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Speaker: Ms. Kit Chan

An Oral Statement to the 21st Session of the UN Human Rights Council by the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC), a non-governmental organization in general consultative status

Thank you Madam President,

While the Indonesian government accepted a number of useful, if general, recommendations on various human rights issues, its commitment to protect rights in reality remains in doubt, given its rejection of key recommendations that would lead to improvements if implemented.

On impunity, the government failed to accept the recommendation calling for the use of civilian courts, instead of military courts, to examine cases of human rights abuses against prisoners.

The ALRC and KontraS have previously raised concerns in this Council about the wider use of military courts, which has resulted in disproportionately light sentences or acquittals of perpetrators in many torture cases.

To address this, Indonesia needs to revise its current Law on Military Courts.

On the protection of religious minorities, the government's unwillingness to revise the Blasphemy Law and some discriminatory Ministerial decrees, as suggested by Denmark, is a cause for concern.

Revision or repeal of those regulations in line with international human rights law will send a message to the public that religious minorities have an equal right for protection, and assist in reducing the ongoing grave abuses against them.

The government's selective approach concerning recommendations on human rights issues in Papua is also worth highlighting.

There has been an escalation of violence in Papua since the UPR session last May. More comprehensive measures should be adopted by the government if it is determined to credibly address the human rights situation there, including by:

- Granting full access to the region to relevant international human rights and humanitarian actors and foreign journalists,
- Inviting the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples to visit Papua;
- Halt human rights violations by security officers and combat impunity;
- And increase protection for human rights defenders and respect for freedom of expression, notably by halting prosecutions under Articles 106 and 110 of the Penal Code.

Thank you.