

His Excellency
Mr. Joko Widodo
President of the Republic of Indonesia
via Botschaft der Republik Indonesien
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Your Excellency;

Please forgive me for approaching you on behalf of the incarcerated Indonesian Christian author, Apollinaris Darmawan. He has been in prison since August 2020 for allegedly insulting the Islamic religion. The Bandung District Court sentenced him to five years in prison on December 22, 2020. He had already been imprisoned from 2015 to March 2020 for the same allegation.

Darmawan was arrested after a mob had stormed his home and dragged him into the street. The angry crowd had ripped off his shirt, and a video is circulating on the Internet, in which he can be seen bare-chested between security guards.

He had shared his personal views on religion in a book, and these views were also shown on the YouTube channel, where he peacefully promoted his faith. The human right to religious freedom, as formulated in Article 18 of the “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” (ICCPR), also includes the right to peacefully promote one's belief. Indonesia joined the pact in 2006.

Therefore, dear Mr. President, I humbly beseech you to advocate the immediate release of Mr. Darmawan. Please do not permit that the blasphemy law is used to intimidate, persecute or impede the human rights of members of religious minorities.

Most respectfully,