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**SPECIFIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS:  
MASS EXODUSES AND DISPLACED PERSONS**

**Written statement\* submitted by the International NGO Forum on Indonesian  
Development (INFID), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 February 2005]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## MASS EXODUSES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

In Aceh (Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, NAD) many civilians have been forced to flee their homes and have become Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This was caused by the armed conflict in Aceh and the government's decision to declare the state of emergency in Aceh. People have been forced to be evacuated because of dangerous conditions in their villages, so that they had to flee and become refugees. The disaster of the Earthquake and Tsunami has increased the number of IDPs in Aceh sharply. This disaster is the biggest human disaster ever that has been experienced by the people of Indonesia. At this moment there are two models of displacement in Aceh. First, refugees who do not go out of the province of Aceh and only move to another place, and second, refugees who leave the province of Aceh and go to other provinces, such as to Medan and Jakarta.

Based on data of the social aid Post of Social Departmental (Depsos) Disaster per 24 January 2005 it is noted that the amount of refugees in the province of Aceh and the province of North Sumatra (Sumut) after earthquake and tsunami wave of 26 December 2004, amounts to 563.879 people. In a regional breakdown the refugees in Bireun amount to 35.000 people, in East Aceh to 22.000 people, in North Aceh 97.942 people, in Banda Aceh 38.146 people, in Lhokseumawe 11.000 people, in Pidie 49.421 people, in Sabang 6.327 people, in Central Aceh 3.454 people, in Aceh Jaya 40.381 people, in Aceh Besar 116.984 people, in Simeulue 46.017 people, in South Aceh 5.634 people, in West Aceh 62.318 people, in South-West Aceh 13.965 people, and in Nagan Raya 9.964 people.

Meanwhile the post of Social Aid, of Depsos in Halim Perdanakusumah Airport, Jakarta, noted since the tsunami disaster 1.314 refugees who originated from NAD. In North Sumatra 4012 refugees reside all or who reside in Regency Nias. (Data taken from [www.mediaindo.co.id](http://www.mediaindo.co.id)). The other data have been published by [www.republika.co.id](http://www.republika.co.id) on January 14th 2005, mentioning that there were 15.000 more Acehnese refugees entering Medan.

These high numbers require fast and serious handling and should show highly dynamic and operational humanitarian activity. But the opposite is the case. The co-ordination by the governmental institutions is insufficient and this condition is worsened because of the Military dominance in the bureaucracy that has the task to channel aid. This insufficient coordination shown, as an example by the fact that until the January 27<sup>th</sup> 2004 (one month after tsunami) in the area of Aceh Jaya where the conditions were known to be of great concern, all refugees had great difficulty to get aid. This was caused by insufficient means of transportation, and as a result each citizen had to fetch the aid by carrying it on his back over distances of more than 10 kilometers. It is imaginable then that many victims in other areas had to be evacuated to other areas because they did not get medicines and food. , Based on these experiences in Aceh Jaya Regency, a whole community of about 3000 people had to move to Aceh Besar. They fled to different places, such as to Mata Ie, Lamno and Lambaro; in some cases this meant a journey on foot of four days and nights.

Another problem was the long and bureaucratic procedures, which must be gone through by refugees in several refugee camps, such as the TVRI site, Lambaro, Blang Bintang and Jantho (Aceh Besar Regency) to get aid and especially food. The procedure which must be gone through by all refugees to get aid from Satkorlak (Operational co-ordination unit) Disaster included the requirement of an introductory letter from Village Head, and this of course was very complicated to say the least, for those refugees in the middle of the disaster.

Another injustice was that aid was not distributed to refugees according to equal needs. This happened in Subdistrict Kreung Jaya, Big Aceh. In reality they had to accept a very limited amount of food aid especially the amount of rice was very limited. Besides they had to struggle with conditions of insufficient sanitation, so that their health conditions in the area are of great concern. Certainly all tsunami earthquake victim refugees residing in the camps are beginning to suffer various diseases like asphyxia and diarrhea, because of the wounds suffered by all refugees in general and in the respiratory tract especially because many people have had water or mud in their lungs.

As explained above, the humanitarian operations handling the IDPs has been insufficient, and this has been deteriorated by the dominant position of the Military in the channeling of aid. The TNI raised the level of operations and security, although this was not needed in this emergency if there had been a condition of security and an approach of negotiations in an attempt to finish the Aceh conflict. The dominant position can also be seen in the example of the incident around Farid Fakhri, chief of GOWA, who allegedly had stolen some humanitarian aid. He was arrested and ill-treated by the TNI in Meulaboh. The operational Joint Intelligence Force has limited very tightly the space to move for the volunteers. All aid has been centrally organized and is distributed to society by the commander of the military resort (Danrem) itself. The conclusion must be that TNI very is completely in command in Meulaboh and that this results in a very bad way of distribution of food and medicine.

This dominant position of TNI has also caused suspicion towards the operations as some places like prisons are only dominated by TNI, and suspicion with respect to discrimination in the distribution of aid distribution to areas of the Aceh Liberation Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM) and areas that were considered non-GAM. There have been a few reports from the field that TNI and Police (Mobile Brigade or brimob) have demanded illegal payments for the use of public roads from a number of local and foreign volunteers in the region of south coastal area. Thus the activities of the volunteers have been complicated and disturbed. Moreover the TNI have not been able to guarantee safety in many instances in Aceh. As an example may serve the report of AWG that one month after the tsunami, no less than 34 times an exchange of shooting has occurred which has added to the plight of the IDPs in Aceh.

The phenomenon of IDPs is of course not a new one in Indonesia, both as a result of disasters as well as caused by armed conflicts, but the operations themselves are insufficient. An example is the earthquake in Nabire, Papua and Alor, NTT on November 26, 2004. This resulted in a displacement of 1.131 persons from Nabire to Makassar, South Sulawesi. After the earthquake the people were forced to stay in emergency tents that were not sufficient. Illnesses like diarrhoea and influenza hit a number of young and very young (under 5) children.

Based on the above reports, we request that the UN Commission on Human Rights urge the Indonesian Government and/or the International Community to:

- ❖ Recall the state of Civil Emergency in Aceh that gives legitimacy to violence and to the dominant position to the military in security operations. This situation causes an increase of the difficulties in channelling aid to IDPs;
- ❖ To invite UN Special Representative For IDPs to Aceh, to monitor the situation of displaced civilians in Aceh.

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