

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

Rafendi Djamin appointed first Director of Amnesty International South East Asia Regional Office

Amnesty International today announced that Rafendi Djamin, one of the region's best known human rights activists, will lead its new South East Asia Regional Office, based in Bangkok.

The appointment comes as the world's leading human rights organization prepares to expand work through its new Bangkok office as part of a major drive to increase the impact of its human rights work in the region.

"We are delighted to announce that Rafendi will help lead our work in South East Asia at a time that we see a renewed crackdown on freedom of expression, ethnic and religious tensions, and in increasingly repressive climate for activists," said Minar Pimple, Senior Director of Global Operations.

"As an activist at heart, he has spent three decades fighting for social justice across the region, and brings a wealth of experience and insight which will be absolutely crucial to combating the many pressing human rights violations."

Most recently, Rafendi served as the Representative for Indonesia to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the only regional human rights mechanism in Asia-Pacific.

Rafendi has also served as an Executive Director for an Indonesian Human Rights NGO Coalition. He brings extensive experience working for non-governmental organizations in the Netherlands and Indonesia, and is on the board of a number of national and global rights organisations – including the Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR).

South East Asia is a key priority for Amnesty International as it looks to move closer to the ground with a new office in Bangkok. It will be staffed by regional and country experts in research, advocacy, campaigns and communications.

"The presence of an Amnesty International office in South East Asia is needed now more than ever. This is a region where many people are grappling with the same rights issues, yet there is no common, fully fledged human rights body. Many countries still lack credible and independent national rights institutions. I am excited to lead Amnesty International's work in the region at this crucial time," said Rafendi Djamin.

As Amnesty International continues to strengthen its work in Asia, the organization has already opened an office in Hong Kong for East Asia and is looking to establish a presence in South Asia over the coming year.