

Official Statement on the Gading Permai Case

(04 May 2006) An attack by a group of workers employed by a nearby oil palm developer against Riaupulp plantation workers in Gading Permai (Kec. Kampar Hilir) resulted in a confrontation on 1 May.

The incident started in the morning when a group of about 70 oil palm workers, who were operating illegally within the concession of PT Siak Raya, confronted the Riaupulp plantation workers and demanded that Acacia planting be stopped in the area. This was followed by threats of violence as weapons were brought out by the attacking group of oil palm workers.

The plantation workers then called for security support. On their way to the site, however, the security contingent was blocked by the oil palm workers. Refusing to heed calls for them to leave the area, the oil palm workers then launched an attack against the responding security team which led to the confrontation. This resulted in minor injuries on both parties with six oil palm workers detained by the local police who will conduct further investigation.

“While we regret this incident of conflict with the oil palm workers, we also have the responsibility to protect our people and our property. We will cooperate fully with local authorities and take appropriate action on the matter,” stated Leonardy Halim, Riaupulp Director.

The incident is the culmination of a series of threats and attacks from this group of workers based on a legally unfounded land. The area in question is licensed to PT Siak Raya which entered into a joint-venture with Riaupulp for Acacia plantation development. However, at the time of land preparation for planting, some 750 hectares of the area were found to have already been planted with oil palm by the group, which did not have legal license for this operation. A case was then filed with the local police and awaits resolution.