



ROBIN WOOD research team in Indonesia

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Statement of ROBIN WOOD to the report of TÜV Rheinland

This statement refers to the report “Verification Report of Suku Anak Dalam Community Settlement Demolition within the Land Use Area (Hak Guna Usaha - HGU) of PT Asiatic Persada“, that is offered for download on the website of Wilmar International. http://www.wilmar-international.com/sustainability/resources/Independent%20Audit%20Report%20on%20Jambi%20Case_English%20Final.pdf
The TÜVs report refers to the violent excess at PT Asiatic Persada, a subsidiary of Wilmar, which in the second week of August 2011 was directed against the inhabitants of the village of Sungai Beruang.

ROBIN WOOD has seen for itself the situation on the ground and has been in the region of Jambi from October 4 until October 7, including a visit in Sungai Beruang. Video documented individual interviews have been carried out with five persons, a meeting with around 20 attending persons was interviewed and information was obtained at several NGOs, among them Setara, Cappa und Walhi.

Based on these and further investigations ROBIN WOOD considers that the TÜV’s report excludes important aspects of the current conflict and misrepresents facts or presents them in a tendentious way.

In particular:

1. TÜV’s report excludes the historic dimension of the land conflict between the indigenous residents of Indonesia (here: Suku Anak Dalam/SAD) and the palm oil industry (here: Wilmar). Just a few decennia ago the SAD lived as forest nomads and were deprived of their traditional life, among others by the palm oil industry, which has disregarded the land rights of these indigenous residents. This historical injustice is the reason for the current land conflicts.

2. TÜV has carried out its investigation in the village of Sungai Beruang - of all days - on the day the village was nearly empty, according to the statements by local people. The majority of the population of the village demonstrated that same day in Jakarta against the violent attacks, thus the unanimous testimonies of the witnesses at the scene.

3. The TÜV’s report talks of temporary settlement huts that were not permanently inhabited. On the other hand, the people questioned by ROBIN WOOD stated that the houses had been their residences. Furthermore, the people questioned state unanimously that 35 of 51 houses

of the village of Sungai Beruang have been destroyed. These statements lack in the TÜV's report.

4. According to the TÜV's report the destructions of the village had no longer been visible at the time of the verification, because the inhabitants had already rebuilt all of it. This statement is false. The destroyed part of the village is still devastated. Numerous houses are still destroyed and could not so far be rebuilt.

5. The TÜV's report remains silent on the fact that people were obviously targeted with live ammunition. This is indicated by the evidence available to ROBIN WOOD: There is photographic evidence of cartridge cases left behind and numerous, unanimous statements of the inhabitants of the village. Moreover, ROBIN WOOD has interviewed a victim with bullet wounds that this person had suffered according to his/her own statements in the violent excesses of the Brimob. The statement of this person has been confirmed by further witnesses. This person is still in shock and to ROBIN WOOD appeared to be traumatized.

6. From ROBIN WOOD's perspective the lack of independence of TÜV to its principal Wilmar is documented in the report itself. There are photographs in the report showing that Simon Siburat – a Wilmar manager from the HO in Singapur – obviously was present at some interviews of the TÜV. Wilmar hereby apparently controls the activities of the TÜV in his sense. Moreover, the presence of Wilmar personnel in the interviews leads to intimidations of the respondents.

7. TÜV is in a conflict of interests. TÜV was already in the same area as certifier responsible for the preceding RSPO verification and now quasi controls its own work. It has a private economical interest to keep receiving orders from Wilmar. Also for this expert opinion TÜV was paid by Wilmar.

Conclusion:

TÜV Rheinland's opinion plays down the violent attacks on people in Sungai Beruang and, according to ROBIN WOOD's perspective, misrepresents some facts. Wilmar's clients would do well to get their information from different sources and to rely not only on Wilmar's ordered expert opinion.

ROBIN WOOD will soon publish both the edited interviews and further documents to this case on the Internet.