

From another E-mail came this appeal:

Dear Friends:

The International Human Rights Law Group is sending a letter to various government officials in Indonesia regarding the recent news of rape of Indonesian women of Chinese descent during the May 1998 riots in Indonesia.

The Law Group is asking for the following:

1. The government should provide full medical care to women victims
2. The government should launch a full investigation into these allegations
3. The government should take strong action against police officials and military personnel who reportedly witnessed a number of incidents but failed to take any action to protect women victims of violence

We are inviting NGOs to join this sign-on letter to make it an international concern for NGOS from around the world to express global concern to the government and global support for the Indonesian women.

You can support this letter in two ways:

1. If you would like to sign-on to this letter, please send us: the name of your organisation, name (or names of the persons signing the letter), and country

We would send one letter with all the NGOs names as co-signatories. If you would like to receive a copy of this letter, please send us your full mailing address.

2. If you would like to support this idea but prefer to send your own letter on your organisation letterhead, please feel free to use this letter as a sample letter.

Send letters to:

H.E. President, B.J. Habibie  
President of the Republic of Indonesia  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
Via Fax (62) 21 345 2685

RE: VIOLENCE AGAINST IN-  
DONESIAN WOMEN OF CHI-  
NESE DESCENT

Dear President Habibie:

We, the undersigned express our deep anguish and grave concern over the recent reports of alleged violence and rape committed against over 200 Indonesian women of Chinese descent. We urge you to take immediate steps to ensure that proper medical care is provided to women victims and an immediate investigation is launched for these cases by the Human Rights Commission of Indonesia.

We draw your attention to the international news reports between 12 May to 21 May 1998 which record that during the riots in Jakarta, Medan and in the Chinese commercial district of Glodok, girls and women between the ages of 10 to 55 were forced to take off their clothes and dance in the streets, raped and, in some cases, raped and burnt to death at various locations such as private homes, banks, public buses, streets and shops. In many cases, violence was committed in the presence of family members or neighbours.

It was also reported that these women were targeted because of their ethnicity and religion as some of them were told that they deserve this treatment because they are "Chinese and non-Muslims." Newspaper reports have noted

that apart from targeting Chinese owned homes and shops, at various occasions during the riots, groups of Indonesian men stopped city buses, entered banks or shops, forced all "non-Chinese Indonesian women" out and then raped the ethnic Chinese women.

We respectfully urge you to immediately act to take all necessary measures to ensure that the persons responsible for committing these violent crimes against Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent are held accountable.

We also urge you to take strong action against Indonesian police officials and army personnel who reportedly witnessed a number of incidents but failed to take any action to protect these women victims of violence.

Copies of this letter are also being sent to the following:

Mr. Marzuki Darusman and Ms. Miriam Budiardjo  
Deputy Directors, Indonesian National Human rights Commission

Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi  
Manusia Indonesia (KOMNAS-  
HAM)  
Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia  
Fax: (62) 21 520 7948

Dr. Tuty Awiyah  
State Minister for Women's Affairs  
Republic of Indonesia  
Fax: (62) 380 5562

Professor Dr. H. Muladi  
Minister of Indonesia  
Fax: (62) 21 525 3095

Ambassador Dorodjatun  
Kuntjoro-Jakti  
Ambassador of Indonesia to the  
United States  
Embassy of Indonesia  
Washington D.C.  
Fax: (202) 775 5365