


H.E. I Gusti A. Wesaka Puja,  
Ambassador to the Netherlands,  
Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia,  
Tobias Asserlaan 8, 2517 KC,  
The Hague




Date:	31 October 2019
<b>RE:</b>	<b>SUSPICIOUS DEATH OF ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST GOLFRID SIREGAR</b>
Contact:	Michael Rice, e-mail: <a href="mailto:m.rice@bothends.org">m.rice@bothends.org</a> , ☎ +31 (0)20 530 6600

Dear Ambassador,

Both ENDS stands in solidarity with the 239 other civil society organizations from around the globe listed below who stand united regarding the death of Golfrid Siregar, an Indonesian environmental lawyer who died on 6 October 2019 under suspicious circumstances.

On 3 October 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 fairer, safer, and 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.

#### **A. Suspicious Circumstances**

The Indonesian Civil Society Coalition for Human Rights Defenders Protection<sup>1</sup> has observed troubling irregularities, which suggest that Golfrid Siregar's injuries were

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<sup>1</sup> The Indonesian Civil Society Coalition for Human Rights Defenders Protection include: WALHI, ELSAM, Imparsial, YLBHI, YPII, HRWG, ICEL, KontraS, ICW, LBH Pers, Kemitraan, PBHI, Greenpeace Indonesia, Human Rights Watch

not caused by an ordinary traffic accident<sup>2</sup>. 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<sup>3</sup>.

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.

## **B. 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. The lawsuit, filed by WALHI North Sumatra, 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

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<sup>2</sup> "Usut Tuntas Kematian Aktivis Golfrid Siregar, Hadirkan Negara untuk Lindungi Pembela HAM", WALHI, October 10, 2019. <https://walhi.or.id/usut-tuntas-kematian-aktivis-golfrid-siregar-hadirkan-negara-untuk-lindungi-pembela-ham>

<sup>3</sup> Ayat S. Karokaro, "Suspicious of murder in death of Indonesian environmental activist", Mongabay, October 9, 2019 – translated by Basten Gokko. <https://news.mongabay.com/by/ayat-s-karokaro/https://news.mongabay.com/2019/10/environmental-activist-death-murder-indonesia/>

the suspicious activities associated with the project developer PT NSHE. Scientific experts have been fired for speaking out against the project<sup>4</sup>; 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<sup>5</sup>.

### **C. 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 and human rights defender and his tragic death.

In light of this, we stand with Indonesian civil society organizations<sup>6</sup> in calling on the Indonesian 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 9 December 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 and 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

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<sup>4</sup> Dyna Rochmyaningsih, "A dam threatens the world's rarest ape. Why are some conservationists suddenly on board?", *Science*, September 10, 2019. <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2019/09/dam-threatens-world-s-rarest-ape-why-are-some-conservationists-suddenly-board>

<sup>5</sup> Zulfadli Siregar, "Dosen USU Onrizal Diperiksa Siber Ditreskripsus Poldasu Terkait UU ITE", *Medan Bisnis Daily*, October 10, 2019. [http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/m/news/online/read/2019/10/10/89036/dosen\\_usu\\_onrizal\\_diperiksa\\_a\\_siber\\_ditreskripsus\\_poldasu\\_terkait\\_uu\\_ite/#.XZ7udjcsnMR.whatsapp](http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/m/news/online/read/2019/10/10/89036/dosen_usu_onrizal_diperiksa_a_siber_ditreskripsus_poldasu_terkait_uu_ite/#.XZ7udjcsnMR.whatsapp)

<sup>6</sup> The Indonesian Civil Society Organizations have issued a joint statement calling on the Indonesian government to urgently take these actions. The joint statement can be found here:

<https://walhi.or.id/usut-tuntas-kematian-aktivis-golfrid-siregar-hadirkan-negara-untuk-lindungi-pembela-ham>

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,



Michael Rice,  
Natural Resources Governance Officer – Asia,  
**Both ENDS**, in solidarity with, and on behalf of:

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. Bruno Manser Fonds

34. Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation
35. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre
36. Cairns Climate Action Network
37. Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organisations
38. Campaign for Survival & Dignity
39. Censat Agua Viva - Amigos de la Tierra Colombia
40. Centar za životnu sredinu/Friends of the Earth Bosnia and Herzegovina
41. Center for International Environmental Law
42. Central Coast Greens
43. Centre for Environmental Justice/Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka
44. Centre for Environmental Law and Community Rights/ Friends of the Earth Papua New Guinea
45. Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica
46. Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos "Segundo Montes Mozo S.J."
47. Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas
48. CESTA/ Friends of the Earth El Salvador
49. Clean Air Action Group
50. Climate Watch Thailand
51. Climaxi/Friends of the Earth Flanders
52. CNCD-11.11.11
53. Coal Action Network
54. COECOCEIBA/ Amigos de la Tierra Costa Rica
55. Colectivo Geografía Crítica Ecuador
56. Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network
57. Community Resource Centre
58. Conseil Regional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales de Development
59. CooperAcción
60. Cordillera Peoples Alliance
61. Corporate Europe Observatory
62. deCOALonize Movement
63. Democracy Green
64. Diálogo 2000-Jubileo Sur Argentina
65. E3G
66. EarthRights International
67. East Timor and Indonesia Action Network
68. EcoEquity
69. EJAtlas Project
70. Environics Trust
71. Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc.
72. Environmental Association "Za Zemiata"
73. Environmental Investigation Agency
74. Environmental Justice Foundation
75. EquityBD
76. Esorg
77. Federación Indígena Empresarial y Comunidades Locales de México
78. Federación por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos Indígenas
79. Fern
80. FIAN Indonesia
81. Focus Association for Sustainable Development/Friends of the Earth Slovenia
82. Food & Water Action

83. Forest Observatory
84. Forest Peoples Programme
85. Forum for Protection of Public Interest/Friends of the Earth Nepal
86. Freedom from Debt Coalition
87. Freedom House
88. Friends of Same
89. Friends of the Earth Australia
90. Friends of the Earth Canada
91. Friends of the Earth Czech Republic
92. Friends of the Earth Europe
93. Friends of the Earth EWNI (England, Wales, Northern Ireland)
94. Friends of the Earth France
95. Friends of the Earth International
96. Friends of the Earth Japan
97. Friends of the Earth Liberia
98. Friends of the Earth Scotland
99. Friends of the Earth Spain
100. Friends of the Earth Togo
101. Friends of the Earth United States
102. Friends of the Orangutans Malaysia
103. Friends of the Siberian Forests
104. Friends with Environment in Development
105. Front Line Defenders
106. Fundación Paso a Paso A.C.
107. Gender and Water Justice
108. Global Forest Coalition
109. Global Justice Now
110. Grassroots Global Justice
111. Great Ape Project
112. Green Advocates International
113. Greenpeace Indonesia
114. Greenpeace Southeast Asia
115. Greenpeace United Kingdom
116. groundWork/Friends of the Earth South Africa
117. HABURAS Foundation /Friends of the Earth Timor Leste
118. HEDA Resource Centre
119. Hodopathy Ethno Medicine Doctors' Association of India
120. Iceland Nature Conservation Association
121. IISCAL
122. Inclusive Development International
123. Indian Social Action Forum
124. Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation
125. Indigenous Perspectives
126. Indonesia AIDS Coalition
127. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
128. Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities
129. International Accountability Project
130. International League of People's Struggle - Commission 10
131. International Platform against Impunity
132. International Rivers
133. International Service for Human Rights
134. Jamaa Resource Initiatives

135. Japan Tropical Forest Action Network
136. Jordens Vänner/Friends of the Earth Sweden
137. Justiça Ambiental/Friends of the Earth Mozambique
138. Khan Kaneej aur ADHIKAR
139. Koalice proti palmovému oleji
140. Korea Federation for Environmental Movements/Friends of the Earth South Korea
141. La Via Campesina
142. Laudato si, z.s.
143. Legal Rights and Natural Resources Centre/Friends of the Earth Philippines
144. Lilak (Purple Action for Indigenous Women's Rights)
145. London Mining Network
146. LPESM Riau
147. Lumiere Synergie Developpement
148. Maleya Foundation
149. Market Forces
150. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
151. Mekong Watch
152. Merdeka West Papua Support Network
153. Mighty Earth
154. Milieudefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands
155. Mom Loves Taiwan Association
156. Mouvement Ecologique/Friends of the Earth Luxembourg
157. Movimentu Dili Matak
158. MultiWatch
159. Myanmar Positive Group
160. Nabilan
161. Nacion Tawahka
162. Narasha Community Development Group
163. National Hawker Federation
164. New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light
165. NGO Forum on Asian Development Bank
166. NGO Neuer Weg
167. NIjmegen Internationale Samenwerking
168. Northern District Community Health Centre Kerang
169. Nostromo
170. Nuclear Information and Resource Service
171. Oil Change International
172. Orang Utan Republik Foundation
173. Orangutan Alliance Ltd.
174. Orangutan Land Trust
175. Oyu Tolgoi Watch
176. Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum
177. Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network/Friends of the Earth Palestine
178. Palm Oil Watch
179. PASAKA Confederation of Lumad Organizations in Southern Mindanao Region
180. People' Health Movement
181. People's Health Institute
182. Plymouth Climate Council
183. PRISMA Foundation
184. Pro Natura/Friends of the Earth Switzerland

185. Progress Lawyers Network
186. Protect the Forest, Sweden
187. Public Interest Law Centre
188. Punganay
189. Radio Rakambia
190. Rainforest Action Network
191. Rainforest Foundation Norway
192. Re:Common
193. REDES/Friends of the Earth Uruguay
194. Resguardo indígena la mirla
195. Rivers without Boundaries Coalition - Mongolia
196. Rivers without Boundaries International Coalition
197. Roraima Indigenous Council
198. Russian Social-Ecological Union/Friends of the Earth Russia
199. Sahabat Alam Malaysia/Friends of the Earth Malaysia
200. Sanlakas
201. Sarawak Campaign Committee
202. SAVE Wildlife Conservation Fund
203. Siemenpuu Foundation
204. Solidar Suisse
205. Solifonds
206. SONIA for a Just New World
207. Sri Lanka Nature Group
208. Stand.earth
209. Stop the Wall Campaign (Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign)
210. Strategic Youth Network for Development
211. Sumatran Orangutan Society
212. Sustainability Agriculture Productivity Improvement Project
213. Synchronicity Earth
214. TAPOL
215. Taunggyi Youth Center
216. Tebtebba Foundation
217. The Australian Rainforest Conservation Society
218. The Citizens' News
219. The Corner House
220. The Democracy Center
221. The Oakland Institute
222. The Waterloo Foundation
223. Third World Network
224. Tokyo East Timor Association
225. Transparency International Korea
226. Timorese Youths Initiative for Development
227. UK Youth Climate Coalition
228. Urgewald
229. Watch Indonesia!
230. Weald Action Group
231. Wild Heritage
232. Witnessradio
233. WomanHealth
234. WoMin African Alliance
235. Woods & Wayside International



- 236. World Rainforest Movement
- 237. Youth For Environment Education And Development Foundation
- 238. Zelena Akcija/Friends of the Earth Croatia
- 239. Zoological Club

### **Countries Represented**

Argentina	Mongolia
Australia	Morocco
Bangladesh	Mozambique
Belgium	Myanmar
Bolivia	Nepal
Bosnia Herzegovina	Netherlands
Brazil	New Zealand
Brunei Darussalam	Nicaragua
Bulgaria	Nigeria
Cameroon	Norway
Catalunya (Spain)	Pakistan
Chad	Palestine
Colombia	Papua New Guinea
Costa Rica	Paraguay
Croatia	Peru
Czech Republic	Philippines
Democratic Republic of Congo	Romania
Ecuador	Russia
Egypt	Scotland
El Salvador	Senegal
Finland	Slovakia
France	Slovenia
Germany	South Africa
Ghana	South Korea
Honduras	Spain
Hong Kong	Sri Lanka
Hungary	Sweden
India	Switzerland
Indonesia	Taiwan
Ireland	Thailand
Italy	Timor-Leste
Japan	Togo
Kenya	Uganda
Liberia	United Kingdom
Malaysia	United States
Mexico	Uruguay