

## Böhler

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **Widows request the State of the Netherlands to deliver apology on South Sulawesi**

Amsterdam, 2 September 2013 - The ten widows from the summary executions carried out by Dutch soldiers on South Sulawesi in Indonesia in 1947 have asked minister Timmermans to deliver the apology on South Sulawesi. They are too old to travel to Jakarta.

Last Friday, the government ruled to deliver apologies on next September 12<sup>th</sup>, for all summary executions by Dutch soldiers in the Dutch East Indies in the period 1946-1949.

These apologies form part of a settlement reached between the State and the widows of South Sulawesi. Conscientious implementation of the settlement agreement demands that the State enables them to be present when the apologies are delivered.

Liesbeth Zegveld, counsel for the widows, informs: "my clients are too old to travel. The widows are between 90 and 100 years of age. It would be difficult to comprehend that they would be required to travel to the ambassador, rather than the ambassador travelling to them. It also lies within the nature of apologising that you go to someone, rather than have someone come to you."

Also, both Zegveld and the K.U.K.B. Foundation, which represents the interests of the victims of South Sulawesi, are of the opinion that the rush that is made to issue the apology is not conducive to a proper conclusion of the matter. Apparently, the apologies must be delivered prior to Prime Minister Rutte's trade mission to Indonesia, at which time this matter needs to no longer be on the table. The question is why Prime Minister Rutte does not deliver the apologies himself, as he will visit Indonesia himself in two months. Apart from this, September 12<sup>th</sup> is a date that does not mean anything among the victims; they commemorate the victims on 11 December. Moreover, a 12-day term is very short to come to a proper conclusion.

Zegveld has asked the state advocate to, no later than on 4 September, inform whether the State is prepared to send the ambassador to South Sulawesi.

Zegveld stated that if the State is not prepared to comply with this request, neither the widows, nor she herself shall be present at the ceremony on next September 12<sup>th</sup>.

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