



*Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)*

## **Solidarity Statement for the Peasants of Kelompok Tani Masyarakat Ingin Makmur (KTMIM) in Indonesia**

We, the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), a regional alliance of farmer federations and organizations in 10 Asian countries representing 10 million farmers, join the call to "free the peasants of Kelompok Tani Masyarakat Ingin Makmur (KTMIM) and investigate the violation of human rights in Banjaran Village, Secanggang Sub-District, Langkat District" in Indonesia.

We are appalled by the wanton disregard for human rights exhibited by PT Buana Estate and the Mobile Brigade when they violently attacked the peasants who were peacefully guarding their land last July 25, 2008.

The land belongs to the people of Kampung Banjaran who have lived there for generations since 1931. But in 1985, Plantation PT Buana Estate forced them to move out from the land, which has already been declared out of the right to use for PT Buana Estate through the Decree of Home Affairs Ministry No.9/HGU/DA/82 dated 25 June 1982.

We are angered by their criminal action when they hit with a truck and brutally kicked Ponisih, a 36-year old peasant woman, who is now in a coma in a hospital, fighting for her life.

We are deeply disturbed by the arrest of 46 peasants, including 2 women – Ana, 35 years old, and Ganong, 55 years old – made by the police during the attack, and are gravely concerned about their safety.

Like many other small men and women and farmers in Asia who are fighting for their right to own the land they till, the peasants of Kelompok Tani Masyarakat Ingin Makmur (KTMIM) are victims of injustice by big and powerful interests in their country, who refuse to recognize their basic human rights.

Together with Bina Desa and other support groups, we condemn this injustice and call on the police to quickly:

1. Free 46 KTMIM farmers who were arrested by the police last July 25, 2008.
2. Stop the torture and criminalization of farmers who are simply fighting for their rights.
3. Uphold justice and stop acting as stooges of PT Buana Estate.
4. Take responsibility for the violations committed against KTMIM farmers, especially Ponisih, who is now in a coma in a hospital.

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We also demand:

1. The PT Buana Estate to return the land that belongs to the Kampung Banjaran people.
2. The National Commission on Human Rights to investigate the human right violations committed against the KTMIM farmers of Kampung Banjaran.
3. The National Commission on Anti-Violence against Women to investigate the violence committed against the female peasants who belonging to KTMIM.
4. The National Land Agency to be firm against the violation of land use right that PT Buana Estate has committed.
5. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia to resolve agrarian conflicts in the country and to implement real agrarian reform.

We pray that the farmers will never lose their hope that, in the end, justice will prevail and their dignity will be restored. We pray that their support groups will remain steadfast and committed to the struggle until the end.

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30 July 2008