

## **OPEN LETTER**

### **TO PRESIDEN REPUBLIK OF INDONESIA JOKO WIDODO AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE PEOPLE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

#### **STOP THE CRIMINALIZATION OF INDIGENOUS POPLES RECOGNICE AND PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

**Dear honorable President Republic of Indonesia,**

**Dear honorable Chairperson of The People Representative Council Republik of Indonesia,**

We as part of the churches in Indonesia, as an integral part of Indonesian society, are called to have compassion and solidarity with indigenous peoples in Indonesia who are struggling to face land grabbing, criminalization and discrimination. As Christ who is present and has a history in the struggle of everyday human life, we hereby declare our partisanship and commitment to be present, stand and move together with indigenous peoples throughout Indonesia.

Churches in Indonesia fully support the implementation of the constitutional mandate in which protection of indigenous peoples has been specifically stated in the 1945 Constitution (UUD) Article 18B paragraph (2). The State recognizes and respects the unity of the Customary Law Community and traditional rights as long as it is still alive and in accordance with the development of society and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Churches in Indonesia are also fighting for the customary rights of the Laman Kinipan indigenous peoples in Central Kalimantan which has led to conflicts between indigenous peoples who are defending their ulayat rights and the authorities. The police made an arrest on August 26, 2020, of the Kepala Adat Masyarakat Laman Kinipan along with five other residents. After being detained for one day, the customary leader Efendi Buhing and the other five indigenous peoples were released with the status of witnesses for Efendi Buhing and suspect status for the other five. Thus, this criminalization case has not yet been completed because it is still in the status of compulsory reporting.

Since 2018 the customary area of the Kinipan, settlements and agricultural land have been evicted by PT Sawit Mandiri (SML) using heavy equipment. The land will be used as an oil palm plantation on the pretext that 19,091 hectares of land have been released from the Ministry of Environment through letter 1 / I / PKH / PNB / 2015 on March 19, 2015. Also based on the Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Spatial Planning / Head of the National Land Agency (ATR / BPN) number 82 / HGU / KEM-ATR / BPN / 2017 concerning the Granting of Business Use Rights on behalf of PT Sawit Mandiri Lestari covering an area of 9,435,2214 hectares.

The process of issuing forest release and HGU above has never involved the Laman Kinipan indigenous people who have long lived in the area. This has resulted in strong rejection from the indigenous community because it has damaged their life structure, including their

livelihoods, who have been relying on forests. This refusal resulted in an agrarian conflict which until now has not been resolved.



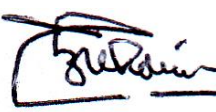

Agrarian conflicts on behalf of investment interests and sacrifice the people, do not only occur in Kalimantan, but in various places in Indonesia such as Papua, Nias Islands, Mentawai Islands, Sumatra, Maluku. Therefore, Churches in Indonesia declare:











1. Requesting the police to immediately stop the criminalization process experienced by the Chief of the Laman Kinipan Custom, Efendy Buhing as a witness along with five other indigenous people who are currently suspects
2. Indigenous peoples are a vulnerable group who have recently been marginalized and discriminated against. For a long time they have had local wisdom in caring for and preserving the integrity of creation. Siding with indigenous peoples is siding with human rights and the integrity of creation. The presence of capital owners supported by the authorities has caused various conflicts throughout Indonesia. Therefore, we urge the government to immediately revoke permits for companies that are present on the lands of the Kinipan indigenous peoples and other areas in Indonesia that have the potential to destroy the environment and the order of the indigenous peoples, causing loss, injustice and even criminalization of communities who resist.
3. In order to guarantee recognition and protection of indigenous peoples, ask the Indonesian Parliament to immediately ratify the Draft Law on Indigenous Peoples which has been included in the 2020 National Legislation Program as the legal umbrella for the protection of indigenous peoples. Especially for the Central Kalimantan region, asking the Central Kalimantan Provincial DPRD to immediately ratify the Local Regulation on the Recognition & Protection of the Dayak Customary Law Community in Central Kalimantan.

Thus we submit this statement for the realization of justice, peace and the integrity of creation as part of the responsibility of the churches in this world.

May God give strength to President and all the member People Representative Council.

Banjarmasin, 15 Oktober 2020

1.	Rev. Dr. Wardinan S. Lidim - Chairperson of GKE Synod	 
2	Pdt. Dr. Tuhoni Telaumbanua - Ephorus of BNKP	 

3	Pdt. Agustinus Purba Chairperson of Moderamen GBKP	 
4	Pdt. Abednego Juwarisman Chairperson of GKJTU	 
5	Pdt. Martin Rumanja Purba Ephorus of GKPS	 
6	Pdt. Elson Lingga Bishop of GKPPD	 
7	Pdt. Ramses Pandingan Ephorus of GPKB	 
8	Pdt. Hizkia Rollo Deputy Chairperson of GKI Tanah Papua Synod	