicated in Section 4, remediation could take various forms, including apologies, restitution, rehabilitation, financial or non-financial compensation and the prevention of harms, including through guarantees of non-repetition.⁴⁰⁵ In order to determine what type of remediation would be appropriate, the companies should carry out meaningful consultations with targeted civil society actors to determine an appropriate form of remediation.

Further, the companies should take all the necessary actions to prevent potential impacts from materializing or to mitigate their risks as far as possible in their capacities.⁴⁰⁶ Such actions should include regularly conducting an Indonesia-specific HRDD that captures evolving human rights risks and addresses harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including those involving state actors. The companies' measures should not only address content moderation issues but also the impacts of their surveillance-based models which rely on algorithm-powered recommender systems for maximizing user engagement but, in turn, can drive harmful content viral. Such a process should also involve meaningful engagements with civil society actors at risk of facing adverse impacts of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation.

Ultimately, ensuring that harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation does not continue to undermine the rights of civil society actors requires immediate and sustained action from the platforms. By ceasing to host such harmful content, providing effective remediation to those targeted, and instituting robust Indonesia-specific HRDD processes, X, TikTok, Meta and YouTube can begin to address the harms to which they have contributed and prevent similar abuses from recurring.

403 OHCHR, "The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights" (previously cited), p. 48.

404 UN Guiding Principles, Principle 22 including Commentary.

405 OHCHR, "The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights" (previously cited), p. 7.

406 OHCHR, "The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights" (previously cited), p. 18.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 CONCLUSION

This report shows that since President Prabowo took office in October 2024, civil society actors in Indonesia have faced harmful and stigmatizing narratives to demonize and label them as ‘foreign agents.’ In most cases, these narratives amounted to disinformation, as state and state-aligned actors – including individuals spreading them anonymously online – systematically disseminated them through campaigns of deceptive coordination. Such weaponization of disinformation constitutes a key authoritarian practice that the Prabowo government has heavily relied on to evade accountability and silence critics. The use of disinformation has also aimed to justify other authoritarian practices, including the expansion of military roles in civilian life, escalating constraints on offline and online expression, and a series of repressive legislative and policy changes.

In some of these instances, the use of these narratives may constitute misinformation, if they are spread without a malicious intent. Nonetheless, as shown in this report, they contributed to delegitimizing the exercise of human rights and generating a chilling effect among human rights defenders and journalists.

As multiple waves of demonstrations broke out across the country to protest repression under the Prabowo administration, the President and senior officials routinely resorted to accusing critics of being ‘foreign agents’ in public speeches and media interviews. Such rhetoric built an “imaginary enemy” in the minds of the public by portraying civil society as paid and manipulated by foreign powers and served to shift public attention away from substantive civic grievances.

This rhetoric migrated to social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, X, YouTube and TikTok, and fused with false and misleading claims, targeting various civil society actors. Two recurring strands of such claims became dominant, including:

- 1 the distortion or decontextualization of legitimate foreign funding or international partnerships as evidence of foreign manipulation; and
- 2 “colour revolution” conspiracy claims portraying any dissent, particularly protests, as foreign-backed attempts to destabilize Indonesia.

These frames recast human rights activism, independent journalism and social movements, which were deemed to be critical of the Prabowo administration, as foreign-driven and illegitimate – without evidence.

This report establishes the presence of deceptive coordination disseminating and amplifying these ‘foreign agent’ allegations online and conducted by state and state-aligned actors. In the report’s three case studies of attacks against activists opposing the Military Law revisions, people involved in the Indonesia Gelap movement, and those part of the media outlet Tempo, dozens of social media accounts that presented themselves as affiliated with the military, as well as other anonymous accounts, together disseminated and amplified false allegations against these targets by posting identical or near-identical content within narrow time windows. Identifying this deceptive coordination allowed Amnesty International to conclude that there was clear malicious intent behind the actors spreading these false allegations, thus meeting the definition of disinformation.



DESPITE THE INCREASINGLY HOSTILE CIVIC SPACE, MANY CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS INTERVIEWED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REMAINED RESILIENT.

Harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation based on ‘foreign agent’ allegations only constituted one component of a broader pattern of attacks against civil society actors under the Prabowo administration. In many cases, the ‘foreign agent’ allegations were deployed together with additional layers of stigmatizing and discriminatory frames, including gendered and racist prejudice and tropes. Additionally, several cases showed an interplay between online and offline harm, where the online labelling of civil society actors as ‘foreign agents’ was accompanied by offline intimidation, harassment and criminalization.

Many civil society actors – both those directly targeted and those who witnessed such attacks – reported having experienced a chilling effect. Some described fear and anxiety that such disinformation served as a “warning sign” of further repression. This chilling effect resulted in their deliberate decisions to self-censor in their human rights work or journalism, refrain from joining coalitions working on issues critical of the Prabowo administration or limit their public visibility for fear of facing further attacks. By generating this hostile environment, disinformation negatively impacted civil society actors’ rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as the right to defend human rights.

The findings of this report reflect the Indonesian government’s clear failures to respect, protect and fulfil these rights. Authorities often launched and took part in disinformation campaigns. In instances where these campaigns were spread and amplified by anonymous or non-state actors, the authorities failed to implement policies to counter their stigmatizing impact, including, for example, by providing reliable information through public communication efforts. They have instead weaponized these narratives to justify the criminalization and intimidation of human rights defenders and journalists. The authorities failed to create an enabling environment for exercising human rights, for example by supporting independent journalism, which is key to counter disinformation.

Existing legal mechanisms under the EIT Law and its related regulations remained inconsistent with IHRL and standards, and insufficient for addressing disinformation. The authorities relied on their vague and broad provisions to criminalize civil society actors instead of protecting them.

Meta, X, YouTube and TikTok also contributed to the adverse human rights impacts documented in this report. Their content moderation efforts proved to be inadequate, as the platforms allowed mis- and disinformation based on ‘foreign agent’ allegations to proliferate, remain online for extended periods and go viral in some cases, against their own policies. They also did not adequately conduct ongoing and context-specific HRDD that could have identified human rights risks for civil society actors under the Prabowo administration and mitigated the harm that their operations contributed to producing.

Despite the increasingly hostile civic space, many civil society actors interviewed by Amnesty International remained resilient. They continued to adapt, support one another and resist. However, the burden must not rest on them alone. The Indonesian government, as well as Meta, X, YouTube and TikTok, must take the following actions immediately to end the use of harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, halt further entrenchment of authoritarian practices and safeguard civic space, the rule of law and human rights:

9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.2.1 TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA:

END HARMFUL STATE PRACTICES BY TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

- Refrain from participating, amplifying, condoning, abetting or engaging in other ways in disinformation campaigns, including labelling civil society actors such as critics, activists, journalists and human rights defenders, and protest movements as ‘foreign agents’, with the aim of stigmatizing dissent and undermining legitimate criticism.
- Promptly issue clear regulations prohibiting all state bodies, including military units, ministries, and public officials, from participating in, amplifying, condoning or abetting disinformation targeting human rights defenders and journalists. These regulations may establish disciplinary proceedings and sanctions for public officials who engage in these campaigns.
- Promote public communication and awareness raising campaigns to counter disinformation targeting journalists and human rights defenders, especially those labelling them as ‘foreign agents’.
- Ensure that everyone can enjoy their right to participate in the conduct of public affairs, including by creating channels to genuinely enable everyone to voice their grievances, including by criticizing public authorities, instead of relying on harmful and stigmatizing narratives that stifle dissent.

ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AND NON-REPETITION BY TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

- Conduct prompt, independent, impartial, and effective investigations into instances of where online disinformation is associated with physical attacks against civil society actors, such as the case of Andrie Yunus. The investigations must be conducted by civilian authorities. Ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and sanctioned through proceedings that respect fair trial standards.
- Establish an independent inquiry into the past and present use of disinformation to target civil society actors, which includes examining how these campaigns have also entrenched systemic prejudice and discrimination against marginalized communities, including women, LGBTI people and racial and religious minorities. Such an inquiry’s findings should be used to inform legal, regulatory and policy reforms for better addressing disinformation issues in Indonesia.
- Establish an independent complaint mechanism for reporting harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including those originating from state actors. The mechanism should have power and resources to enforce remedies for individuals and organizations targeted by mis- and disinformation, the content and scope of which should also be based on meaningful consultation with the most affected actors and communities.
- Immediately and unconditionally drop charges against civil society actors prosecuted simply for exercising their human rights, including their right to defend human rights.
- Ensure that the process of Indonesia currently pursuing OECD full membership, as an official accession candidate, incorporates a robust process to ensure that its human rights standards align with those of the OECD, namely the OECD Guiding Principles for Multinational Enterprises for Responsible Conduct. This should include any process through which Indonesia develops guidance on human rights-based business practices, which will be critical to its accession. Any such process must include meaningful consultation with rights holders and those most affected and should prioritize the issues addressed in this report.

ADDRESS OFFLINE VIOLENCE:

- Conduct prompt, independent, impartial, and effective investigations into all instances of physical attacks, threats and incitement to violence against civil society actors and hold the perpetrators accountable, including through judicial proceedings that respect fair trial standards and by enforcing sanctions that are commensurate with the gravity of the offences.

REFORM LAWS AND POLICIES:

- Amend the Electronic Information and Transaction Law, particularly the problematic provisions criminalizing “immorality”, defamation and “hate speech”, under Articles 27 and 28, so that any restrictions on freedom of expression fully comply with the three-part test set out by Article 19(3) of the ICCPR, namely legality, legitimate aim, and necessity and proportionality. Restrict the use of criminal penalties to only the most exceptional cases of advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence, in line with the Rabat Plan of Action.
- Review all the regulations related to online content takedown, including Government Regulation No. 71 of 2019, Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics No. 5 of 2020 concerning the Private Electronic System Operators and Minister of Communication and Informatics Decree No. 522 of 2024 to ensure transparency, procedural safeguards, access to evidence and the right to appeal to an independent body. This review should address the role of companies in functioning as a conduit for problematic content.
- Refrain from proposing a new law regulating “foreign propaganda and disinformation” and ensure no other legislation, regulation or policy would be introduced to criminalize legitimate expression, restrict funding or enable further stigmatization of civil society actors.

STRENGTHEN NON-LEGAL APPROACHES TO COUNTERING MIS- AND DISINFORMATION:

- Create a safe and enabling environment where civil society actors are protected from offline and online violence, can work effectively to defend human rights and conduct journalism and fact-checking initiatives without fear of reprisals.
- Protect independent journalism as a primary counterweight to disinformation and ensure financial sustainability, editorial independence, and diversity of media actors.
- Support community-based and civil society initiatives, including fact-checking, aimed at countering disinformation, fostering critical thinking and verification skills.
- Integrate and support media literacy into school curricula and lifelong learning.

REGULATE THE ROLE OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS THROUGH A RIGHTS-RESPECTING FRAMEWORK:

- Adopt and enforce laws requiring mandatory human rights due diligence (HRDD) for all companies, including social media platforms, operating in Indonesia, including the requirement to identify and mitigate the risks that online disinformation poses to the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and provide remedies, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Refrain from using content takedown regulations to censor expressions critical of the government.
- Hold the companies involved in these abuses to account for providing the space for these online disinformation campaigns to take place and amplify over time.

9.2.2 TO X, TIKTOK, META AND YOUTUBE:

END HARMS CAUSED BY MIS- AND DISINFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

- Remove harmful and stigmatizing disinformation and networks involved in spreading them in the cases documented in this report.
- For harmful and stigmatizing content that does not amount to disinformation documented in this report, consider demoting or other restrictions to decrease its visibility and minimize its harm.

PROVIDE APPROPRIATE FORMS OF REMEDIATION:

- Acknowledge the platforms' contribution to adverse human rights impacts caused by harmful and stigmatizing disinformation that remained on social media platforms for extended periods.
- Engage in direct, meaningful and inclusive consultation with targeted civil society actors to determine appropriate forms of remediation for the harms caused and provide such remediation without delay.

IMPROVE CONTENT MODERATION AND SUPPORT MEASURES THAT COULD CEASE AND PREVENT ADVERSE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT:

- Ensure consistent detection and implement proportionate restrictions on deceptive coordinated activities, especially networks linked to political actors, military units, or state-aligned actors.
- Support and cooperate with actors focusing on identifying and countering online disinformation, including fact-checkers and independent journalists.
- Undertake meaningful consultations with civil society actors who are most at risk of being affected by content moderation online and incorporate their views in any measures taken on this issue.

STRENGTHEN DUE DILIGENCE AND TRANSPARENCY:

- Immediately conduct an Indonesia-specific HRDD to assess the human rights risks and impacts under the Prabowo administration and, thereafter, carry out such HRDD on a regular basis to address evolving risks, including harmful and stigmatizing disinformation involving state actors.
- Ensure that HRDD is conducted in relation to the design and deployment of algorithmic systems in high-risk contexts, to include meaningful public consultation and engagement prior to the finalization and deployment of a product or service, with civil society, human rights defenders and representatives of marginalized or under-represented communities.
- Consistently publish dedicated reporting on Indonesia-based networks involved in disinformation campaigns to assist researchers in further investigating such networks and the human rights impacts of their activities.

SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY'S RESILIENCE:

- Expand rapid response escalation channels to include individuals and groups at high risk of being targeted with harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation, including those whose cases were documented in this report.
- Create regular dialogues with civil society, including those whose cases were documented in this report, to track emerging threats.

ANNEX I: LIST OF ACCOUNTS ENGAGING IN THE ACTIVISTS PROTESTING THE MILITARY LAW REVISIONS (FIRST VIDEO)

Below is the list of accounts appearing to belong state actors, namely the military, which Amnesty International identified to have engaged in the disinformation campaign against activists protesting the Military Law revisions at Fairmount Hotel in Jakarta as documented in Section 5.3.1 (First video). The accounts were presented in chronological order based on their posting activities.

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
1	@pendim1510sula	Instagram	Information Detachment of District Military Command 1510 Sula (“Penerangan Kodim 1510 Sula” or “Pendim 1510 Sula”)	17 March 2025 18:07 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHTFbG5yKiW/
2	@kodim_0319_mentawai	Instagram	District Military Command 0319 Mentawai (“Komando Distrik Militer 0319 Mentawai” or “Kodim 0319 Mentawai”)	17 March 2025 19:20 PM (GMT+)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHT-NowXTuIF/
3	@kodim_1513_sbb	Instagram	District Military Command 1513 West Seram (“Komando Distrik Militer 1513 Seram Bagian Barat” or “Kodim 1513 SBB”)	17 March 2025 19:44 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHTQH2-TkNq/
4	@koramil02sungaiapit	Instagram	Sub-district Military Command 02 Sungai Apit (“Komando Rayon Militer 02 Sungai Apit” or “Koramil 02 Sungai Apit”)	17 March 2025 20:05 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHTSrfFPFsP/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
5	@kodimtobelo	Instagram	District Military Command 1508 Tobelo (“Komando Distrik Militer 1508 Tobelo” or “Kodim 1508 Tobelo”)	17 March 2025 20:59 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHTY89fyAtD/
6	@kodim0322siak	Instagram	District Military Command 0322 Siak (“Komando Distrik Militer 0322 Siak” or “Kodim 0322 Siak”)	17 March 2025, 21:44 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHT-NufhSJLA/
7	@kesdam_9udayana	Instagram	Udayana Regional Military Health Service (“Kesehatan Daerah Militer IX Udayana” or “Kesdam IX Udayana”)	17 March 2025 22:59 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHTmxfQz-Os/
8	@kodim1611badung	Instagram	District Military Command 1611 Badung (“Komando Distrik Militer 1611 Badung” or “Kodim 1611 Badung”)	18 March 2025 02:35 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHT_c_MvQDg/
9	@rst.atambua	Instagram	Army Hospital Atambua (“Rumah Sakit Tentara Atambua” or “RST Atambua”)	18 March 2025 05:45 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHU-VLGjzdor/
10	@kodim1610klungkung	Instagram	District Military Command 1610 Klungkung (“Komando Distrik Militer 1610 Klungkung” or “Kodim 1610 Klungkung”)	18 March 2025 05:55 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHU-WNT7Bnrm/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
11	Kodim Klungkung	Facebook	District Military Command 1610 Klungkung (“Komando Distrik Militer 1610 Klungkung” or “Kodim 1610 Klungkung”)	18 March 2025 05:55 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.facebook.com/reel/1389427355758580
12	@yonzipur_18ykr	Instagram	18th Combat Engineer Battalion “Yudha Karya Rajasa” (“Batalyon Zeni Tempur 18 YKR” or “Yonzipur 18 YKR”)	18 March 2025 06:30 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUaRNqBHet/
13	@kodim1616gianyar	Instagram	District Military Command 1616 Gianyar (“Komando Distrik Militer 1616 Gianyar” or “Kodim 1616 Gianyar”)	18 March 2025 06:32 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUagR9Tqxl/
14	@kodim0703cilacap	Instagram	District Military Command 0703 Cilacap (“Komando Distrik Militer 0703 Cilacap” or “Kodim 0703 Cilacap”)	18 March 2025 06:41 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUboOmzavC/
15	@kodim_1617jembrana	Instagram	District Military Command 1617 Jembrana (“Komando Distrik Militer 1617 Jembrana” or “Kodim 1617 Jembrana”)	18 March 2025 06:45 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUcFm7hOTT/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
16	@denkesyahmataram	Instagram	Regional Health Detachment Mataram (“Detasemen Kesehatan Wilayah Mataram” or “Denkesyah Mataram”)	18 March 2025 06:45 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUcl_Gz4Ht/
17	@kodim_1628_sumbawa_barat	Instagram	District Military Command 1628 Sumbawa Barat (“Komando Distrik Militer 1628 Sumbawa Barat” or “Kodim 1628 Sumbawa Barat”)	18 March 2025 07:22 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHVCGPRPgP/
18	@kodim_1619_tabanan	Instagram	District Military Command 1619 Tabanan (“Komando Distrik Militer 1619 Tabanan” or “Kodim 1619 Tabanan”)	18 March 2025 07:46 (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUjB2iCU84/
19	@yonif743psy5	YouTube	743rd Infantry Battalion Samapta Yudha (“Batalyon Infanteri 743 Pradnya Samapta Yudha” or “Yonif 743 PSY”)	18 March 2025 07:52 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRJQPu3wNYg
20	@yonif741gn	Instagram	741st Infantry Battalion Garuda Nusantara (“Batalyon Infanteri 741 Garuda Nusantara” or “Yonif 741 GN”)	18 March 2025 08:20 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHUmf9sB3Jt/
21	@squadgaruda741gn	YouTube	741st Infantry Battalion Garuda Nusantara (“Batalyon Infanteri 741 Garuda Nusantara” or “Yonif 741 GN”)	18 March 2025 09:16 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/puAv0bcyZQ8

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
22	@kodim_1603_sikka_maumere	Instagram	District Military Command 1603 Sikka (“Komando Distrik Militer 1603 Sikka” or “Kodim 1603 Sikka”)	18 March 2025 08:21 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUnJ04hB-D/
23	@kodim1621_tts	Instagram	District Military Command 1621 Timor Tengah Selatan (“Komando Distrik Militer 1621 Timor Tengah Selatan” or “Kodim 1621 TTS”)	18 March 2025 08:45 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHUpCvWSCOa/
24	@babinkum.tni	Instagram	TNI’s Legal Development Agency (“Badan Pembinaan” Hukum TNI or “Babinkum TNI”)	18 March 2025 09:05 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHUsNTYvyQF/?hl=en
25	@koramil04_cikupa	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 04 Cikupa (“Koramil 04 Cikupa”)	18 March 2025 10:57 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHU41eZPklm/
26	@kodim1620	Instagram	District Military Command 1620 Loteng (“Komando Distrik Militer 1620 Loteng” or “Kodim 1620 Loteng”)	18 March 2025 11:50 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHU-Hr_Pn6t/
27	Kodim 1620/Loteng	Facebook		18 March 2025 12:05 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.facebook.com/reel/1378789139945321
28	@1620Kodim	X		18 March 2025 12:12 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://x.com/1620Kodim/status/1901864255164706933

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
29	@rsaddenpasar	YouTube	Udayana Level II Army Hospital (Rumkit Tingkat II Udayana Denpasar)	18 March 2025 15:12 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/6rHVdpvf3Mk
30	@kodim_1502masohi	Instagram	District Military Command 1502 Masohi (“Komando Distrik Militer 1502 Masohi” or “Kodim 1502 Masohi”)	18 March 2025	Account deleted; Online until Feb 2026 (Screenshot of the post on file with Amnesty International)
31	@koramilwawo	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 1608-06 Wawo (“Komando Rayon Militer 1608-06 Wawo” or “Koramil 1608-06 Wawo”)	19 March 2025 08:24 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHXMGcLy46t/

ANNEX II: LIST OF ACCOUNTS ENGAGING IN THE ACTIVISTS PROTESTING THE MILITARY LAW REVISIONS (SECOND VIDEO)

Below is the list of accounts appearing to belong state actors, namely the military, which Amnesty International identified to have engaged in the disinformation campaign against activists protesting the Military Law revisions. The accounts were presented in chronological order based on their posting activities.

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status at the time of sending this letter
1	@penrem181	Instagram	Sub-Regional Military Command 181 Praja Vira (“Komando Resor Militer 181 Praja Vira” or “Korem 181 Praja Vira”)	23 March 2025 11:33 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHh-1DS8CHvc/
2	@koramil04_cikupa	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 04 Cikupa (“Komando Rayon Militer 04 Cikupa” or “Koramil 04 Cikupa”)	23 March 2025 15:23 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHiO5w-WP6z8/
3	@kodim_1809_maybrat	Instagram	District Military Command 1809 Maybrat (“Komando Distrik Militer 1809 Maybrat” or “Kodim 1809 Maybrat”)	23 March 2025 17:09 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHib-N7Ry8g/
4	@kodim1810_tambrau	Instagram	District Military Command 1810 Tambrau (“Komando Distrik Militer 1810 Tambrau” or “Kodim 1810 Tambrau”)	23 March 2025 20:33 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHixXNwP2ac/

ANNEX III: LIST OF ACCOUNTS ENGAGING IN THE DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST INDONESIA GELAP PROTESTERS

Below is the list of accounts appearing to belong state actors, namely the military, which Amnesty International identified to have engaged in the disinformation campaign against the Indonesia Gelap protesters as documented in Section 5.3.2. The accounts were presented in chronological order based on their posting activities.

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
1	@koramil14_panongan	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 14 Panongan (“Komando Rayon Militer 14/ Panongan” or “Koramil 14/Panongan”)	18 May 2025 16:23 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJyiyZPp-cf/
2	@denkav4sp	Instagram	Cavalry Detachment 4 Simha Pasupati (“Detasemen Kavaleri 4 Simha Pasupati” or “Denkav 4/SP”)	18 May 2025 16:31 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJyjnULvcxR/
3	@koramil04_cikupa	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 04 Cikupa (“Koramil 04 Cikupa”)	18 May 2025 17:30 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy-qlvpzCAS/
4	@kodim1423soppeng	Instagram	District Military Command 1423 Soppeng (“Komando Distrik Militer 1423 Soppeng” or “Kodim 1423 Soppeng”)	18 May 2025 18:55 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy-0IMbJN1Z/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
5	@kodim0312padang	Instagram	District Military Command 0312 Padang (“Komando Distrik Militer 0312/ Padang” or “Kodim 0312 Padang”)	18 May 2025 18:58 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJyOfx_JAWN/
6	@koramil14_ciampea_tenjolaya	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 0621-14 Ciampea (“Komando Rayon Militer 0621-14 Ciampea” or “Koramil 0621-14 Ciampea”)	18 May 2025 19:00 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy0gc7JqF2/
7	@kodim_1617jembrana	Instagram	District Military Command 1617 Jembrana (“Komando Distrik Militer 1617 Jembrana” or “Kodim 1617 Jembrana”)	18 May 2025 19:02 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy2UCcyw_a/
8	Kodim Jembrana	Facebook	District Military Command 1617 Jembrana (“Komando Distrik Militer 1617 Jembrana” or “Kodim 1617 Jembrana”)	18 May 2025 19:20 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.facebook.com/reel/1025257826366135
9	@kodim.0622	Instagram	District Military Command 0622 Sukabumi Regency (“Komando Distrik Militer 0622 Kabupaten Sukabumi” or “Kodim 0622 Kab Sukabumi”)	18 May 2025 19:09 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy1rftv-vV/
10	@koramil05balaraja	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 05 Balaraja (“Komando Rayon Militer 05 Balaraja” or “Koramil 05 Balaraja”)	18 May 2025 20:07 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy8PfjvRB2/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
11	@brigif11badiksakti	Instagram	Infantry Brigade 11 Badik Sakti (“Brigade Infanteri 11 Badik Sakti” or “Brigif 11 Badik Sakti”)	18 May 2025 20:21 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJy98iOyHDN/
12	@kodim0415jambi	Instagram	District Military Command 0415 Jambi (“Komando Distrik Militer 0415 Jambi” or “Kodim 0415 Jambi”)	18 May 2025 20:31 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy_CQQBB5Q/
13	@koramil01.siak	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 01 Siak (“Komando Rayon Militer 01 Siak” or “Koramil 01 Siak”)	18 May 2025 20:39 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzAE8hPI2S/
14	@yonkav11_msc	Instagram	Armored Battalion 11 Macan Setia Cakti (“Batalyon Kavaleri 11 Macan Setia Cakti” or “Yonkav 11 MSC”)	18 May 2025 20:43 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzAPVXyLH4/
15	@kodim0407kb	Instagram	District Military Command 0407 Bengkulu City (“Komando Distrik Militer 0407 Kota Bengkulu” or “Kodim 0407 KB”)	18 May 2025 20:50 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzBWzoOuH9/
16	@koramil02pondokgede	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 02 Pondok Gede (“Komando Rayon Militer 02 Pondok Gede” or “Koramil 02 Pondok Gede”)	18 May 2025 21:03 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzCcAOz1qh/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
17	@kodim_tapsel_0212	Instagram	District Military Command 0212 South Tapanuli (“Komando Distrik Militer 0212 Tapanuli Selatan” atau “Kodim 0212 Tapsel”)	18 May 2025 21:08 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJy8a96vWx/
18	@kodimkotabandar-lampung	Instagram	District Military Command 0410 Kota Bandar Lampung (“Komando Distrik Militer 0410 Kota Bandar Lampung” or “Kodim 0410 KBL”)	18 May 2025 21:24 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzFKrcPnmW/
19	@kodim1408mks_	Instagram	District Military Command 1408 Makassar (“Komando Distrik Militer 1408 Makassar” or “Kodim 1408 MKS”)	18 May 2025 21:39 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzG0joySpD/
20	@kodim_0105	Instagram	District Military Command 0105 Aceh Barat (“Komando Distrik Militer 0105 Aceh Barat” or “Kodim 0105 Abar”)	18 May 2025 21:45 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzHcvPyaTo/
21	@rindam.hasanuddin	Instagram	Regional Training Regiment XIV Hasanuddin (“Resimen Induk Daerah Militer XIV Hasanuddin” or “Rindam XIV Hasanuddin”)	18 May 2025 22:35 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/p/DJzNVVfzzax/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
22	@koramil_17_geumpang	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 17 Geumpang (“Komando Rayon Militer 17 Geumpang” or “Koramil 17 Geumpang”)	18 May 2025 22:55 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzPfuqSdPL/
23	@koramilwoylabarat	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 0105-10 Woyla Barat (“Komando Rayon Militer 0105-10 Woyla Barat” or “Koramil 0105-10 Woyla Barat”)	19 May 2025 00:50 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJzM87JyAy7/
24	@kodim1614dompu	Instagram	District Military Command 1614 Dompus (“Komando Distrik Militer 1614 Dompus” or “Kodim 1614 Dompus”)	19 May 2025 06:55 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJQJfewTBHw/
25	@kodim_gorut	Instagram	District Military Command 1314 North Gorontalo (“Komando Distrik Militer 1314 Gorontalo Utara” or “Kodim 1314 Gorut”)	19 May 2025 07:12 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ0leZ5zJD-/
26	@pendim0113gayolues	Instagram	District Military Command 0113 Gayo Lues (“Komando Distrik Militer 0113 Gayo Lues” or “Kodim 0113 Gayo Lues”)	19 May 2025 07:47 AM (GMT+7)	Account deleted; Online until February 2026 (Screenshot of the post on file with Amnesty International)
27	@kodimdumai	Instagram	District Military Command 0320 Dumai (“Komando Distrik Militer 0320 Dumai” or “Kodim 0320 Dumai”)	19 May 2025 09:02 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/kodimdumai/reel/DJOVEJTUM7v/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
28	@kodim0322siak	Instagram	District Military Command 0322 Siak (“Komando Distrik Militer 0322 Siak” or “Kodim 0322 Siak”)	19 May 2025 09:48 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJyoxNAyimb/
29	@kodim_0417kerinci	Instagram	District Military Command 0417 Kerinci (“Komando Distrik Militer 0417 Kerinci” or “Kodim 0417 Kerinci”)	19 May 2025 09:49 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJ0Z6UqSgYT/
30	@penerangankodim0313kpr	Instagram	District Military Command 0313 Kampar (“Komando Distrik Militer 0313 Kampar” or “Kodim 0313 Kpr”)	19 May 2025 10:00 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ0btNWx12G/
31	@koramil10pdt	Instagram	Sub-District Military Command 10 Padang Tualang (“Komando Rayon Militer 10 Padang Tualang” or “Koramil 10 PDT”)	19 May 2025 11:33 AM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ0mbJPPu8J/
32	@korem052wijayakrama	Instagram	Sub-Regional Military Command 052 Wijayakrama (“Komando Resort Militer 052 Wijayakrama” or “Korem 052 WKR”)	19 May 2025 12:46 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ0usRmSkbl/

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status as of 20 April 2026
33	@kodim0317_tbk	Instagram	District Military Command 0317 Tanjung Balai Karimun ("Komando Distrik Militer 0317 Tanjung Balai Karimun" or "Kodim 0317 TBK")	19 May 2025 13:56 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ02yUOhmwy/
34	@kodim_0424_tanggamus	Instagram	District Military Command 0424 Tanggamus ("Komando Distrik Militer 0424 Tanggamus" or "Kodim 0424 Tanggamus")	19 May 2025 14:55 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ09jXwT3f5/
35	@korem042gapu	Instagram	Sub-Regional Military Command 042 Garuda Putih ("Komando Resor Militer 042 Garuda Putih" or "Korem 042 Gapu")	19 May 2025 15:23 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ1As8YsQ7P/
36	@kodim_bulukumba_official	Instagram	District Military Command 1411 Bulukumba ("Komando Distrik Militer 1411/ Bulukumba" or "Kodim 1411/ Bulukumba")	19 May 2025 20:05 PM (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DJ1g4Z-zdUD/
37	@kodimbangli	Instagram	District Military Command 1626 Bangli ("Komando Distrik Militer 1626 Bangli" or "Kodim 1626 Bangli")	19 May 2025	Account became private (Screenshot of the post on file with Amnesty International)


ANNEX IV: LIST OF ACCOUNTS ENGAGING IN THE DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST MEDIA OUTLET TEMPO

Below is the list of accounts appearing to belong state actors, namely the military, which Amnesty International identified to have engaged in the disinformation campaign against media outlet Tempo as documented in Section 5.3.3. The accounts were presented in chronological order based on their posting activities.

No	Account ID	Platform	Potentially responsible military unit	Time of posting	Status at the time of sending this letter
1	@penrem181	Instagram	Sub-Regional Military Command 181 Praja Vira (“Komando Resor Militer 181 Praja Vira” or “Korem 181 Praja Vira”)	23 March 2025 10:48 (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/p/DHh-v2QvCNIU/
2	@Kodim_1809_Maybrat	Instagram	District Military Command 1809 Maybrat (“Komando Distrik Militer 1809 Maybrat” or “Kodim 1809 Maybrat”)	23 March 2025 14:54 (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHiLqStSyll/
3	@kodim1810_tambrau	Instagram	District Military Command 1810 Tambrau (“Komando Distrik Militer 1810 Tambrau” or “Kodim 1810 Tambrau”)	23 March 2025 17:45 (GMT+7)	Online and publicly accessible at: https://www.instagram.com/reels/DHi-etyTPhP6/


ANNEX V: RESPONSES FROM SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANIES

E-mail response from TikTok to Amnesty International, dated 23 February 2026

 Outlook

re: Amnesty International - correspondence on Indonesia/disinformation

From [REDACTED]
Date Mon 2/23/2026 6:05 AM
To [REDACTED]
Cc [REDACTED]

 **CAUTION External Sender** Exercise caution opening links or attachments. Do not provide login details.

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter to Lisa Hayes dated 9 February 2026. We appreciate the opportunity to provide more information about our approach to disinformation on TikTok, our partnerships with external stakeholders, and our human rights commitments.

Upholding Human Rights

As a global discovery company, TikTok has a responsibility to help ensure that our community is treated with fundamental dignity and respect on our platform. We are committed to respecting the human rights of all people impacted by our platform, regardless of their ethnicity, orientation, background, or life experience.

We strive to proactively identify and mitigate human rights risks across our business. Key leaders across TikTok help provide oversight on human-rights-related actions and decisions. Internally, a cross-functional working group coordinates and collaborates on human rights initiatives. For one initiative, we [partnered with Article One](#), a business and human rights consultancy, to conduct a human rights impact assessment (HRIA) of our trust and safety operations, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

This assessment identified several key areas of focus for our human rights strategy within Trust and Safety, including aligning operational approaches to managing human rights and enhancing language coverage for content moderation. TikTok has taken a number of steps to align with the recommendations from the assessment, including developing a framework to assess country risk based on short- and long-term risk and expanding global fact-checking coverage. More information about the HRIA, including details on the areas of focus and recommendations, is available [here](#).

Global Safety Partners

We engage with external experts to inform us of ongoing and upcoming human rights risks around the world. This includes engaging members of affected communities or larger organizations representing their interests.

Our proactive engagement includes human rights organizations, independent experts and members of our [Advisory Councils](#). We have 10 regional advisory councils, including the Southeast Asia Safety Advisory Council, each of which works collaboratively with our local teams to inform and strengthen our policies, product features, and safety processes. In addition, through our [Youth Council](#) we actively engage young

people in order to hear their insights and recommendations and to help us better understand and respond to their safety and well-being needs on our platform.

Our Community Partner Channel (CPC), which includes safety and civil society organizations with a broad range of expertise across content safety and youth safety issues, can report potentially violative content to us directly for review. These partners supplement our content moderation practices by identifying and sharing locally nuanced risks. Through the CPC, we provide a direct line for trusted NGOs in Indonesia to report content for priority review. This helps ensure that content posing a threat to their specific communities is addressed swiftly. By maintaining these partnerships, we can more effectively reach and work with vulnerable groups, including women and children. Our local trusted partners include the Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (SAFENet) on digital safety and online gender-based violence; the Legal Aid Foundation of the Indonesian Women's Association for Justice (LBH APIK) on women's safety and sexual harassment; Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia on misinformation; the SEJIWA Foundation on child safety; and BullyID on anti-bullying.

Community Guidelines & Combatting Misinformation

We have Community Guidelines to help keep TikTok a safe and positive experience. These rules apply to everyone and everything on our platform. TikTok is a place where you can learn from and engage with a wide variety of topics, and we don't want anyone to take advantage of the desire to engage and explore new topics. As part of our effort to safeguard authentic experiences on TikTok, we:

- Prohibit [harmful misinformation](#), restrict unverified content from For You feeds, and partner with over 20 fact-checking organizations globally to enforce those policies accurately.
- Label unverified content, connect people to authoritative sources of information in-app, and provide "verified" account badges to signal an account belongs to who it claims to be. Our verified badges are earned based on authenticity criteria rather than bought.
- Require people to label realistic AI-generated content so viewers aren't misled and we invest in an easy-to-use labeling [tool](#) for creators as well as [technologies](#) like Content Credentials that help us automatically label AI-generated content ourselves. Harmfully misleading AIGC is not allowed, even if labeled.
- Partner with experts around the globe on [media literacy features](#) and [educational videos](#) that raise awareness for critical thinking skills in-app and connect hundreds of millions of people to authoritative information about elections, evolving natural disasters, health, and more.
- Publish regularly updated, public-facing information about enforcement of our Community Guidelines and policies. This includes our [Covert Influence Operations Report](#) and our [Community Guidelines Enforcement Report](#).

We thank you for your questions and appreciate the opportunity to provide additional details. We welcome a continued dialogue with Amnesty International regarding our shared priority of maintaining a safe platform for our users.

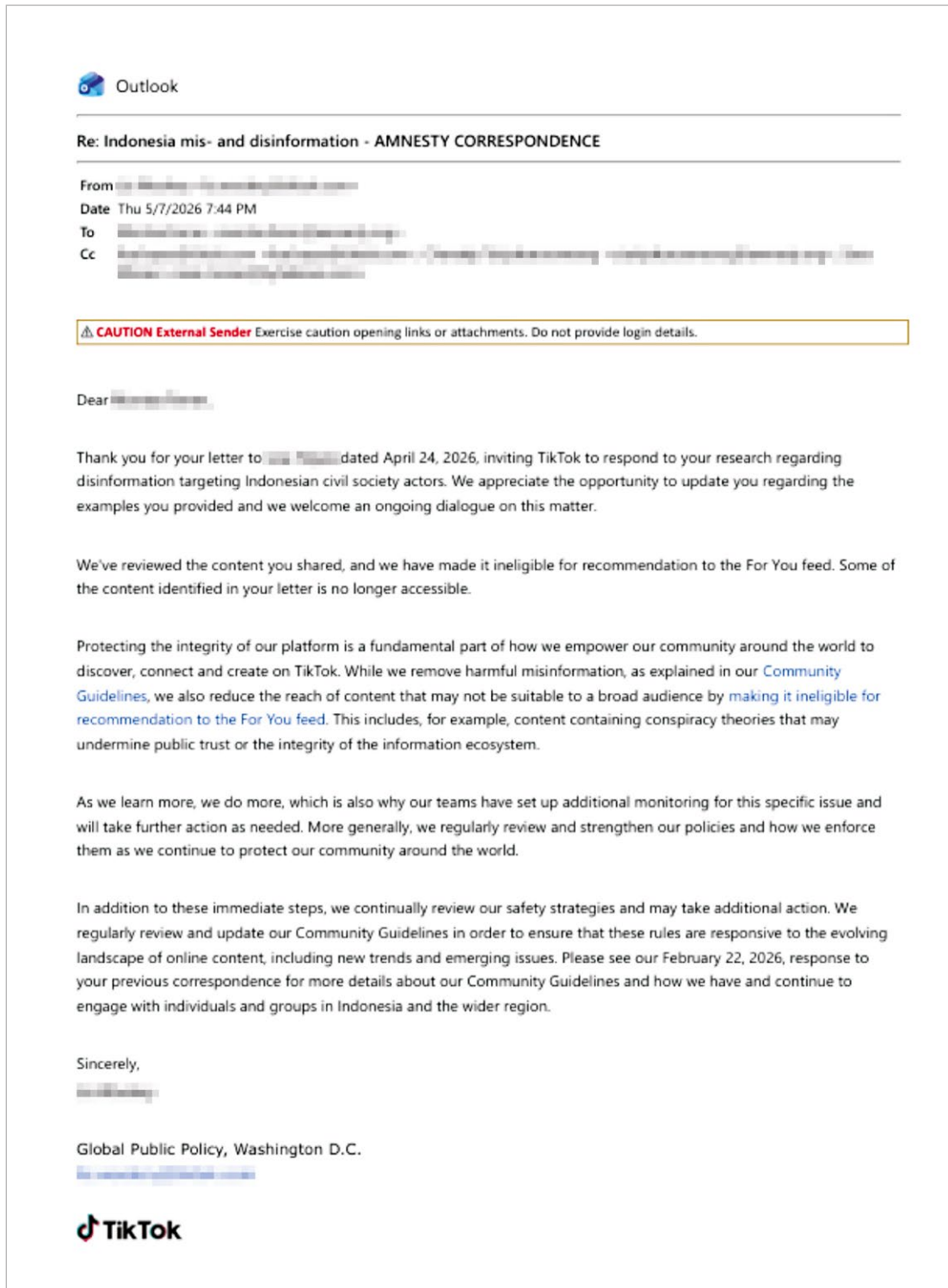
Sincerely,



Global Public Policy, Washington D.C.

Tel: +1 202 234 4200

Email: publicpolicy@tiktok.com



Letter from Meta to Amnesty International, dated 25 February 2026:



February 25, 2026

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

East Asia and Southeast Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
Amnesty International
by email

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you very much for your letter of 9 February 2026.

We appreciate the work of Amnesty International documenting human rights violations and abuses, including the concerns that you have raised regarding the targeting of human rights defenders in Indonesia.

Human rights due diligence is a key element of our [Corporate Human Rights Policy](#), and takes multiple forms including ongoing engagement with our policy and product teams at the global, regional and country-levels. It also encompasses work done with trusted partners, civil society and risk-specific research.

We published our Comprehensive [Human Rights Salient Risk Assessment](#) in 2022, which we have regularly updated in our annual human rights reporting (see references to Indonesia in our [2024 report](#)). Although we haven't published integrated due diligence on Indonesia since the 2018 [Human Rights Impact Assessment](#), our policies continue to be informed by those findings. In addition to the measures that we disclose publicly, we also have robust internal risk management and tracking systems in place to measure and assess the effectiveness of our mitigations.

Our Corporate Human Rights Policy incorporates a foundational commitment to seek to *protect human rights defenders*, as defined by the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, in their work to peacefully promote and protect human rights. We recognize

that human rights defenders are a high-risk user group in Indonesia and strive to offer specific measures to protect their safety and well-being. We also proactively engage with human rights defenders to understand their needs and the heightened human rights risks they face. We have provided detail on the tools that we use to protect human rights defenders in our [annual reports](#).

We engage with a broad range of *Indonesian stakeholders*, including civil society organizations and Trusted Partners, who bring context to our policies and processes and have a special reporting channel. We engage them to identify trends and violations of our Community Standards, better understand the impact of online content and behavior on local communities, and explore how we can strengthen our escalation channels.

We conduct roundtables and training sessions with civil society organizations and meet with them regularly. Those engagements have informed our work - for instance, our Indonesian Trusted Partners supported our integrity elections efforts in 2024, including by flagging hateful conduct and bullying [targeting female and LGBTQ+ candidates](#).

As you have noted in your letter, Meta has reported publicly on actions taken against accounts and networks involved in *coordinated inauthentic behaviour* originating in or targeting Indonesia in [2019](#) and [2020](#). We continue to use both automated tools and expert investigations to catch efforts by previously-removed networks to reconstitute on platform. We continue to monitor for and seek to disrupt CIB operations, via a combination of manual investigations and automated detection.

We have also provided information in recent Adversarial Threat Reports about disruptions in Indonesia. In December 2022, we [reported](#) on action taken against a mass reporting network targeting people primarily within the Wahhabi Muslim community. In December 2025, we also [reported](#) on action taken against a criminal network that targeted countries including Indonesia - as part of our effort to combat [criminal scam syndicates](#).

Yours sincerely,


A redacted signature consisting of a series of grey rectangular blocks of varying sizes, obscuring the name of the sender.



Head of Human Rights Policy - APAC




**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.
WHEN INJUSTICE HAPPENS
TO ONE PERSON, IT
MATTERS TO US ALL.**

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“BUILDING UP IMAGINARY ENEMIES”

MISINFORMATION, DISINFORMATION AND ‘FOREIGN AGENT’ ALLEGATIONS IN PRESIDENT PRABOWO’S INDONESIA

Since President Prabowo took power in October 2024, state officials have repeatedly resorted to harmful and stigmatizing mis- and disinformation online, relying on unsubstantiated ‘foreign agent’ allegations as an authoritarian practice to target critics, including civil society actors. Such mis- and disinformation has served to deflect criticism on a range of issues and recast dissent not as a legitimate expression of grievances rooted in social, economic, or political conditions, but as the product of manipulation by hidden foreign forces.

This report exposes the role of state and state-aligned actors in weaponizing such mis- and disinformation against civil society actors as ‘foreign agents’ in the digital space during the first 18 months of the Prabowo administration. It examines the interplay between online mis- and disinformation and offline forms of violence, analyses the resulting human rights harms, including their chilling effect, and assesses the role of social media companies in contributing to these harms.

