



October 31, 2019

His Excellency Mahendra Siregar
Ambassador of Indonesia
2020 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington, DC 20036
USA

Re: Suspicious Death of Environmental Human Rights Activist Golfrid Siregar

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

Inclusive Development International joins 239 other civil society organizations writing in regards to Golfrid Siregar, an Indonesian environmental lawyer who died on October 6, 2019, under suspicious circumstances. On October 3, 2019, Golfrid Siregar was found beaten and abandoned on the side of a road in Medan. Although police claim his death was the result of a traffic accident, there are a number of irregularities and suspicious circumstances which suggest his death may have occurred as retaliation for his environmental and human rights advocacy work, thus warranting immediate further investigation.

We believe that environmental human rights defenders represent a country's best and brightest – these are the individuals who put their lives on the line to make their country more fair, more safe, more just. As such, **we stand with the Indonesian Civil Society Coalition for Human Rights Defenders Protection in urgently calling on the Indonesian government to immediately launch an independent, thorough investigation of Golfrid Siregar's death.** Failing to do so would suggest the Indonesian government's ambivalence to the serious life and death struggles facing its own people.

Suspicious Circumstances

The Indonesian Civil Society Coalition for Human Rights Defenders Protection has observed troubling irregularities, which suggest that Golfrid Siregar's injuries were not caused by an ordinary traffic accident. First, he suffered primarily from serious head injuries which caused his cranium to break, while the rest of his body remained largely uninjured. Second, family and friends reported that there were bruises to his right eye as if from a hard, direct blow. Third, mud and wet soil were found on his clothes, even though the area where he was found is paved, with no soil nearby. Fourth, his personal belongings, bag, laptop, wallet, phone, and ring were missing. Fifth, his motorcycle was mostly undamaged, and not reflective of being in a serious, fatal traffic accident. It should also be noted that there were no bloodstains where he was found; his clothes were undamaged and did not show signs of Golfrid falling off the motorcycle.

Golfrid Siregar's Life's Work to Promote Environmental Protection and Human Rights

These suspicious circumstances are more troubling when seen in the context of Golfrid Siregar's life's work to promote human rights and environmental protection. Since 2016, Golfrid Siregar worked as Legal Manager at WALHI North Sumatra, where he advocated on behalf of local communities on a variety of cases involving illegal logging, mining, and forest encroachment, among others. One of his more recent cases involved a lawsuit against PT NSHE, the developer for the controversial Batang Toru Hydrodam in North Sumatra. Filed by WALHI North Sumatra, the lawsuit claimed that the company violated at least three Indonesian laws related to project permitting, good governance, and procedural flaws. He was also involved in exposing an expert's forged signature in the project's AMDAL (environmental impact assessment). Golfrid Siregar was extremely active in this case, and also filed a complaint with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in regards to potential embezzlement and corruption between the project developer PT NSHE and local government.

In August and September of this year, he was in communication with the Investigation Supervision Role (Wassidik) and Professional and Security Division (Propam) at Indonesian Police Headquarters (Mabes POLRI) after submitting a report on concerning behavior of the Regional Police North Sumatra investigator. Forgery is a criminal offense, and so the forged signature in the Batang Toru Hydrodam was previously reported to the Regional Police. Golfrid's report to Indonesian Police Headquarters (Mabes POLRI) raised concerns about the Regional Police of North Sumatra's sudden issuance of a Termination Letter of Investigation (SP3), which essentially ended regional police investigation of forgery in Batang Toru Hydrodam's AMDAL. In September, he was invited by the Professional and Security Division (Propam) Mabes POLRI to provide additional clarification to his report about the Regional Police's Termination of Investigation (SP3), but requested to reschedule due to work responsibilities in Medan.

It should be noted that the Batang Toru Hydropower project has attracted controversy for not only its environmental, social, and biodiversity issues, but for the suspicious activities associated with the project developer PT NSHE. Scientific experts have been fired for speaking out against the project; local environmental organizers report harassment, intimidation, and being followed by company hired men; and just recently, the Indonesian expert who testified that his signature was forged in the AMDAL for the Batang Toru Hydrodam project has been accused of defamation.

Our Request to the Indonesian Government, in Solidarity with Indonesian Civil Society

Within this context, Golfrid Siregar's death is extremely suspicious, and it is not unreasonable to draw uncomfortable connections between his work as an environmental human rights defender and his tragic death. In light of this, we stand with Indonesian civil society organizations in calling on the Indonesian state government to urgently take the following actions:

- 1. Launch an independent, robust investigation immediately** in order to ascertain violations of human rights and freedom, which is in line with the international standard of the Declaration of Human Rights Defenders (Article 9 - Section 5) passed by the United Nations on December 9, 1998.
- 2. Establish an independent fact-finding team coordinated directly by the National Commission on Human Rights (KOMNAS HAM),** and conduct a thorough, independent investigation.
- 3. Assign Indonesian Police Headquarters (Mabes POLRI) as lead investigators on Golfrid Siregar's death and conduct the investigation in a public and transparent manner,** given existing conflicts of interest

within the local North Sumatran police department (POLDA Sumut) and Golfrid's advocacy work to expose legal irregularities in local projects.

4. Immediately publish Presidential Regulations which establish and ensure protections for environmental, human rights defenders, so as to prevent any further violence and criminalization of those who may expose unjust or illegal activities at the price of their lives.

5. Establish and enshrine people's rights to life and environmental sustainability as inviolable prerequisites within Indonesian policies and programs related to economic development.

Lastly, we note that Golfrid Siregar's untimely death occurs as part of a broader pattern of criminalization and intimidation of Indonesian environmental human rights defenders. These include Indra Pelani, Salim Kancil, Yohanes Balubun, Poroduka, and now Golfrid Siregar, as well as the attempted murder by arson experienced by Murdani in West Nusa Tenggara. As such, we strongly call on the Indonesian government to take the above actions in order to ensure that no more lives – the country's best and brightest – will be lost in the future.

Sincerely,



David Pred, Executive Director

List of Signatories:

1. 11.11.11 Belgium
2. 350 Ghana Reducing Our Carbon
3. Abibiman Foundation
4. Accion Ecologica
5. Accountability Counsel
6. Africa Japan Forum
7. Aliansi Jurnalis Independen
8. Alyansa Tigil Mina
9. Amazon Watch
10. Amics de la Terra Mallorca
11. Amigos da Terra Brasil/Friends of the Earth Brazil
12. Amigos de la Tierra Argentina/Friends of the Earth Argentina
13. AMUMRA
14. Animal People, Inc.
15. Animals Asia
16. Aotearoa New Zealand Human Rights Foundation
17. ARA
18. Arab Youth Climate Movement
19. Asia Indigenous Peoples Network on Extractive Industries and Energy
20. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development

21. Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development
22. Asociacion Ambiente y Sociedad
23. Attac France
24. Australian Rainforest Conservation Society
25. Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association/Friends of the Earth Bangladesh
26. Bangladesh Krishok Federation
27. Bank Information Center
28. BankTrack
29. BIC Europe
30. Biofuelwatch
31. Bolivian Platform on Climate Change
32. Borneo Futures
33. Both ENDS
34. Bruno Manser Fonds
35. Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation
36. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre
37. Cairns Climate Action Network
38. Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organisations
39. Campaign for Survival & Dignity
40. Censat Agua Viva - Amigos de la Tierra Colombia
41. Centar za životnu sredinu/Friends of the Earth Bosnia and Herzegovina
42. Center for International Environmental Law
43. Central Coast Greens
44. Centre for Environmental Justice/Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka
45. Centre for Environmental Law and Community Rights/ Friends of the Earth Papua New Guinea
46. Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Practica
47. Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos "Segundo Montes Mozo S.J."
48. Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas
49. CESTA/ Friends of the Earth El Salvador
50. Clean Air Action Group
51. Climate Watch Thailand
52. Climaxi/Friends of the Earth Flanders
53. CNCD-11.11.11
54. Coal Action Network
55. COECOCEIBA/ Amigos de la Tierra Costa Rica
56. Colectivo Geografía Crítica Ecuador
57. Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network
58. Community Resource Centre
59. Conseil Regional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales de Development
60. CooperAcción
61. Cordillera Peoples Alliance
62. Corporate Europe Observatory
63. deCOALonize Movement

64. Democracy Green
65. Diálogo 2000-Jubileo Sur Argentina
66. E3G
67. EarthRights International
68. East Timor and Indonesia Action Network
69. EcoEquity
70. EJAtlas Project
71. Environics Trust
72. Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc.
73. Environmental Association "Za Zemiata"
74. Environmental Investigation Agency
75. Environmental Justice Foundation
76. EquityBD
77. Esorg
78. Federación Indígena Empresarial y Comunidades Locales de México
79. Federación por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos Indígenas
80. Fern
81. FIAN Indonesia
82. Focus Association for Sustainable Development/Friends of the Earth Slovenia
83. Food & Water Action
84. Forest Observatory
85. Forest Peoples Programme
86. Forum for Protection of Public Interest/Friends of the Earth Nepal
87. Freedom from Debt Coalition
88. Freedom House
89. Friends of Same
90. Friends of the Earth Australia
91. Friends of the Earth Canada
92. Friends of the Earth Czech Republic
93. Friends of the Earth Europe
94. Friends of the Earth EWNl (England, Wales, Northern Ireland)
95. Friends of the Earth France
96. Friends of the Earth International
97. Friends of the Earth Japan
98. Friends of the Earth Liberia
99. Friends of the Earth Scotland
100. Friends of the Earth Spain
101. Friends of the Earth Togo
102. Friends of the Earth United States
103. Friends of the Orangutans Malaysia
104. Friends of the Siberian Forests
105. Friends with Environment in Development
106. Front Line Defenders
107. Fundación Paso a Paso A.C.

108. Gender and Water Justice
109. Global Forest Coalition
110. Global Justice Now
111. Grassroots Global Justice
112. Great Ape Project
113. Green Advocates International
114. Greenpeace Indonesia
115. Greenpeace Southeast Asia
116. Greenpeace United Kingdom
117. groundWork/Friends of the Earth South Africa
118. HABURAS Foundation /Friends of the Earth Timor Leste
119. HEDA Resource Centre
120. Hodopathy Ethno Medicine Doctors' Association of India
121. Iceland Nature Conservation Association
122. IISCAL
123. Inclusive Development International
124. Indian Social Action Forum
125. Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation
126. Indigenous Perspectives
127. Indonesia AIDS Coalition
128. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
129. Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities
130. International Accountability Project
131. International League of People's Struggle - Commission 10
132. International Platform against Impunity
133. International Rivers
134. International Service for Human Rights
135. Jamaa Resource Initiatives
136. Japan Tropical Forest Action Network
137. Jordens Vänner/Friends of the Earth Sweden
138. Justiça Ambiental/Friends of the Earth Mozambique
139. Khan Kaneej aur ADHIKAR
140. Koalice proti palmovému oleji
141. Korea Federation for Environmental Movements/Friends of the Earth South Korea
142. La Via Campesina
143. Laudato si, z.s.
144. Legal Rights and Natural Resources Centre/Friends of the Earth Philippines
145. Lilak (Purple Action for Indigenous Women's Rights)
146. London Mining Network
147. LPESM Riau
148. Lumiere Synergie Developpement
149. Maleya Foundation
150. Market Forces
151. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

152. Mekong Watch
153. Merdeka West Papua Support Network
154. Mighty Earth
155. Milieudedefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands
156. Mom Loves Taiwan Association
157. Mouvement Ecologique/Friends of the Earth Luxembourg
158. Movimentu Dili Matak
159. MultiWatch
160. Myanmar Positive Group
161. Nabilan
162. Nacion Tawahka
163. Narasha Community Development Group
164. National Hawker Federation
165. New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light
166. NGO Forum on Asian Development Bank
167. NGO Neuer Weg
168. Nijmegen Internationale Samenwerking
169. Northern District Community Health Centre Kerang
170. Nostromo
171. Nuclear Information and Resource Service
172. Oil Change International
173. Orang Utan Republik Foundation
174. Orangutan Alliance Ltd.
175. Orangutan Land Trust
176. Oyu Tolgoi Watch
177. Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum
178. Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network/Friends of the Earth Palestine
179. Palm Oil Watch
180. PASAKA Confederation of Lumad Organizations in Southern Mindanao Region
181. People' Health Movement
182. People's Health Institute
183. Plymouth Climate Council
184. PRISMA Foundation
185. Pro Natura/Friends of the Earth Switzerland
186. Progress Lawyers Network
187. Protect the Forest, Sweden
188. Public Interest Law Centre
189. Punganay
190. Radio Rakambia
191. Rainforest Action Network
192. Rainforest Foundation Norway
193. Re:Common
194. REDES/Friends of the Earth Uruguay
195. Resguardo indígena la mirla

196. Rivers without Boundaries Coalition - Mongolia
197. Rivers without Boundaries International Coalition
198. Roraima Indigenous Council
199. Russian Social-Ecological Union/Friends of the Earth Russia
200. Sahabat Alam Malaysia/Friends of the Earth Malaysia
201. Sanlakas
202. Sarawak Campaign Committee
203. SAVE Wildlife Conservation Fund
204. Siemenpuu Foundation
205. Solidar Suisse
206. Solifonds
207. SONIA for a Just New World
208. Sri Lanka Nature Group
209. Stand.earth
210. Stop the Wall Campaign (Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign)
211. Strategic Youth Network for Development
212. Sumatran Orangutan Society
213. Sustainability Agriculture Productivity Improvement Project
214. Synchronicity Earth
215. TAPOL
216. Taunggyi Youth Center
217. Tebtebba Foundation
218. The Australian Rainforest Conservation Society
219. The Citizens' News
220. The Corner House
221. The Democracy Center
222. The Oakland Institute
223. The Waterloo Foundation
224. Third World Network
225. Tokyo East Timor Association
226. Transparency International Korea
227. Timorese Youths Initiative for Development
228. UK Youth Climate Coalition
229. Urgewald
230. Watch Indonesia!
231. Weald Action Group
232. Wild Heritage
233. Witnessradio
234. WomanHealth
235. WoMin African Alliance
236. Woods & Wayside International
237. World Rainforest Movement
238. Youth For Environment Education And Development Foundation
239. Zelena Akcija/Friends of the Earth Croatia

240. Zoological Club

Countries represented

Argentina
Australia
Bangladesh
Belgium
Bolivia
Bosnia Herzegovina
Brazil
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria
Cameroon
Catalunya (Spain)
Chad
Colombia
Costa Rica
Croatia
Czech Republic
Democratic Republic of Congo
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Finland
France
Germany
Ghana
Honduras
Hong Kong
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Ireland
Italy
Japan
Kenya
Liberia
Malaysia
Mexico
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand

Nicaragua
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Palestine
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Romania
Russia
Scotland
Senegal
Slovakia
Slovenia
South Africa
South Korea
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Taiwan
Thailand
Timor-Leste
Togo
Uganda
United Kingdom
United States
Uruguay