

57th session of the Human Rights Council

Item 4: General Debate

25 September 2024

**Joint statement on behalf of
OMCT, Franciscan International, Amnesty International, Forum-Asia**

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Thank you, Mr. President.

Our organisations are gravely concerned by the unnecessary and harsh force used against peaceful protesters opposing the Regional Election Bill in Indonesia in late August. The protests were met with widespread, violent repression, arbitrary arrests, and intimidation. Prominent Indonesian human rights organisation, KontraS, documented unlawful use of force by the police, including reckless use of tear gas and water cannon which led to serious injuries, affecting both protesters and bystanders in nearby communities.

Many of those arrested were denied access to legal assistance. Journalists covering the protests were harassed and assaulted, posing a serious threat to press freedom. Of particular concern are reports of incommunicado detention during police sweeps and severe beatings of protesters, reflecting a broader pattern of escalating human rights violations perpetrated by the police in Indonesia. Between 2020 and 2023, KontraS recorded 1,950 cases of unlawful use of force by the police, with 198 more incidents already documented in 2024.

Our concerns extend to proposed amendments to Law No. 2 of 2002, which unduly expand police powers, allowing increased surveillance and wiretapping with little oversight, undermining the right to privacy. We are equally alarmed by proposed changes to the Military Law, which could lead to a return to unwarranted military involvement in civilian governance.

We call on the Indonesian government to immediately end the violent repression of peaceful protests and to conduct independent, effective, transparent investigations into these human rights violations, ensuring accountability for those responsible. It is crucial that any legislative changes comply with international human rights law and standards and promote, rather than undermine, accountability within law enforcement.

Thank you.