



YAB Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud  
Chief Minister of Sarawak  
22nd Floor, Wisma Bapa Malaysia,  
Petra Jaya, 93502 Kuching  
Sarawak  
Malaysia

July 22 2010

*Dear Chief Minister*

The UK's All Party Parliamentary Group for Tribal Peoples is concerned to learn of the newly documented cases of rape and sexual abuse of Penan women and girls, reported by the Penan Support Group.

The Penan have frequently been subject to violence and intimidation at the hands of loggers operating on their land, and have found that the police often appear to act to protect the interests of the companies rather than the security of the tribe.

As you will know, logging companies have operated for decades on the Penan's land without their consent and despite their peaceful protests. Many are struggling to find enough food, since logging has left the forest with fewer animals and the polluted rivers with fewer fish, and are suffering from poor health as a result. The effects of plantations growing oil palm and trees for paper production are even more serious, as the forest is cleared completely.

We were heartened to hear of Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak's recent meeting with some of the Penan and hope that this will be the start of a genuine dialogue in which the tribe's voice will be heard. However, without recognition of their land rights, the Penan are struggling to provide for themselves, and are left vulnerable to violence and exploitation.

We urge you to halt logging and other developments on the Penan's land without their free, prior and informed consent, according to international law. We also ask you to take steps to ensure that Penan women and girls are protected from sexual violence and the perpetrators of such abuse brought to justice.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Horwood MP  
Chair

Endorsed by **GREENPEACE**

SECRETARIAT

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