



PROTECTION of HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS in THE DIGITAL AGE in INDONESIA

Submitted by: Freedom of Association Coalition
(YAPPIKA, ELSAM, PSHK, IMPARSIAL and LBH Jakarta)



Input for the report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant to HRC resolution 58/23

“Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Digital Age in Indonesia”

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(YAPPIKAⁱ, ELSAMⁱⁱ, PSHKⁱⁱⁱ, IMPARSIAL^{iv} and LBH Jakarta^v)

1. Authoritarian Statism, Militarization, and the Escalation of Repression against Human Rights Defenders (HRDs), and Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), in the Digital Age in Indonesia

- 1) For more than a year under the administration of Prabowo-Gibran, the state of democracy and human rights (HAM) in Indonesia has shown a significant decline, marked by the increasing intimidation of human rights defenders (HRDs), journalists, and civil society activists, as well as restrictions on freedom of expression.¹ In the digital space, this situation is further characterized by the Digital Authoritarianism Mutation phenomenon, referring to the shift in practices restricting civil liberties to the online domain through the use of regulations, technology, and various forms of online attacks to silence public criticism.² Particularly in the period from August to October 2025, in response to various human rights violations and amid economic pressures, including policies increasing allowances for legislators³, youth groups, and human rights defenders organized protests in various cities. These actions were met with repressive measures by security forces. The Youth Movement Against Criminalization (GMLK) reported that the resulting criminalization led to a series of human rights violations.⁴

The Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI) recorded at least ten deaths, hundreds of injuries, and thousands of protesters who were arrested and subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, a nationwide manhunt, and other forms of state repression, including being designated as political prisoners.⁵ Individuals not involved in the protests were also affected.⁶ In what has been described as the largest post-Reformasi manhunt, GMLK reported that, as of 3 March 2026, there were **709 individuals identified as**

¹ Amnesty International Indonesia, “Massive Attacks on Human Rights Defenders Occurred in the First Half of 2025,” accessed at <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/serangan-terhadap-pembela-ham-masif-terjadi-di-paruh-pertama-2025/07/2025/>

² SAFEnet, “SAFEnet Reveals Digital Authoritarian Mutation in Indonesia,” accessed at <https://safenet.or.id/id/2026/02/safenet-ungkap-mutasi-otoritarianisme-digital-di-indonesia/>

³ BBC News Indonesia, “‘25 August’ Demonstrations Reject DPR Allowances, Dasco: Housing Allowance of IDR 50 Million Terminated,” accessed at <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cr5rj1pv1ppo>

⁴ Suara.com, “Youth Movement Against Criminalization Reveals Chain of Violence Ensnaring 709 Young Political Prisoners in Indonesia,” accessed at <https://www.suara.com/news/2026/03/04/175352/gerakan-muda-lawan-kriminalisasi-ungkap-rantai-kekerasan-jerat-709-tahanan-politik-muda-indonesia>

⁵ Kompas, “YLBHI: 3,337 People Arrested and 10 Killed During Demonstrations,” accessed at <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/yldbhi-3337-orang-ditangkap-dan-10-meninggal-dalam-unjuk-rasa>

⁶ Project Maltatuli, “Prabowo Regime’s Suppression of Gen Z: ‘Instead of Being Tamed, Young People Are Increasingly Angry,’” accessed at <https://projectmaltatuli.org/gen-z-tahanan-politik-rezim-prabowo-demonstrasi-agustus-2025/>

political prisoners, spread across **43 cities** and **14 provinces** in Indonesia.⁷ Furthermore, data from the Case Tracking Information System (SIPP) indicate that, of the **127 individuals specifically recorded, 119 were young people aged 16 to 30**.⁸ GMLK also reported that this criminalization has had severe and structural impacts on women, with at least **eight women** subjected to legal proceedings in connection with the August protests.⁹

Furthermore, Andrie Yunus, a HRDs and the Deputy Coordinator for External Affairs of the Commission for Disappeared and Victims of Violence (KontraS)¹⁰, was subjected to terror and even an attempted killing.¹¹ Despite his extensive involvement in various advocacy efforts, on 15 March 2025, he entered the Fairmont Hotel in Central Jakarta while members of Commission I of the House of Representatives (DPR) were holding a closed meeting to discuss revisions to the Indonesian National Army (TNI) Law. Following this protest, Andrie and his colleagues were subjected to a series of threats, including repeated calls from unknown numbers, while KontraS also faced intimidation. Andrie consistently opposed the revision of the TNI Law through both protests (non-litigation) and litigation processes. He also opposed the conferment of the title of national hero on Suharto.

His loud voice challenges the authorities. On the evening of 12 March 2026, he was attacked with acid, resulting in burns affecting approximately 24 per cent of his body. These injuries had serious implications for his health and constituted an attempted killing.¹² The United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, Mary Lawlor, called on Indonesia authorities to carry out thorough investigations into the horrific attack.¹³

In the context of the protection of human rights defenders in the digital era, patterns of intimidation through digital communication, such as repeated calls from unknown numbers, are increasingly used as initial methods of targeting, intimidating, and surveilling human rights defenders, which may escalate into physical attack. This emphasizes that threats against human rights defenders are multi-layered and interconnected across both the digital space and the offline environment.

- 2) The acceleration of Indonesia's investment-driven development agenda in recent years--particularly through the National Strategic Projects (PSN) policy, reinforced by the Job Creation Law, was initiated during the administration of Joko Widodo and has

⁷ Suara.com, "Youth Movement Against Criminalization Reveals Chain of Violence Ensnaring 709 Young Political Prisoners in Indonesia," accessed at <https://www.suara.com/news/2026/03/04/175352/gerakan-muda-lawan-kriminalisasi-ungkap-rantai-kekerasan-jerat-709-tahanan-politik-muda-indonesia>

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ Further information on the mass hunting and silencing of data can be accessed at Project Maltatuli, "Prabowo Regime's Suppression of Gen Z: 'Instead of Being Tamed, Young People Are Increasingly Angry,'" accessed at <https://projectmaltatuli.org/gen-z-tahanan-politik-rezim-prabowo-demonstrasi-agustus-2025/>

¹⁰ Front Line Defenders, "Andrie Yunus, HRD, KontraS" accessed at <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/profile/andrie-yunus>

¹¹ Front Line Defenders, "Acid Attack Against Human Rights Defender Andrie Yunus", accessed at <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/acid-attack-against-human-rights-defender-andrie-yunus>

¹² Project Maltatuli, "Courage Because of Andrie Yunus: KontraS Has Grown Weary of Violence," accessed at <https://projectmaltatuli.org/berani-karena-andrie-yunus-kontras-sudah-lelah-dengan-kekerasan/>

¹³ Tempo, "UN Demands Probe into Acid Attack on Activist Andrie Yunus", accessed at <https://en.tempo.co/read/2092628/un-demands-probe-into-acid-attack-on-activist-andrie-yunus>

continued under Prabowo Subianto (from the New Developmentalism¹⁴ to Prabowonomics¹⁵, also described as authoritarian neoliberalism in Indonesia¹⁶). This development approach has created a political and economic context that further exacerbates the vulnerability of human rights defenders, particularly environmental defenders advocating for the protection of the rights to life, natural resources, and living space.

Several experts highlighted that, within this policy framework, PSN is positioned as a development instrument oriented towards investor profit, while the approach of “facilitating and accelerating investment” risks undermining the protection of citizens’ rights.¹⁷ In essence, the combination of developmental state ambitions (or state capitalism), economic nationalism, and a security-oriented government has become particularly strong in the era of Prabowonomics¹⁸.

Furthermore, in pursuit of economic growth, the role of the military has expanded significantly in the governance of the natural resources sector, legitimized through amendments to the TNI Law¹⁹. In addition to exacerbating the climate crisis and increasing the risk of ecological disasters, environmental defenders and individuals who criticize development projects or extractive economic interests face various forms of State repression, including stigmatization²⁰, intimidation, criminalization, and legal threats, including through the use of the Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) Law against critical expression in the digital space, as experienced by Adetya Pramandira (Dera) and Fathul Munif.²¹ In addition, the Indonesian Forum for the

¹⁴ Eve Warburton, “Jokowi and the New Developmentalism”, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies* Volume 52, 2016 – Issue 3, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00074918.2016.1249262>

¹⁵ Betahita, “Testing Prabowonomics”, accessed at <https://betahita.id/news/detail/11890/menguji-prabowonomics.html?v=1772493140>

¹⁶ Moch. Faisal Karim dan Muhammad Kholid, “The Return of Authoritarian Neo-Liberalism in Indonesia?”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2025.2529013>

¹⁷ Mahkamah Konstitusi Republik Indonesia, “Expert: Acceleration of National Strategic Projects Opens Investment Space at the Expense of Citizens’ Rights,” accessed at <https://www.mkri.id/berita/ahli:-percepatan-psn-buka-ruang-investasi-korbankan-hak-warga-23752>

¹⁸ Betahita, “Testing Prabowonomics”, accessed at <https://betahita.id/news/detail/11890/menguji-prabowonomics.html?v=1772493140>

¹⁹ WALHI (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia), “Critical Notes on One Year of the Prabowo Administration – Consolidation of Oligarchy, the Collapse of Ecological Justice, and Threats to Public Safety,” accessed at <https://www.walhi.or.id/uploads/WALHI%202025-2029/Dokumen/Catatan%20Kritis%20Satu%20Tahun%20Pemerintahan%20Prabowo%202025.pdf>

²⁰ The Freedom of Association Coalition has also compiled a paper on Stigmatising/Negative Narratives Targeting Activism, Civil Society, Social Movements, and Freedom in Indonesia. For further information see, Freedom of Association Coalition, “Input for the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association for her report to be presented at the UN General Assembly – 79th session (UNGA79),” accessed at https://yappika-actionaid.or.id/uploads/downloads/Input_for_UNGA-79th_FoAA_Report_Freedom_of_Association_Coalition_FINAL_ENG.pdf

²¹ Adetya Pramandira (Staff of the WALHI Central Java) and Fathul Munif (Activist from the Semarang Kamisan Action) were arrested and arbitrarily detained at around 6:45 a.m. WIB in Semarang. Police determined that both of them violated Article 45A paragraph 2 in conjunction with Article 28 paragraph 2 of the ITE Law regarding Hate Speech and Article 160 of the KUHP regarding Incitement. On December 10, 2025, their detention was suspended by the Central Java Regional Police, but this status does not automatically release them (they could be detained again at any time). Read more at WALHI, “WALHI Calls for the Cessation of Forced Sentencing and the Release of Adetya Pramandira and Fathul Munif,” accessed at <https://www.walhi.or.id/walhi-serukan-penghentian-pemidanaan-dipaksakan-dan-pembebasan-adetya-pramandira-dan-fathul-munif>; Jawa Pos, “Request for Suspension of Activists Dera and Munif Granted, They Have Been Released, accessed at

Environment (WALHI) reported that, during the administration of Prabowo-Gibran, the criminalization of environmental defenders has increased, including cases involving 11 members of the Maba Sangaji community in North Maluku, two members of Indigenous Peoples in Mentawai, West Sumatra, two residents of Torobulu Village, Laeya Sub-District, South Konawe District, Southeast Sulawesi, as well as environmental experts Prof. Bambang Hero and Prof. Basuki Wasis.²²

- 3) During the administration of Prabowo-Gibran, the condition of civic space in Indonesia has increasingly reflected a security-oriented approach (securitization) in responding to public criticism, social conflict, and civil society mobilization²³. The Government has deployed security forces, including the police and the military, in response to public protests and issues framed as affecting national stability. This approach is often accompanied by the use of excessive force against HRDs, as well as restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association. This trend is further reinforced by policies that expand the role of security forces in civilian affairs, including discourse on military involvement in domestic security matters and the management of social conflict. The securitization approach also extends into the digital space through the mass and illegal surveillance of online activity, the labeling of activists as threats to national stability,²⁴ and the use of security-based narratives to justify restrictions on digital expression. Several reports indicate that this approach has contributed to increased pressure on journalists, student activists, and civil society organizations (CSOs) that organize public mobilization through digital platforms. This condition places HRDs in an increasingly vulnerable position, where legitimate advocacy activities may be perceived as security threats, thereby enabling digital surveillance, intimidation, and other repressive measures by State authorities.
- 4) The effort to revise Law Number 39/1999 on Human Rights, included in the 2026 Priority National Legislation Program²⁵, has raised concerns regarding the potential weakening of human rights accountability mechanisms in Indonesia. Provisions in the draft amendments may limit the investigative mandate and independence of the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) as a national human rights institution (NHRI). Komnas HAM plays a crucial role in receiving public complaints, monitoring human rights violations, and providing a mechanism for HRDs to report

<https://radarsemarang.jawapos.com/semarang/726946964/permohonan-penanggulangan-aktivis-dera-dan-munif-terkabung-sudah-dibebaskan>

²² WALHI (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia), “Critical Notes on One Year of the Prabowo Administration – Consolidation of Oligarchy, the Collapse of Ecological Justice, and Threats to Public Safety,” accessed at <https://www.walhi.or.id/uploads/WALHI%202025-2029/Dokumen/Catatan%20Kritis%20Satu%20Tahun%20Pemerintahan%20Prabowo%202025.pdf>

²³ The Freedom of Association Coalition has also prepared about the Strengthened Securitization Agenda in Indonesia. For further information see, Freedom of Association Coalition, “Input for the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, to be presented to the 80th session of the UN General Assembly – Freedom of assembly and association rights, collective action and human solidarity facing existential threat: preserving the fundamental principles in Indonesia”, accessed at [https://yappika-actionaid.or.id/uploads/downloads/Input for the for the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association - Freedom of Association Coalition - 16 June 2025 - Indonesia.pdf](https://yappika-actionaid.or.id/uploads/downloads/Input_for_the_for_the_Special_Rapporteur_on_Freedom_of_Peaceful_Assembly_and_of_Association_-_Freedom_of_Association_Coalition_-_16_June_2025_-_Indonesia.pdf)

²⁴ Dita Alyaaulia and Astri Yuana Sari. (4 September 2025). Impact of the President’s Speech Labeling Demonstrations as Treason and Terrorism, KBR.id, 4 September 2025, accessed at <https://kbr.id/articles/ragam/dampak-pidato-presiden-yang-sebut-makar-dan-terorisme-dalam-aksi-demonstrasi>.

²⁵ DPR RI. (2026). Decision No. 9/DPR RI/11/2025-2026. Accessed at https://peraturan.go.id/prolegnas/2026-02-10-10-49-48_sk_prolegnas_prioritas_perubahan_2026_dan_proritas_perubahan_2025-2029.pdf

intimidation, violence, and criminalization they experience. Any limitation of its authority may further weaken the state's capacity to ensure protection and accountability for victims of human rights violations, including HRDs.²⁶

These concerns also relate to international standards on the independence of national human rights institutions, as set out in the Paris Principles. Komnas HAM and civil society have noted that several provisions in the draft amendments may undermine institutional independence and restrict Komnas HAM's ability to conduct effective investigations into alleged human rights violations by state officials. Although the government has indicated that the draft revision includes provisions on legal protection or immunity for human rights defenders in the course of their advocacy,²⁷ in the context of protecting HRDs, weakening oversight bodies such as Komnas HAM risks exacerbating impunity for perpetrators of violence or intimidation against activists and journalists, including in the digital space.²⁸

- 5) During the August–October 2025 wave of demonstrations, women human rights defenders (WHRDs) who criticized state policies, both offline and online, were subjected to arbitrary arrests and misogynistic digital attacks, including doxing, as experienced by Laras Faizati²⁹. The Peoples Participation, Initiative and Partnership Strengthening Foundation (YAPPIKA) noted that this pattern aligns with findings from studies on cybermisogyny, which indicate that online hatred against women in digital space generally manifests as online abuse and intimidation. This practice is often reinforced by a permissive culture that silences women, fosters victim-blaming, and cultivates negative prejudices against women without objective justification.

In Laras's case, the attacks targeted not only the individual but also undermined women's standing in the public space. Despite exercising her right to freedom of expression, she was treated as a suspect, arrested without written clarification, and her reproductive health needs were ignored during detention.³⁰ This illustrates that the legal process lacks a gender perspective, thereby exacerbating impunity for perpetrators of violence and intimidation, including in digital spaces. It also underscores the need for gender-sensitive, justice-based protection for WHRDs facing legal processes.

²⁶ Tempo.co. (12 November 2025). "National Human Rights Commission: Draft Revision of Human Rights Law Contradicts International Standards," 12 November 2025, accessed at <https://www.tempo.co/politik/komnas-ham-draf-revisi-uu-ham-bertentangan-dengan-standar-internasional-2088900>.

²⁷ Fath Putra Mulya. (21 November 2025). Minister of Human Rights: Human Rights Defenders Granted Immunity in the Revised Human Rights Law. Accessed at <https://www.antaraneews.com/berita/5257465/menteri-ham-pembela-ham-diberikan-hak-kekebalan-di-revisi-uu-ham>

²⁸ Dian Dewi Purnamasari. (31 October 2025). National Human Rights Commission: Revision of Human Rights Law Potentially Weakens Authority, Kompas.id, accessed at <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/komnas-ham-revisi-uu-ham-berpotensi-lemahkan-kewenangan>.

²⁹ Laras Faizati is a human rights defender who carries out human rights defense activities by conveying opinions and expressing criticism of the government for the injustice experienced by the people, however, the Panel of Judges at the South Jakarta District Court (PN) sentenced her to a six-month probationary sentence because she was proven to have violated Article 161 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Code. Further information at <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/cx2y9l9pj84o>

³⁰ YAPPIKA, "Written Opinion as Amicus Curiae (Friend of the Court) to the Panel of Judges of the South Jakarta District Court in Case Number 675/Pid.Sus/2025/PN JKT.SEL - Criminalization of Expression as a Form of Human Rights Violation and Democratic Regression", accessed at <https://yappika-actionaid.or.id/id/publikasi/detail/205/kriminalisasi-ekspresi-sebagai-bentuk-pelanggaran-hak-asasi-manusia-dan-regresi-demokrasi>

Moreover, findings from the rapid response team established by the National Commission on Violence Against Women revealed a recurring and systematic pattern in the handling of the demonstrations, including the labeling and stigmatization of detained women, the use of excessive force and arbitrary arrests in violation of constitutional rights, and the dissemination of hoaxes related to sexual violence, used as a tool of terror to silence women's voices and instill collective fear. These findings demonstrate that the state's response to public criticism not only restricts civic space but also exposes WHRDs to gender-based violence in both digital and offline spheres, placing them in positions of heightened vulnerability.³¹

- 6) In 2026, Indonesia was elected President of the United Nations Human Rights Council.³² This position places Indonesia in a key leadership role in global human rights diplomacy, with responsibilities including facilitating dialogue among countries, promoting respect for international human rights standards, and strengthening the protection of vulnerable groups, including HRDs. However, this leadership role contrasts with the ongoing challenges faced by HRDs and WHRDs at the domestic level. Several CSOs have highlighted the gap between Indonesia's leadership in international human rights forums and the situation of human rights protection within the country.³³ Numerous reports indicate that HRDs in Indonesia continue to face intimidation, criminalization, and various restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.³⁴

This gap between global leadership and domestic practice illustrates a credibility gap, reflecting the mismatch between a country's international human rights commitments and its implementation at the national level. In the context of protecting HRDs in the digital era, this gap is particularly relevant, as states are expected not only to promote the principles of HRD protection in international forums but also to ensure that they in their own countries, can safely conduct advocacy work, including in digital spaces. Indonesia's presidency of the UN Human Rights Council, therefore, not only confers diplomatic prestige but also subjects the country to increased international scrutiny regarding its obligations to respect, protect, and ensure a safe environment for HRDs and WHRDs domestically.

³¹ Komnas Perempuan, "Press Release on the Report of State Handling of Public Demonstrations", accessed at <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/siaran-pers-detail/siaran-pers-komnas-perempuan-tentang-laporan-penanganan-negara-terhadap-aksi-unjuk-rasa-warga>

³² United Nations. (8 January 2026). *Human Rights Council elects Indonesian candidate President for 2026*, accessed at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/01/1166720>.

³³ Accessed at various sources: <https://ti.or.id/ironi-indonesia-sebagai-presiden-dewan-ham-pbb-kemewahan-diplomatik-di-tengah-catatan-pelanggaran-ham/>; <https://infid.org/presidensi-dewan-ham-pbb-ri-retorika-kosong-tanpa-pembenahan-ham-domestik/>; <https://theconversation.com/indonesia-pimpin-dewan-ham-pbb-prestise-global-di-tengah-problem-domestik-273366>; <https://lbhmasyarakat.org/prestasi-atau-hipokrasi-empat-catatan-lbhm-atas-terpilihnya-indonesia-sebagai-presiden-dewan-ham-pbb/>.

³⁴ In recent years, the advocacy activities of human rights defenders, which have increasingly shifted to the digital space, have become an arena for repression. Various reports from civil society organizations, international human rights institutions, and academic research show that human rights defenders in Indonesia face not only physical repression and attacks, but also digital ones, ranging from digital surveillance, doxing, online harassment, and gender-based violence, to the threat of criminalization through various regulations that broadly regulate expression on the internet. Source: Niniek Karmini. (29 April 2025). Amnesty says Indonesia suppresses free speech with crackdowns on public protests. AP News. Accessed at <https://apnews.com/article/indonesia-amnesty-international-human-rights-report-d604e050110bb42614642245d7e4ccc8>. See also: <https://safenet.or.id/2025/08/statement-on-digital-repression-during-the-august-2025-indonesian-protests/>.

2. Restrictive Legislative and Regulatory Measures Affecting Human Rights Defenders and Women Human Rights Defenders in Indonesia

- 7) Indonesian laws relating to internet governance reflect the State's tendency to control activities in the digital space. A study entitled "Digital Rights for Democracy and Civic Space: A Study of Internet Regulation Mapping in Indonesia", conducted by the Center for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies (PSHK) and the Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (SAFEnet), found that, of the 13 existing laws governing internet governance in Indonesia, only nine guarantee freedom.³⁵ In practice, the protection guaranteed under these nine laws is minimal, and provisions regulating freedom of opinion and expression are rarely applied.³⁶
- 8) Law No. 1/2023 on the New Criminal Code (KUHP), which entered into force on 2 January 2026, has the potential to criminalize HRDs. Together with Law No. 20/2025 on the Criminal Law Procedure Code (KUHAP), one of the first cases arising from the implementation of these laws involved charges of incitement in the digital space. These charges were brought against Laras Faizati, who expressed criticism and opinions online following the August 2025 demonstrations. In addition to Laras, hundreds of individuals were arrested and detained as political prisoners. The New KUHP and KUHAP have been used as the law to criminalize freedom of expression.
- 9) Law No. 1/2026 on Criminal Adjustments increases the potential for overcriminalization of criticism of the Government. Several provisions that threaten freedom of expression and narrow civic space are reflected in the inclusion of controversial articles, including the criminalization of insulting the President/Vice President, insulting the Government or State institutions, disseminating false information, and acts deemed to disturb public order.
- 10) The norms within these provisions are vague and susceptible to use as catch-all provisions to criminalize HRDs. Provisions on insult are frequently used as legal justification for abuse of process. Notably, the Constitutional Court of Indonesia, in Decision No. 013-022/PUU-IV/2006, annulled the provision on insulting the President in the old KUHP because it violated freedom of expression. The existence of similar provisions through the Criminal Code Adjustments indicates a regression in the progressive development of Indonesian criminal law.
- 11) Since its adoption, Law No. 11/2008 on the ITE (ITE Law) has been one of the laws most frequently used to criminalize HRDs. Despite two amendments, in 2016 and 2024, the law's broad and ambiguous provisions continue to pose legal challenges and are often used to target individuals, including HRDs, for expressing themselves in digital spaces. The provisions most commonly invoked are those relating to defamation and incitement/hate speech.

³⁵ SAFEnet and PSHK, "Digital Rights for Democracy and Civic Space: A Study of Internet Regulation Mapping in Indonesia," pshk.or.id, 2025, accessed at <https://pshk.or.id/publikasi/hak-digital-untuk-demokrasi-dan-civic-space-studi-pemetaan-regulasi-internet-di-indonesia/>

³⁶ This is measured based on several rights within the liberty principle of the Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet (ICRP), which is also included in the UDHR and ICCPR. These rights include: (1) the right to online protest; (2) freedom from censorship, including blocking, cyberattacks, and online harassment; (3) the right to information; (4) media freedom; and (5) freedom from hate speech.

- 12) Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics (Permenkominfo) No. 5/2020 on the Private Electronic System Providers is a ministerial regulation that poses a clear threat to freedom of expression and the right to privacy. In its 2024 Report on the Reform of the Legal Framework for the Protection and Expansion of Civic Space in Indonesia, PSHK found that this regulation threatens media independence and freedom.³⁷ The primary concern lies in the broad interpretation of electronic information/documents deemed to “disturb the public” or “disrupt public order”. These terms lack a clear definition, and determinations are left to ministries or institutions in accordance with statutory regulations. Furthermore, the restriction of access to such electronic information/documents is categorized as an urgent access blocking measure.
- 13) Furthermore, the Permenkominfo, requires Private Electronic System Providers to terminate access (take down) to electronic information/documents deemed to disturb the public or disrupt public order as soon as possible and without delay, and no later than four hours after receiving a notification. This obligation is accompanied by compelling consequences, “forcing” Private Electronic System Providers to comply with such orders. In cases of non-compliance, the Minister may terminate access directly and/or instruct internet service providers to block access to the relevant electronic system, after considering the reasons provided by the Private Electronic System Providers. Administrative sanctions, including fines, may also be imposed on Private Electronic System Providers that fail to comply with such orders.
- 14) Regulation of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police (Perkapolri) No 4/2025 on the Prosecution of Attacks on the Indonesian National Police is an implementing regulation that restricts freedom of expression and legitimizes the use of force in handling protests. The regulation permits the use of firearms and allows for the determination of an individual’s actions as unlawful based on presumption.
- 15) Amid increasing scrutiny of repressive actions by the police and calls for institutional reform of the National Police, Perkapolri No. 4/2025 represents a policy development that reinforces threats to freedom of expression. As a state institution mandated to maintain public security, the role of the police is being directed towards narrowing civic space by reinforcing a culture of violence in the handling of protests.
- 16) The application of the new KUHP, KUHAP, and/or Criminal Criminal Adjustments Law, alongside sector-specific laws such as Laws on Digital Regulation (ITE Law), creates legal uncertainty, leading to widespread criminalization and increasing fear among HRDs. Furthermore, broadly formulated provisions are being used to silence and intimidate individuals through law enforcement. This is compounded by implementing regulations that reinforce a repressive legal environment, contributing to a chilling effect and further narrowing civic space.
- 17) Several legislative initiatives and regulatory policies in Indonesia indicate a growing trend towards a security-based approach (securitization) in governance, resulting in the narrowing of civic space, particularly in the digital space. Draft policies introduced in response to national security concerns, disinformation, and cyber war have the potential to expand the state’s authority in deploying its apparatus significantly and massively. These include the Bill on Combating Disinformation and Foreign

³⁷ PSHK, “Reform of the Legal Framework for the Protection and Expansion of Civic Space in Indonesia,” *pshk.or.id.*, 2024, accessed at <https://pshk.or.id/publikasi/kertas-kebijakan-reformasi-kerangka-hukum-untuk-perlindungan-dan-peluasan-ruang-gerak-masyarakat-sipil-civic-space-indonesia/>

Propaganda, the revised Broadcasting Law, the Bill on Cyber Security and Resilience, and the Draft Presidential Regulation on the involvement of the TNI in counter-terrorism. The provisions contained in these draft instruments are broadly defined and risk enabling greater state control over the flow of digital information, expanding surveillance practices, and increasing restrictions on online expression.

- 18) The Combating Disinformation and Foreign Propaganda Bill has attracted criticism due to its potential to restrict freedom of expression and narrow civic space in Indonesia. The draft introduces broadly defined concepts of “disinformation” and “foreign propaganda”, and grants the state significant authority to regulate and restrict content in the digital space.³⁸ Several human rights organizations have warned that such provisions risk enabling the Government to determine the legitimacy of information and potentially suppress online criticism or dissent. In the context of the increasing use of digital platforms by HRDs for advocacy, these provisions may create legal uncertainty and expose activists, journalists, and civil society organizations to allegations of disseminating disinformation or acting on behalf of foreign interests. Similar narratives have emerged in public discourse, where demonstrations or civil society campaigns critical of government policies are portrayed as being driven by foreign interests, illustrating how such a regulatory framework may facilitate the stigmatization and criminalization of legitimate advocacy.
- 19) The Cybersecurity and Resilience Bill raises serious concerns due to provisions that could enable greater military involvement in cybersecurity governance and law enforcement in the digital space. The bill has the potential to blur the distinction between civilian and military authority in managing cyberspace, potentially granting military institutions the power to carry out law enforcement activities targeting civilians.³⁹ The draft remains oriented towards a state security approach and does not adequately incorporate human rights protections, potentially expanding digital surveillance and restricting freedom of expression.⁴⁰ For HRDs, this risks reinforcing a narrative that frames public criticism or digital advocacy as a security threat. This risk is reflected in several instances of criminalization of digital expression, including the prosecution of activists or citizens who criticized government policies on social media under legal provisions related to electronic information. For example, activists and social media users were arrested for allegedly inciting unrest through posts or comments concerning government demonstrations in 2025.⁴¹

3. Restrictions on Freedom of Expression and Digital Authoritarianism in Indonesia

- 20) On 28 August 2025, the Jakarta Branch of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPID) issued Circular Letter No. 309/KPID-DKI/VIII/2025 on appeals for broadcast

³⁸ Nino Citra Anugrahanto. (22 January 2026). The Bill on Combating Disinformation and Foreign Propaganda is Considered to Risk Limiting Freedom of Expression. Kompas.id. Accessed at <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/ruu-penanggulangan-disinformasi-dan-propaganda-asing-dinilai-berisiko-batasi-kebebasan-berpendapat>.

³⁹ Ady Thea DA. (17 October 2025). Imparsial Reveals 7 Potential Dangers in the KKS Bill. Accessed at <https://www.hukumonline.com/berita/a/imparsial-beberkan-7-poin-potensial-bahaya-dalam-ruu-kks-lt68f237551878d/>.

⁴⁰ Dodi Sanjaya. (21 October 2025). The KKS Bill is considered to ignore human rights aspects. Accessed at <https://www.elsam.or.id/teknologi-dan-ham/peneliti-elsam--ruu-kks-dinilai-abaikan-aspek-hak-asasi-manusia>.

⁴¹ Radhiyya Indra. (8 September 2025). Online crackdown haunts Indonesia protests. The Jakarta Post. Accessed at <https://www.thejakartapost.com/indonesia/2025/09/06/online-crackdown-haunts-indonesia-protests.html>.

and news coverage during mass demonstrations. The Jakarta KPID prohibited broadcasters from airing or reporting content deemed provocative, exploitative, or likely to escalate public anger. The KPID further urged broadcasters to prioritize coverage with a “calm” and “peaceful” tone. This directive was inappropriate and had the potential to undermine the role of the press as a social watchdog and provider of information. Moreover, the circular infringed on the public’s right to know and access information, thereby creating a form of illegitimate censorship that restricts citizens’ rights to receive information free from the influence of power.⁴²

- 21) On 25 March 2026, the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs blocked access to Wikimedia, citing alleged gambling-related content on Wikimedia Commons. The Coalition for Democratization and Moderation of Indonesia’s Digital Space (Damai Coalition) stated that this action constituted a systematic sabotage of public knowledge production. The Wikimedia blockage is part of a broader pattern of digital authoritarianism that the Indonesian Government continues to enforce through Permenkominfo No. 5/2020.⁴³ Such state control of digital infrastructure narrows access to information, undermines the public’s right to free and independent knowledge, and reinforces recurring censorship practices and restrictions on freedom of expression in the digital space.
- 22) In many cases, the Indonesian Government exerts significant control over internet connectivity, as previously observed in Papua a while ago. Furthermore, data from the SAFENet indicate a surge in digital repression. One factor contributing to this increase was the wave of civil society demonstrations throughout August and September 2025. During this period, multiple allegations emerged regarding violations of citizens’ internet access, both related and unrelated to the demonstrations. SAFENet received complaints on restricted features, difficulties in accessing platforms, and suspended accounts on Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp.⁴⁴
- 23) Several social media features experienced restrictions, including the inability to use songs from certain musicians in Instagram stories and difficulties in re-uploading some content. Some features were even disabled, citing security concerns, due to the large number of TikTok users live-streaming police violence during the demonstrations.⁴⁵ Additionally, there were indications of an information operation aimed at diverting public attention from police violence during the August–September 2025 demonstrations. The narratives disseminated sought to shift focus onto the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI), while demonstrators were increasingly labeled as anarchists, in an attempt to delegitimize their demands rather than call for accountability for police brutality.⁴⁶

⁴² LBH Press, “[Press Release] The flawed logic of the DKI Jakarta KPID’s appeal: Banning broadcasts of demonstrations is a violation of the right to information”, accessed at <https://lbhpers.org/siaran-pers-logika-sesat-himbauan-kpid-dki-jakarta-pelarangan-penyiaran-aksi-demonstrasi-adalah-pelanggaran-hak-atas-informasi/>

⁴³ SAFENet, “Call for an end to the blocking and sabotage of digital knowledge!”, accessed at <https://safenet.or.id/id/2026/03/83-organisasi-dan-jaringan-masyarakat-sipil-desak-penghentian-pemblokiran-dan-sabotase-pengetahuan-digital/>

⁴⁴ SAFENet, “Cyber Police Trigger Surge in Digital Rights Violations During the Third Quarter of 2025”, accessed at <https://safenet.or.id/id/2025/10/polisi-siber-picu-lonjakan-pelanggaran-hak-digital-selama-triwulan-iii-2025/>

⁴⁵ Tempo.co, “Internet Restrictions, Government-Style Digital Repression”, accessed at <https://www.tempo.co/infografik/infografik/pembatasan-internet-represi-digital-ala-pemerintah-2066684>

⁴⁶ SAFENet, “Statement of Position on Digital Repression During the August 2025 Protests”, accessed at <https://safenet.or.id/id/2025/08/pernyataan-sikap-atas-represi-digital-selama-aksi-agustus-2025/>

- 24) Content restrictions were also imposed on CSO accounts that actively criticized the Government. The Legal Aid Institute (LBH) Jakarta TikTok account was temporarily suspended after posting information and campaign material related to the August 2025 demonstrations. After being restored, the account experienced further restrictions on posting campaign content related to the ongoing demonstrations until now. These limitations by social media platforms have constrained public access to information on democracy, law, and human rights issues. Given the strong influence of conventional news media, social media serves as a crucial tool for civil society to promote the democratization of knowledge. Content blocking has significantly limited civil society's efforts to create counter-narratives
- 25) HRDs have been subjected to digital attacks targeting their personal data, including doxing, impersonation, and threatening messages. These digital attacks are often followed by offline threats, such as the anonymous delivery of goods to defenders' homes. Regarding the August 2025 demonstrations, LBH Jakarta handled several cases of digital attacks against HRDs. First, on 27 February 2026, while demonstrating at the Indonesian National Police Headquarters in Jakarta, a student from the Jakarta State Polytechnic confronted a police officer who had assaulted him during the August 2025 demonstrations. On the same day, the student was doxed by a police officer who disseminated his personal data on Instagram. Consequently, the student received death threats via anonymous spam calls and was threatened with expulsion from his university. Second, a digital attack targeted legal counsel involved in the August 2025 demonstrations. On 19 January 2026, a public lawyer assistant at LBH Jakarta was contacted by an unknown number impersonating a HRD, attempting to defraud at least five people via WhatsApp. This occurred after the assistant had provided legal support to students criminalized in connection with the August 2025 demonstrations.
- 26) Following the August 2025 demonstrations, HRDs who raised issues beyond the demonstrations were also subjected to digital attacks via Instagram and WhatsApp, accompanied by threatening messages. In late December 2025, environmental activists from Greenpeace Indonesia received threats via Instagram and offline terror in the form of dead chickens delivered to them after they publicly criticized the handling of large-scale ecological disasters on the island of Sumatra through social media. At the same time, a social media influencer who criticized the management of these ecological disasters on Sumatra also experienced digital attacks through social media⁴⁷. Additionally, between 14 and 20 January 2026, five students from the University of Indonesia were subjected to hacking, doxing, and anonymous threatening messages. They subsequently faced offline terror in the form of unsolicited cash-on-delivery packages containing death ceremony regalia. WhatsApp accounts belonging to their parents were also hacked to send edited videos of the students with target marks on their foreheads. These attacks followed their criticism of public officials attempting to control the student movement⁴⁸.
- 27) The handling of digital attacks against HRDs often experiences undue delays. Of the four police reports filed with LBH Jakarta regarding such attacks, none have proceeded to trial. Police reports are frequently complicated or even rejected by law enforcement.

⁴⁷ Greenpeace Indonesia, "Resisting Silencing, Safeguarding Democracy: Activists and Content Creators Report Terror to the Police", accessed at <https://www.greenpeace.org/indonesia/siaran-pers/65707/melawan-pembungkaman-merawat-demokrasi-aktivis-dan-konten-kreator-laporkan-teror-ke-polisi/>

⁴⁸ Amnesty Indonesia, "Reveal the Perpetrators of Terror Against BEM UI Activists", accessed at <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/ungkap-pelaku-teror-ke-aktivis-bem-ui/01/2026/>

Consequently, HRDs who are victims of digital attacks are unable to access protection, restitution, or rehabilitation for the attacks they experience⁴⁹. Moreover, investigations are often not conducted in accordance with proper procedures, resulting in the perpetrators' identities remaining unknown and leaving them without accountability for the violence committed.

- 28) HRDs who use social media for campaigning and advocacy are vulnerable to criminalization. “The Jakarta Four”—HRDs Delpedro, Syahdan, Khariq, and Muzaffar—were criminalized for allegedly inciting children to commit violence during the August 2025 demonstrations in Jakarta⁵⁰. Evidence used by the state, through the Public Prosecutor, included Instagram posts providing information about free legal aid for demonstrators criminalized during the August 2025 protests and calls for solidarity. This demonstrates an attempt to silence government criticism by framing the protests as riots. This also restricted access to legal aid for children unlawfully detained during the demonstrations. The use of WhatsApp as a communication tool also poses criminalization risks for HRDs. Invitations to join WhatsApp groups were used by the state as evidence that The Jakarta Four incited children to riot. For HRDs, normal patterns of interaction on digital communication platforms, now a widespread practice in Indonesia, are thus treated as potential evidence of conspiracy, exposing them to legal risk⁵¹.
- 29) Artists who upload their work on social media as an expression of criticism of the government are also not immune from criminalization. The silencing of these artists is carried out by summoning them by the police as an intimidation tactic. In November 2025, LBH Jakarta accompanied a digital artist in Jakarta who was summoned by the police because his work was used as a poster in the August 2025 demonstrations. The digital artist uploaded the work on social media so that it could be used by the public to voice their aspirations in the August 2025 demonstrations. Although no prosecution was filed by the police, the summons was a form of intimidation against the artist so that he would not participate in criticizing the government through his work. Police questioning also occurred in January 2026 of Pandji Pragiwaksono, a well-known stand-up comedian. In his stand-up comedy show titled “Mens Rea” which aired on Netflix, Pandji made jokes criticizing several Indonesian politicians. According to the police, the stand-up comedy, which had been widely marketed through Netflix, had the potential to influence a wider audience than the audience present at the event⁵². The police investigation revealed that the police force was more focused on surveilling public expression and opinion than enforcing substantive law enforcement. This report also has a political nature, as it demonstrates state repression to suppress criticism, silence public opinion, and intimidate artists who speak out critically⁵³. Furthermore,

⁴⁹ Tempo.co, “University of Indonesia Student Has Yet to Receive Protection After Being Terrorized”, accessed at <https://www.tempo.co/politik/mahasiswa-ui-belum-dapat-perlindungan-setelah-diteror-2108042>

⁵⁰ Tim Advokasi untuk Demokrasi (TAuD), “Acquittal for the Fearless Four Must Lead to a Chain of Freedom for Other Political Prisoners”, accessed at <https://bantuanhukum.or.id/putusan-bebas-untuk-the-fearless-four-harus-berlanjut-menjadi-rantai-kebebasan-untuk-tahanan-politik-lainnya/>

⁵¹ WhatsApp is the most widely used social media platform in Indonesia, with 112 million users by 2024, placing Indonesia as the third-largest user base in the world. For more information, see: *World Population Review*. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/whatsapp-users-by-country>

⁵² Charges against Pandji Pragiwaksono were based on blasphemy provisions under Articles 242 and/or 243 of the Criminal Code, as well as incitement under Articles 300 and/or 301 of the Criminal Code

⁵³ LBH Jakarta, “Mens Rea of Pandji Is Not a Criminal Offence: The Government Must Seriously Protect Freedom of Expression”, accessed at <https://bantuanhukum.or.id/mens-rea-pandji-bukan-tindak-pidana-pemerintah-harus-serius-lindungi-kebebasan-berekspresi-warga/>

uploading satirical content on social media risks criminalization for HRDs. Khariq, one of The Jakarta Four, faced separate charges for posting news articles about statements by public officials that were edited satirically. Although the court ultimately ruled the charges unsubstantiated, the prosecutor's demands demonstrate that any form of criticism will be met with criminalization. The Prabowo-Gibran administration views criticism as a threat, not a response to dissatisfaction in a democratic society.

4. Militarization of Cyberspace and Illegal Surveillance in Indonesia

30) Cyber patrols constitute a form of cyberspace investigation carried out under the authority of the Indonesian National Police. The task force was established in response to the ITE Law and the rise of online-based crimes. Problems have arisen due to the absence of official regulations clearly defining the limits of police authority in patrolling social media, where the distinction between public and private spaces has become blurred. The Circular Letter of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police (SE/2/II/2021) instructs investigators, upon receiving public reports, to distinguish between criticism, suggestions, hoaxes, and defamation punishable under law, to determine the appropriate response. However, this guidance does not align with a proper understanding of what constitutes criticism and suggestions, which are protected under the right to freedom of opinion and expression. Profiling and framing issues persist, and the lack of a clear investigative methodology has led police to target the first account encountered as the black sheep without accounting for the rapid information exchange on social media. In the case of “The Jakarta Four,” the police, acting as the reporting party, claimed that the posts were identified through the cyber patrol system. However, during court proceedings, the police were unable to provide specific details on the investigative methods used to single out these accounts as suspects, despite the many other accounts also engaging in advocacy and campaigning during the August 2025 demonstrations. This indicates that the police focus was not on addressing riots per se, but on punishing a group of activists to create a deterrent effect and instill fear among other HRDs.

31) The lack of clear regulations governing cyber patrols also enables the police to arbitrarily block citizens' social media accounts. According to official police reports, cyber patrols collaborated with the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs to block 592 pieces of content and accounts deemed to have incited the August 2025 protests⁵⁴. These actions were carried out without explicit legal regulations, justified on the grounds of maintaining national stability. The absence of restrictions on cyber patrol authority is further compounded by weak regulations on blocking as a coercive measure. Blocking is addressed in the new KUHAP, ratified on 17 December 2025, which allows blocking without the permission of the Head of the District Court in urgent circumstances. The definition of “urgent circumstances” is problematic, as it is interpreted to include either the existence of a criminal act related to electronic information and transactions or situations determined at the investigator's discretion. This means that anyone under investigation for content related to the ITE Law can have their accounts blocked without judicial approval. Such blocking not only restricts freedom of expression and opinion but also undermines the dignity of affected individuals, as social media accounts serve as personal spaces. Blocking can further

⁵⁴ Humas Polri, “Police Take Firm Action Against Provocative Accounts to Safeguard National Stability”, accessed at <https://humas.polri.go.id/news/detail/2072319-polri-tegas-tindak-akun-provokatif-demi-jaga-stabilitas-nasional>

disrupt an individual's online identity and sever their connections to online communities⁵⁵.

32) Another issue that needs attention is the use of spyware against HRDs in Indonesia. Spyware technology is a type of malicious software used to collect information from a device without informing the user and transmit it to another unauthorized entity. This technology is highly invasive because it allows unrestricted access to a device and leaves very little trace, making it nearly impossible for victims to determine what data has been collected.⁵⁶ The use of spyware technology poses a risk of violations of the right to privacy and personal data protection. In the Indonesian context, the fundamental problem is that there is no policy framework governing spyware. However, a specific mechanism is needed to regulate its procurement and implementation. This is crucial considering that the use of spyware (espionage, spying, and the collection of personal data) is a violation of human rights. Therefore, its implementation must be regulated within a policy framework through law. Currently, the most relevant policy framework related to the use of wiretapping for law enforcement purposes is the ITE Law. Another problem in Indonesia is the confidential nature of spyware, making it difficult for victims to prove that spyware is present on a digital device or has collected their personal data.

5. Media Oligarchy and Censorship of Public Voices by Digital Platforms in Indonesia

33) Although there was no direct government order to block content, social media platforms independently restricted content related to the August 2025 demonstrations⁵⁷. TikTok limited the Live feature, citing additional security measures in response to escalating violence during the demonstrations. These restrictions followed the government's plan to summon TikTok and Instagram to discuss the distribution of content deemed provocative. TikTok's initiative was influenced by the government's authority to revoke the platform's operating license in Indonesia at any time. In 2023, TikTok faced threats of license revocation from the Indonesian government regarding its social commerce activities⁵⁸. As the country with the largest TikTok user base in Southeast Asia, with over 160 million users, Indonesia represents a crucial market for the platform⁵⁹. Consequently, TikTok sought to maintain good relations with the government by aligning its content moderation with the government's definitions of criticism and demonstrations as threats or violence; thus, such actions violated TikTok's community guidelines. In October 2025, following the August demonstrations, the Indonesian government temporarily suspended TikTok's operating license, claiming the platform had provided only partial data on TikTok Live activities during the demonstrations, thereby violating the Electronic System

⁵⁵ Wu, S., & Fang, H. (2025). Social media suspensions as dignity takings: Users' personal loss in "account bombing". *New Media & Society*, 27(3), 1544-1564.

⁵⁶ Amnesty International, *A Web of Surveillance: Unravelling A Murky Network Of Spyware Exports To Indonesia*, (2024), p. 7

⁵⁷ Tempo, "Explanation from the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs on the Restriction of TikTok Live Feature Following the Escalation of Demonstrations", accessed at <https://www.tempo.co/politik/penjelasan-komdigi-soal-fitur-live-tiktok-yang-dibatasi-buntut-meluasnya-demo-2065025>

⁵⁸ Tempo, "Zulhas Threatens to Block TikTok if It Does Not Immediately Obtain a License", accessed at <https://www.tempo.co/ekonomi/zulhas-ancam-blokir-tiktok-kalau-tak-segera-urus-izin-138527>

⁵⁹ TikTok Newsroom, "TikTok Surpasses 460 Million Users in Southeast Asia; Inks Partnership with Vietnam's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism", accessed at <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/tiktok-surpasses-460-million-users-in-southeast-asia-inks-partnership-with-vietnams-ministry-of-culture-sports-and-tourism?lang=en-SG>

Operator's obligation to provide access for monitoring purposes⁶⁰. TikTok's partial data provision can be seen as an attempt to comply with its internal policies and procedures regarding data handling and response to data requests. However, government pressure ultimately compelled TikTok to provide full data related to traffic escalation and Live Monetization for 25–28 August 2025⁶¹. Given TikTok's long history of user surveillance, the data obtained by the Indonesian government could enable further surveillance and criminalization of HRDs in the future⁶².

- 34) Media oligopolies in Indonesia threaten citizens' right to access credible and accountable information. At least twelve large media groups control nearly all media channels in the country (including broadcasting, print, and online media). Over the past 20 years, ownership of both conventional and digital media companies has been extensively leveraged for political purposes.⁶³ It is widely known that media company owners are affiliated with political party leaders, government officials, and even members of the House of Representatives (DPR). This has resulted in increasingly biased and partisan news reporting, with the potential to deepen societal polarization.
- 35) Ownership of media by political elites can shape editorial agendas and news framing. National media outlets concentrated within conglomerates often present information aligned with the political interests of their owners. As a result, the media no longer function as an independent third party delivering information. Accountability to the public is increasingly limited when media companies operate as private companies.

6. Recommendation

- 36) The Government of Indonesia should immediately:
 - a. Ensure the proper functioning of democratic space and create a safe digital environment, including halting all forms of digital attacks and harassment, in accordance with its international obligations under instruments such as the ICCPR, CEDAW, the Paris Principles, and other international human rights covenants.
 - b. Conduct thorough investigations into cases of physical and digital attacks against HRDs, WHRDs, journalists, and media. These investigations must be carried out transparently and accountably to prevent recurrence.
 - c. End the criminalization of expression and digital harassment, particularly targeting HRDs and WHRDs, by revising digital laws and regulations. This includes addressing problematic provisions in the KUHP, KUHAP, the Criminal Adjustments Law, the ITE Law, and Permenkominfo No. 5/2020 on Private Electronic System Providers; revoking the Regulation of the Chief of the Indonesian National Police No. 4/2025 on the Prosecution of Attacks on the Indonesian National Police; and halting repressive cyber patrols.
 - d. Promote the strengthening of redress mechanisms for victims of violations of freedom of expression, assembly, association, press, and other human rights.

⁶⁰ Kompas.com, "Government Temporarily Suspends TikTok's Operating License", accessed at <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2025/10/03/11520301/pemerintah-bekukan-sementara-izin-tiktok>.

⁶¹ CNBC Indonesia, "TikTok License Freeze Lifted, Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs Receives Live-Streaming Data During Protests", accessed at <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/tech/20251004223744-37-672894/pembekuan-izin-tiktok-dicabut-komdigi-terima-data-live-selama-demo>

⁶² Patrick K. Lin, "Under U.S. Ownership, TikTok Poses an Even Greater Threat to Americans' Privacy", diakses dari <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/carr-ryan/our-work/carr-ryan-commentary/under-us-ownership-tiktok-poses-even-greater-threat>

⁶³ Masduki, "Research reveals four models of media and political affiliation in Indonesia," lensa.uui.ac.id., 2025. <https://lensa.uui.ac.id/riset-ungkap-bentuk-empat-model-afiliasi-media-dan-politik-di-indonesia/>

- 37) The High Commissioner for Human Rights (HC) should:
- a. Facilitate multilateral dialogues to enable Indonesia and other countries to exchange best practices on the protection of HRDs and WHRDs in the digital age.
 - b. Monitor and visit to report the human rights violations (both online and offline) experienced by HRDs and WHRDs in Indonesia.
 - c. Establish effective communication channels with Indonesian civil society organizations to monitor the protection of HRDs and WHRDs.
 - d. Provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to help harmonize Indonesian regulations with international human rights standards, particularly regarding the protection of HRDs and WHRDs in the digital age.
 - e. Enhance the promotion of the 1998 Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, including conducting a global campaign emphasizing the importance of protection for human rights defenders. This campaign should advocate for countries to establish regulations that protect human rights defenders and recognize their work. The campaign should be conducted with the involvement of governments, civil society organizations, media, and corporations.
- 38) Civil society organizations and movements at the local, national, and international levels, along with the general public, should support and strengthen solidarity in addressing human rights violations (both online and offline), particularly in efforts to defend and protect HRDs and WHRDs in the digital age

ⁱ **The Peoples Participation, Initiative and Partnership Strengthening Foundation (YAPPIKA - a member of ActionAid International)** is a non-profit organization that has been standing and working together with some communities in Indonesia since 1991 to encourage government policies to improve public services in between the fields of education and health and advocate for a better enabling environment for civil society. Since 2010, the YAA Indonesia has been the secretariat of the Freedom of Association Coalition focused on enabling a conducive environment for CSOs in Indonesia. YAPPIKA Website: <http://yappika-actionaid.or.id/>

ⁱⁱ **The Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy (ELSAM)** is a human rights organization that has been established in Jakarta, since August 1993. It aims to participate in efforts to develop, promote and protect civil and political rights as well as human rights in general - as mandated by the 1945 Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. ELSAM currently has three main activities, which consist of: (1) mainstreaming human rights in policy making; (2) study and production of human rights knowledge to support policy advocacy; and (3) Human Rights Education. ELSAM website: <https://elsam.or.id/>

ⁱⁱⁱ **The Center for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies (Pusat Studi Hukum dan Kebijakan Indonesia, PSHK)** is a research and advocacy institution for legal reform, with visions of the establishment of socially responsible law or towards socially responsible lawmaking. Established in 1998, PSHK works focus on legislation and justice. In the field of legislation, PSHK carries out three main activities, namely legislative monitoring, legislative assessment, and legislative drafting. Meanwhile, In the field of justice. PSHK is consistently involved in the reform agenda at the Indonesian Supreme Court. Enhance legal understanding of policy-making processes through evidence-based studies and active participation in public discourse is the main aims of PSHK. PSHK Website: <https://pshk.or.id/>

^{iv} **The Indonesian Human Rights Monitor (IMPARSIAL)** was established by 18 workers of human rights in Indonesia, among others, Todung Mulya Lubis, Karlina Leksono, M.M. Billah, Wardah Hafidz, Hendaradi, Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, [the late] Ade Rostina Sitompul, Robertus Robet, Binny Buchory, Kamala Chandrakirana, [the late] H.S. Dillon, [the late] Munir, Rachland Nashidik, Rusdi Marpaung, Otto Syamsuddin Ishak, Nezar Patria, Amiruddin, and Poengky Indarti. The founders share the same concern: state power with tendency of its repressive practices show a stronger tendency in Indonesia today. Right opposite, society institutions working in the field of promotion and protection of human rights also show lower trend. IMPARSIAL Website: www.imparsial.org

^v **The Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH Jakarta)** is an institution that provides structural legal assistance to poor, legally illiterate and oppressed communities in the context of upholding the rule of law, democracy and human rights based in Jakarta. LBH Jakarta Website: <https://bantuanhukum.or.id/>