

Brev till Östtimors regering

Östtimorkommittén skickade den 3 februari med anledning av en vädjan från Amnesty International från den 27 januari att protestera mot säkerhetsstyrkornas agerande mot människorättsorganisationen Yayasan HAK dagen innan nedanstående brev till

Östtimors justitieminister den 3 februari. Kopior skickades till landets FN-representant i Genève och högste ansvarige för mänskliga rättigheter. Några gensvar har inte kommit.

Gabriel Jonsson



Swedish East Timor Committee

Minister of Justice
Ivo Jorge Valente
Ministry of Justice
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Dili, Timor-Leste
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Dear Minister

It has come to our knowledge that two members of Timor-Leste's security forces visited the office of the human rights NGO Yayasan HAK on 26 January and that the police has been harassing its Executive Director by telephone for organizing and participating in a peaceful demonstration.

Manuel Monteiro Fernandes, Executive Director of the human rights NGO Yayasan HAK based in Dili, Timor Leste, has informed Amnesty International that the police has been calling him repeatedly regarding the NGO's involvement in organizing a peaceful demonstration to coincide with the President of Indonesia's visit to Timor-Leste on 26 January.

On the day of the demonstration, two members of the Timor-Leste Defence Force visited the Yayasan HAK office and requested to use the space as a security base due to its proximity to the Indonesian Embassy in Dili. Manuel Monteiro Fernandes refused to allow them to use their office. One of the soldiers then approached another member of the staff, Adelio da Costa Fernandes and requested that he immediately remove his t-shirt because it carried the slogan "Free West Papua", which refers to a political issue that is considered as highly sensitive by the Indonesian government.

Yayasan HAK announced in a joint public statement on 25 January, together with other local NGOs, that the peaceful demonstration was organised to urge the Timorese and Indonesian governments to address crimes against humanity committed during the Indonesian occupation between 1975 and 1999. They also called for the immediate implementation of recommendations set out by the Commission for Truth and Friendship (CTF), a bilateral agreement between the government of Indonesia and the government of Timor-Leste to investigate crimes committed during the 1999 independence referendum, including the establishment of a Commission for Missing People.

With this background, I call on the Timor-Leste authorities to take immediate action to:

1. Prevent further intimidation and harassment against staff at Yayasan HAK and to respect the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and association;
2. Implement the government's responsibility to protect human rights defenders and ensure they can carry out their legitimate activities without fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

On behalf of the Swedish East Timor Committee, February 3, 2016

Gabriel Jonsson
Chairman