



Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD)

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFAD Strongly Condemns Deportation of Council Member by Malaysia Gov't

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Manila, Philippines—The Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD) strongly condemns the deportation of its Council Member and former Chairperson, Mugiyanto, by Malaysian authorities last January 7, 2016. Mugiyanto, an Indonesian human rights defender and co-founder of the Indonesian Association of the Families of the Disappeared (IKOHI), arrived at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport that day at around 11:30 AM where he was then held and interrogated by three police officers, including one anti-terror unit. Mugiyanto was travelling to Kuala Lumpur on invitation to speak at the #YellowMania forum organized by Malaysian electoral rights group, Bersih.

AFAD believes that the deportation was an act of fear on the part of the Malaysian government—its fear of the growing sentiment of discontent among its people over the government's lack of electoral transparency and accountability so strong that it resorted to persecuting a human rights defender invited to speak at a peaceful assembly in the country's capital.

We maintain that the act is reflective of the government's failure to respect, protect and fulfill people's democratic rights. As a federation of organizations of families of the disappeared and rights groups working on the issue of enforced disappearances, we recognize that the deportation of Mugiyanto lies on the same spectrum of human rights violations—together with enforced disappearances—as tools used by States to stifle people's freedoms of assembly and expression, freedoms that are enshrined in many international human rights instruments to which the government of Malaysia is State party.

This act by the government of Malaysia could not have coincide with a more inopportune stage in the history of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 began in 1 January 2016 which envisions:

“An inclusive and responsive community that ensures our peoples enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as thrive in a just, democratic, harmonious and gender-sensitive environment in accordance with the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law.” (ASEAN Community Vision #8.2)

We stand in solidarity with Mugiyanto and the rights groups in Malaysia in their fight for democratic rights in the country and in demanding that the government of Malaysia fulfill its obligations under international human rights laws.###

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