



Bullet casings found at the scene of the incident. © Private

INDONESIA: UNNECESSARY AND EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE AGAINST FARMERS IN JAMBI

On 15 January 2011, Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob) officers in Jambi province, Sumatra Island opened fire on a group of palm oil farmers, critically injuring six of them.

The shootings took place amid a land dispute between the farmers and a palm oil company PT Kresna Duta Agroindo, which has been ongoing since 2006. The farmers claim that the land, which they loaned to the palm oil company in 2001, is now rightfully theirs after the loan agreement ended. At least 150 farmers were harvesting palm oil trees that morning near the village of Karang Mendapo in Sarolangun district when they were confronted by at least 30 Brimob officers who attempted to evict them from the plantation.

According to local sources, the Brimob officers had been instructed by the Jambi regional police to provide support to the Sarolangun district police in maintaining security in the area of the company's operations. When the farmers refused to leave, the police fired warnings shots into the air, causing the farmers to flee in panic. As they fled, the police reportedly opened fire on them with rubber bullets hitting six farmers in the face, thigh, stomach and back.

The six farmers, all men, injured are: Suhen, Saiful, Munawir, Fahmi, Agus, and Nur Indones.

Following the incident, seven other villagers were arrested and questioned. They were later released without charge.

The police internal affairs division (Propam) is currently investigating the incident; however Amnesty International is not aware of any progress on the case.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please write to the Indonesian authorities urging them to:

- Initiate a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into the reported unnecessary and excessive use of force against the farmers. Where appropriate, take measures to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice in fair trials and the victims receive reparations;
- Ensure that all police use of force procedures are in line with the Indonesian police regulation on Human Rights Principles and Standards in the Discharge of Duties of the Indonesian National Police (No. 8/2009), the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and other international standards; and
- Establish an independent police complaints mechanism or broaden the mandate of existing commissions that will ensure effective external accountability of the police. This body should be empowered, among other things, to receive complaints, investigate them, and submit them to the Public Prosecutor.

Please send letters to:

Jambi Regional Police Chief (Kapolda)

Brigjen Bambang Suparsono
Jambi Regional Police Headquarters (Polda)
Jl. Jenderal Sudirman KM 45
Jambi
Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Brigadier General

Head of the Division on Professionalism and Security (Propam)

Irjen Pol Budi Gunawan
Kadiv Propam Mabes Polri
Jl. Trunojoyo No. 3
Jakarta Selatan
Indonesia
Salutation: Dear General

National Police Commission (KOMPOLNAS)

Mr. Adnan Pandu Praja
Sekretaris Kopolnas
Jl Trunjoyo No. 3 Kebayoran Baru
Jakarta 12110
Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Adnan Pandu Praja

Please send copies to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

