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UA 107/21, **Update 1**, AI Index ASA 21/5461/2022 of 7 April 2022  
The original index number is ASA 21/ 4932/2021 of 1 November 2021

## INDONESIA HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS CHARGED WITH DEFAMATION

Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti were charged on 17 March 2022 with defamation under article 27 of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law, after being reported by the Coordinating Minister for Maritime and Investment Affairs on 22 September 2021. The police investigation relates to a YouTube video of a conversation between the two human rights defenders where they discussed the findings of a report on the alleged involvement of several military figures in the mining industry. Haris and Fatia could face up to six years in prison if found guilty. Indonesian police should drop the charges against them.

### Write to the Chief of the National Police urging him to:

- Drop the charges and close the investigation against Haris and Fatia
- Amend the ITE to decriminalize defamation and ensure that defamation is only treated as a civil matter
- Ensure that all human rights defenders can carry out their peaceful activities without harassment, intimidation, arbitrary detention or fear of reprisals, in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders

### Write to:

General Listyo Sigit Prabowo  
Chief of Indonesian National Police  
Indonesian National Police Headquarter  
Jl. Trunojoyo No.3, Jakarta Selatan  
DKI Jakarta 12110  
Phone: 011 62 21 7218396  
Email: [mabes@polri.go.id](mailto:mabes@polri.go.id)  
Twitter: @ListyoSigitP  
Salutation: Dear Mr. Prabowo:

### And Copy:

Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia  
55 Parkdale Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1Y 1E5  
Phone: 613 724 1100  
Fax: 613 724 1105  
Email: [publicaffairs@indonesia-ottawa.org](mailto:publicaffairs@indonesia-ottawa.org)

## **Additional information**

Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti are well-known Indonesian human rights defenders. Azhar is also a lecturer, an advocate, and the executive director of Lokataru Foundation, a civil society organization defending human rights. Maulidiyanti is the coordinator of KontraS, an organization well-known for exposing human rights violations and advocating on behalf of victims of human rights violations since Indonesia's Soeharto era.

On 20 August 2021, Haris Azhar uploaded a video on his YouTube channel containing a conversation between himself and Fatia Maulidiyanti about a report that mentioned that some companies were allegedly involved in the exploration of Wabu Block gold mine in Intan Jaya, Papua. The report is entitled "Political Economy Study of Military Placement in Papua: The Case of Intan Jaya," which was launched on 12 August 2021. The research was conducted by researchers from nine organizations, including KontraS. The research argues the existence of a relationship between concessions granted by the Indonesian government to some companies and the deployment of the military in Papua. Following the release of the video, the Coordinating Minister for Maritime and Investment Affairs, Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, sent two subpoenas on 26 August and 2 September. According to his spokesperson, the summons were aimed at asking Haris and Fatia to explain the motive, intention, and purpose behind the video's dialogue. The Minister felt that the video reflects untrue opinions, character assassinations, and fake news.

On 29 August, Haris explained that the data mentioned in the dialogue came from the report produced by multiple civil society organizations, which outlined the alleged involvement of several military figures in the mining industry.

On 21 October, Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti were summoned by Jakarta's Police for mediation. Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti were present, but the Coordinating Minister Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan was not. The mediation was postponed indefinitely.

On 17 March 2022, Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti were accused of defamation and charged under article 27 of ITE Law. On 21 March, both were summoned by Jakarta's Police for the investigation process.

Amnesty International Indonesia has recorded at least 367 cases of prosecution, arrest, attack and intimidation of human rights defenders by various actors from January to December 2021. Meanwhile, over 100 people have been reported under the ITE Law, most of them accused of defamation, during the same period.