



Blocking Papua from the Truth



Andre Barahamin - 28 Mar, 2017

Why have Jokowi's promises to open up Indonesia's "forbidden island" to journalists and rights monitors flunked?

On 20 December 2016, the Legal Aid Foundation for Indonesia Press (LBH Pers) staged a press conference. It highlighted censorship by The Indonesia Ministry of Information and Communication (Kominfo) towards Suara Papua, a local news outlet based in Abepura, Papua. With no prior notification, Suara Papua was silently listed alongside 11 websites blocked by the government. Those websites allegedly violated principles of journalism by promoting hoaxes and hate.

Later that evening, Rudiantara, the Minister of Information and Communication called Asep Komarudin from LBH Pers, promising that the ban would be lifted the next day.

On 21 December, Suara Papua could be accessed again, but not for those using Telkomsel – the largest telecommunications service provider in Indonesia. In Papua, Telkomsel is the main player and controls more than 65 per cent of the market for mobile phone services users. When I recently published an article with Suara Papua, dozens of people told me that they could not read it due to the Kominfo block.

Arnold Belau, Suara Papua's Editor-in-Chief says that there were no reasons given for the censorship. There was no early warning or official letter of notification. He discovered the website had been consistently censored since 14 November 2016, based on screenshots sent by readers from different regions of Papua. Belau strongly believes that blocking the website and censorship represses freedom of press, and violates public rights to access information, particularly for Papuans.

Franky Samperante, the Executive Director of PUSAKA Foundation says that the censorship of Suara Papua shows how Joko Widodo (Jokowi) is once again following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. He believes the censorship of Suara

Papua is an act of repression against alternative media that raises awareness regarding issues such as ongoing human rights violations, land grabs against indigenous people, massive environmental destruction, education and health problems, and poverty — issues that are rarely mentioned by the mainstream Indonesian press.

This mirrors concerns raised in a 2015 report from Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Something to Hide? Indonesia's Restrictions on Media Freedom and Rights Monitoring in Papua." The 75-page account outlines the government's roles in obstructing access to the provinces of Papua and West Papua. Phelim Kine, the Asia Director of HRW said that government access restrictions have for far too long made Papua Indonesia's "forbidden island" for foreign media and rights monitors. Foreign journalists describe an opaque and unpredictable permit application process in which they often never receive a final response. Many have waited fruitlessly for months – and in some cases years – for approval.

Journalists who enter Papua under a tourist visa face the threat of arrest by security forces, as experienced by Thomas Dandois and Valentine Bourrat in 2014. The pair — who were working for Franco-German TV channel Arte — was arrested by Indonesian security forces on 7 August while interviewing Areki Wanimbo, a local indigenous leader. Dandois and Valentine were sentenced to 2.5 months prison and fined \$US200. They were released on 28 October 2014. But Wanimbo — who was charged with conspiracy to commit treason — had to wait eight months before release.

Suara Papua was one among few publications regularly providing updates on Wanimbo when all eyes were focused on Dandois and Bourrat.

When Jokowi announced the opening of Papua to foreign journalists and monitors in 2015, it was met with strong resistance from senior government and security forces officials. The promise was never realised because Jokowi provide any specific written directives after the announcement. This opened space for non-compliance by state agencies and security forces opposed to loosening restrictions on foreign observers' access to Papua.

Various senior officials have since publicly contradicted the president's statement. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Luhut Binsar Panjaitan, has announced that the government will take serious action towards those who are trying to limit journalist access and work in Papua. However in contrast to this statement, HRW has discovered no changes on the ground. Andreas Harsono, the Indonesian researcher of HRW, has confirmed that foreign journalists seeking to travel to Papua are still required to provide details of their likely sources and dates of travel in advance. Those details are believed to be used by the security forces to keep an eye on the journalists' work and to prevent negative press circulating out from Papua.

As of 10 March, Suara Papua is online once again. But, despite the grand proclamations from government ministries and Presidential pledges for press freedom, it is no surprise that an increasingly intolerant Indonesia continues to block West Papua from the truth.

Andre Barahamin is researcher of PUSAKA Foundation, and member of Papua Itu Kita (Jakarta-based solidarity campaign for Papua). He is also serving as editor for IndoPROGRESS, an online platform connecting progressive scholars and activists.

INDIGENOUS PAPUANS ARE STILL DISCRIMINATED



UN Special Rapporteur on health, Dainius Puras when having a meeting with civil society in Jayapura, Friday (31/3/2017) – Jubi/Benny Mawel

Jayapura, Jubi – United Nations Special Rapporteur on health, Dainius Puras said distrust has made health problem in Papua become even more complicated. In a press conference, Monday (03/04/2017) in Jakarta, Puras explained that health problems in Papua as a serious complexity. He cited the Family Planning (KB) clearly showing there is distrust between Papuan native (OAP) and the Indonesian government.

“Even if the family planning program is run ethically and well, the Papuan people still think that KB aims to reduce the number of indigenous people,” said Puras, as quoted in satuharapan.com.

Puras understood the difficulty, but he can ensure the family planning program is actually a good program. However, if executed by force, it violates human rights.

“But if implemented in a good way, through responsible information, for not having a child every year, it’s good. However, in environments that have no trust to each other, it becomes a complication. So there must be a solution,” said Puras.

Puras also recognize there is still stigma and discrimination on health services perceived by Papuan indigenous. “There are serious concerns on the health of Papuan indigenous. Not only the high prevalence of HIV-AIDS, but also the level of infant and maternal mortality, and children malnutrition,” said Puras.

In a meeting with civil society in Jayapura, Friday (31/3/2017) a hospital attendant in Abepura hospital told him that the hospital limiting births of Papuans by way of terrorizing families of mother with a ‘death threat’.

“Actually, she could have a normal birth, but sometimes the doctor demand an operation or else it would cost live of the mother or child. The family then forced to sign an operation,” said her.

While a midwife from Yakuhimo said restrictions on reproductive rights is also an entrance for violence against women. In Yakuhimo the practice of family planning programs that are not informative has caused many women experienced domestic violence. (*)

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Man fined \$500 for West Papua protest at Indonesian consulate

The Age MARCH 23 2017 –

A man is refusing to pay a \$500 fine for trespassing at an Indonesian consulate to protest against its presence in West Papua, saying Australia has sold him out. Tyrone Gibb, 42, climbed the fence at the Indonesian consulate in Melbourne, and up to the building's first-floor balcony on January 6. He waved a separatist "Morning Star" flag for the Indonesian province of West Papua, which is banned in Indonesia.



The "morning star" flag of West Papua separatists. Photo: Amy Paton

Gibb pleaded guilty to trespassing on a protected property at the Melbourne Magistrates Court on Thursday. He was arrested and charged after the Indonesian government criticised Australian authorities for not doing so, almost a month after the protest was filmed and distributed on Facebook.

Papuans meets UN Special rapporteur Victims of Human Rights Abuses

Sunday, April 2nd, 2017 Jayapura, SATUHARA-PAN.COM - For two hours the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations (UN) health, Dainius Puras, met with civil society as well as witnesses and victims of human rights violations (of human rights) in the field of health in Jayapura on Friday (31 / 03).

The witnesses who testified came from Jayapura, Wame-na, Merauke and Manokwari.

From Manokwari who testified was Alexander Nekenem, Susten Ferdinanda W.ibo-Yatipai and Advocate Theresje Julianty Gasperz (LP3BH Manokwari).

Director LP3BH Manokwari, Yan Christian Warinussy say, Alex gave testimony about access to health care for political prisoners and criminals in Detention Police / Brimob, and Manokwari Prison.

"Ibo sister testified about the pattern of health services for First People of Papua in hospitals in West Papua and Mrs. Theresje about assisting prisoners LP3BH experience in obtaining medical services in detention," said Yan Chris-

tian, in an email to satuharapan.com.\according to Director LP3BH Manokwari, Puras on the occasion to listen to the testimony of the witnesses and victims of human rights abuses in the health sector in Papua (Foto: Ist)



West Papuan villages awarded forest permits

Hans Nicholas Jong The Jakarta Post
Sorong, Papua | Fri, March 10, 2017 |



People of the nomadic Korowai forest tribe in Papua process the sagu palm.

Residents of Manggroholo village and Sira village in South Sorong, West Papua province, rejoiced on Thursday as their villages were the first in Papua to have their rights to manage the island's forests acknowledged by the government.

The South Sorong administration handed over the *hutan desa* (village forest) permits to representatives of the villagers on Thursday.

The Environment and Forestry Ministry defines a "village forest" as a state forest not encumbered by previous rights and managed by a village to improve its welfare.

Fredrik Sagisolo, the head of a local indigenous community alliance, said he expected the permit issuance to be followed by the recognition of other *hutandesas* in West Papua.

"We wanted our customary land rights to be wholly recognized because we knew that we had a lot of potential, but it was not us who managed the potential," he said.

Greenpeace Indonesia heralded the acknowledgment as a landmark decision as it marked the first time villagers in Papua received rights to manage their own forests under the village forest scheme.

The scheme was part of President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's land reform plan, which included the distribution of 12.7 million hectares of land access to local communities, villagers and indigenous people.

"After almost 10 years of fighting, finally today our friends received a permit to manage *hutan desa*, which will allow freedom and sovereignty in managing *hutan desa*," Greenpeace Indonesia forest campaigner Kiki

Taufik said during the permit-giving ceremony in Teminabuan, South Sorong.

He said the villagers had been fighting for their rights to manage around 3,500 hectares of forests from palm oil companies that wanted to convert the forest areas into oil palm plantations since 2013. (rin)

Moi indigenous people block road in opposition to oil palm



The sky was blue that morning and the sun's intense heat would burn your skin. Hundreds of people from the Moi indigenous community in Sorong Regency, West Papua arrived at the crossroads at the entrance to the administrative centre of Klaso sub-district, blocking the street while they unfurled banners stating their opposition to oil palm expansion in their ancestral domain. Moi people from three sub-districts in Sorong Regency took part in the road blockade on the morning of Wednesday 22nd March – Klaso, Saengkeduk and a new prospective sub-district Sele-kobo. It was timed to coincide with a meeting between the Sorong Regency government and oil palm operator PT Mega Mustika Plantation with the local community, which would take place in the administrative centre of Klaso sub-district. PT Mega Mustika Plantation is one of several oil palm companies which has been issued permits by the local government. Bupati decree 66.1/127/2014 awarded the company a plantation business licence for 9,835 hectares, based on the location permit 221/2011 which had previously been issued on 23rd December 2011

According to Agus Kalalu, who is from the Moi ethnic group, this action to close the road was an expression of the people's frustration, because none of their previous actions had been met with a meaningful response from the company or government. "This is the fifth time that people from the three sub-districts have taken action", Agus said.

The first action started in Saengkeduk village, and was followed by a second action in Klaben village in 2012. The third action was in front of the Sorong District Legislative Council building in 2016 and then most recently during a meeting with the Sorong Regency Forestry Agency in 2016.

David Ulimpa, a Moi indigenous community leader as well as being one of the customary landowners in Klaso sub-district, stated the reasons for opposition to the oil palm plantation in a speech, believing that it would have no effect on the community's economic wellbeing. On the contrary it would bring hardship.

The people would not only lose their ancestral domain, they would also end up as labourers on their own traditional lands. He took as an example a case from Klamono sub-district, where PT Henrison Inti Persada, the company working in the area, has fired workers, local people, just because they were demanding their rights.

"In Malalilis village, Klayili sub-district in 2016, people who used to work in the plantation were fired by PT Henrison Inti Persada, just because they were demanding their right. The company terminated their contracts, but the land they were working on was their own ancestral land," said David.

Not only that, last year two children of people who had been fired were detained at the Sorong Regency Police Headquarters just because they were making demands to the company about their parents' rights.

Another reason, according to David, is that the land and forest belonging to the Moi indigenous community is not that vast, meaning that if a oil palm company were to come and take over the land, it would have an effect on their means of livelihood.

"Where would we look for food? We have always been very dependent on nature. For that reason, I'm standing on the Kalaso land, representing all the clans here, making a pledge in the name of God and the ancestors of the Malamoi land, that we will not accept oil palm companies in our area", David made clear.

Mialim, a community leader from Saengkeduk sub-district, asked Lazarus Malagam, the third assistant regional secretary of Sorong Regency who was present at the meeting, to reveal immediately which clans had signed agreements with PT Mega Mustika Plantation.

"We have already expressed our opposition several times and I'm asking the third assistant regional secretary of the Sorong administration, Lazarus Malagam, to let this be the last time. We, the people of Saengkeduk sub-district are one hundred percent opposed to PT Mega Mustika Plantation," Mialim added.

As a follow-up to the action, the people made a pledge in their traditional way, planting a certain sort of bamboo in the ground and praying that the people would never again accept oil palm companies in the Saengkeduk sub-district. Unfortunately, the company representatives soon left the meeting without giving any response to the community's protest.

"We are annoyed that the company went home, they really should have listened to what we want and witnessed the cutting of the bamboo to show we didn't accept them," Mialim said.

In response to the people's demands, third assistant secretary Lazarus Malagam, stated that he would support the people's wishes as long as there was unity and consistency between all the different clans.

"Don't let it happen that everybody is in opposition today but then next year there are clans that suddenly turn around and accept. This can create social tensions, because people will surely think that one group could do this then why couldn't another. But if we want to say no, then let's all oppose together. If everyone is in opposition today, then let's not let oil palm come into the same area in the future.

Rounding off the action, representatives of the indigenous communities in Klamono, Saengkeduk and Seleko sub-district handed over a statement of their opposition to the local government, as represented by Lazarus Malagam.

"I will inform the leaders of Klamono and Saengkeduk sub-districts about the outcomes of the meetings and any related decisions in the near future", Lazarus promised.

Distribution of the Moi ethnic group in Papua Barat.

According to the head of the everyday governing body of the Indigenous People's Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN) of the greater Sorong Region, Yusak Konstantinus Magablo, the whole of the Moi ancestral land comprises 400,000 hectares, of which only a small portion has been mapped through participatory mapping. "There are ten Moi sub-ethnic groups, which each have their own boundaries. This sub-ethnic groups are in turn divided into around one hundred large and small clans known as *gelet*", Yusak explained.

The Moi sub-ethnic groups include Moi Kalasa, Moi Kalagedi, Moi Malamsimsa, Moi Amber, Moi Malayik, Moi Seget, Moi Kelim, Moi Walala, Moi Abun and Moi Malaibin, but only a few of these are widely known, mostly those in Sorong regency.

The Moi people can be found in almost all areas of Papua's Bird's Head Peninsula. In Raja Ampat, the Moi Mayya, were once considered a sub-group of the Moi people but are now their own ethnic group with several sub-groups and *gelet*.

The Moi ethnic group shares with other ethnic groups in Papua the special characteristic of forming *gelet*. A *gelet* could disappear if it becomes part of another ethnic group. Alternatively, other ethnic groups are open to becoming part of the Moi people.

One reason for this could be if they were 'evicted by nature' in the form of a natural disaster or other natural phenomena. Moi people have their own social structure, at the highest level are the indigenous leaders, comprised of the *nedla*, *neliging* (people who speak well), *nefulus* (historic people), *ne kook* (rich people) dan *nefoos* (holy people). There are also traditional officials, such as *usmas*, *tukang finise* or those who lead the affairs in the traditional buildings, *tulukma*, *untlan* (teachers at traditional schools called *kambik*), and *kmaben*.

At the lower level are the *wiliwi*, young males who have undergone traditional education in the Kambik and have had a traditional graduation ceremony. This group is being trained to become leaders and so they are taught the philosophy of leadership and thorough details of Moi customary laws and practices.

Source: Mongabay Indonesia [http://](http://www.mongabay.co.id/2017/03/29/tolak-perkebunan-sawit-masyarakat-adat-moi-palang-jalan/)

www.mongabay.co.id/2017/03/29/tolak-perkebunan-sawit-masyarakat-adat-moi-palang-jalan/

Uganda parliament pledges support



Federal Republic of West Papua's Jacob Rumbiak (left) hands over a the country's flag to Deputy Speaker of Parliament Jacob Oulanyah, during a courtesy visit to Parliament on April 7th

Jacob Oulanyah said parliament was ready to support the group's cause using its connections with parliaments in other countries.

Parliament of Uganda has pledged to support West Papua, a province of Indonesia fighting for independence to realise its dream.

This is after its leader petitioned parliament and presented heartrending accounts of sufferings under the rule of the island nation.

In a petition presented to the Parliament deputy speaker Jacob Oulanya on Friday, Jacob Rumbiak, the leader of United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) said they want Uganda to influence other countries in the region to support their bid for independence at the United Nations.

He told Saturday Vision that he believes Uganda's strength at African Union (AU) can galvanize the African vote in New York and help them clinch independence by 2019.

Saturday Vision has learnt that besides Parliament, the group also wants to meet President Yoweri Museveni over their bid.

Formerly under Dutch rule, West Papua is fighting to shake off the firm rule of Indonesia, under which it was placed courtesy of a UN-backed treaty in 1969. The island maintains that Indonesia's rule over it is illegal because the UN-sanctioned ballot -- 'the Act of Free Choice', which legitimized West Papua as a province of Indonesia in 1969, was fraudulent. Under the act, 1000 people, who were chosen to vote on behalf of the island, were coerced by Indonesian military to vote against the independence bid.

With a land size of 162, 371 square miles, West Papua is nearly twice the size of Uganda. However, Uganda boasts of a population eight times bigger and has better human development indicators than the island's four million people according to online sources.

Rumbiak blames the above on an orchestrated genocide and the brutal rule they have suffered under Indonesia since 1969.



West Papua Minister of Foreign Affairs Jacob Rumbiak (left) hands over a shirt to Deputy Speaker of Parliament Jacob Oulanyah

A request for a comment from the Indonesia's foreign affairs ministry had not been replied by press time.

West Papua separatists blame the West, particularly US, for turning a blind eye to the violations, which they say is a compromise with Indonesia for mining rights in the resource-rich island.

Saturday Vision has learnt that West Papua is pushing for independence via a United Nations sponsored referendum, the way East Timor did in getting independence from Indonesia in 1999.

Oulanyah said parliament was ready to support the group's cause using its connections with parliaments in other countries. "We will do whatever our parliament and the nation can to ensure that by the end of June this year, that resolutions is heard and discussed in the UN," he said.

He added: "Parliament can also identify different legislators to propose the motion, support and debate it in House. We can send the resolutions to other East African Parliaments including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Eastern Africa countries."



The Deputy Speaker of Parliament Jacob Oulanyah (second right) posing for a picture with Minister of Foreign Affairs Federal Republic of West Papua Jacob Rumbiak (centre) while Glory to Glory Ministries Senior Pastor Bahimbisombwe (second left), Simon Mulongo (left) and Ned Bryne (right) look on, during a visit to Parliament

Deputy Foreign Affairs minister, Okello Oryem, said Uganda was ready to meet the group. "But Uganda and Indonesia enjoy good diplomatic ties and we respect the latter's internal affairs," Oryem said.

Oulanyah advised the group to mobilise the young people but through the diplomatic and international protocols in their country to mount pressure on the existing colonizers.

Rumbiak said his country has the largest Gold and copper deposits in world. "It is one of the reasons we are being colonized," he said.

Indonesia Permits Rare Papua Access to UN Health Rights Expert

Visit Shines Light on Government Policy Failures
Andreas Harsono Indonesia Researcher

The United Nations special rapporteur on the right to health did something remarkable last week: he traveled to the Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Papua. Dainius Puras' two-day trip to Papua, part of a two-week official visit, was notable for the simple fact the Indonesian government allowed it to happen. Given the government's long history of blocking scrutiny of conditions in Papua by foreign media and international observers, including UN experts, this development may indicate a change in policy.

In 2013, the government rejected the proposed visit of Frank La Rue, then-UN special rapporteur on freedom of expression, because he insisted on travelling to Papua. The government has justified limiting international observers' access to Papua on security grounds, but the reality is the government and the security forces are just unwilling to face criticism from nongovernmental organizations and the foreign media. Puras' observations about health conditions in Papua are a searing indictment of the government's failings on public health. He singled-out the fact that ethnic Papuans "are two times more likely to have HIV/AIDS than the rest of the population and new infections are on the rise." He called for the development of "culturally sensitive"

HIV/AIDS treatment in the region. Other statistics are equally alarming: Papua has the lowest life expectancy in Indonesia and the country's highest infant, child, and maternal mortality rates. Despite Papua's glaring health service deficiencies, the government severely restricts access of international NGOs, including those that provide much-needed healthcare services. In August 2010, the government banned from Papua the Dutch international aid organization Cordaid. The government asserted the organization had assisted Papua pro-independence activists, an allegation Cordaid denied.

Puras' concerns about health rights in Papua should be a wakeup call to the government that its current policies on health in Papua are seriously inadequate. The government should recognize that international NGOs – and allowing media to freely report in Papua – can play a crucial role in supporting official efforts to fill gaps in public health delivery systems. Permitting Puras' visit will hopefully open the door to wider international access to Papua, so that the government can get support to address the appallingly poor health indicators of ethnic Papuans.

Indonesia UNHCR reaction diverts from serious violations in Papua

PIANGO 5/3/17

Indonesia's scathing attack on Vanuatu at the 34th UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) session is an attempt to divert the international community's attention away from the on-going human rights violations taking place in West Papua.

These sentiments were echoed by the Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO) executive director, Emele Duituturaga after Indonesia criticised Vanuatu of "politicising the issue of West Papua for its domestic political purposes" at the UNHRC in Geneva.

"Indonesia's reaction was quite telling of its unwillingness to respect and uphold the values of what it means to belong to the international community of nations – the UN."

"Their response was to resort to divide and conquer by picking on Vanuatu and then again offering to help Vanuatu with its alleged human rights issues in response to the Pacific coalition's request to treat a member of the Pacific family – West Papua - with respect and dignity," Duituturaga said.

She said the Pacific Islands Coalition on West Papua (PICWP) of which PIANGO is a member of would not be requesting the UN to send special rapporteurs into West Papua if they didn't have enough evidence to prove that West Papuans were suffering.

"Indonesia plays an important role in Pacific stability and peace, their contribution to the region is widely known and appreciated. Pacific governments and civil society would not just as easily undermine such an important relationship."

"However, when there is overwhelming evidence that thousands of West Papuans who are Pacific Islanders have lost their lives as they tried to raise alternative views in the governance of their resources with state authorities and even to motivate seven Pacific countries to form a coalition on West Papua, Indonesia must realise it can no longer afford to feign innocence at the UN."

She said according to several human rights reports, the number of victims and cases of extra-judicial killings and torture in West Papua have not significantly reduced between 2012 and 2016.

"The number of political arrests has exponentially increased over the last 3 years and all victims of torture and killings that our partners were able to find were indigenous Papuans. While indigenous Papuans make up only some 40% of the population, they make up 100% of the victims. There is a clear element of racial violence in the practice of security forces."

Duituturaga said the systematic disempowerment of West Papuans is such that literacy rates in remote regions have dramatically decreased, with some villages registering literacy rates as low as 20 percent.

"Since 2007, Indonesia has not allowed any special procedures to visit West Papua. The region is largely closed for international human rights observers. Foreign journalists get either no access or are accompanied by intelligence, making independent fact finding impossible."

"That's just the tip of the iceberg and that's what PIANGO representative, Laitia Tamata is helping to support the PICWP delegation raise awareness on in Geneva."

As concerned citizens from around the world, we call on you to urgently address the human rights situation in West Papua and to review the UN's involvement in the administration of West Papua that led to its unlawful annexation by Indonesia -- and the human rights abuse that continues today. We call upon you to: - appoint a Special Representative to investigate the human rights situation in West Papua; - put West Papua back on the Decolonisation

Committee agenda and ensure their right to self-determination -- denied to them in 1969 -- is respected by holding an Internationally Supervised Vote (in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolutions 1514 and 1541 (XV)).

Help to end the genocide in West Papua



24,852 signers. Let's reach 30,000

In August 2017 six young swimmers will embark on a 69km journey up the length of Lake Geneva. They will carry with them a petition and the voices of thousands of people demanding an internationally supervised vote for the people of West Papua.

Swim for West Papua is the Free West Papua campaign's 2017 grass roots movement to secure a free and fair independence referendum for the West Papuan people who have been the victims of gross human rights violation and slow-motion genocide which began in the 1960s. This 'people-power' petition directly compliments the higher diplomatic efforts of the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) and International Parliamentarians for West Papua (IPWP).

Swim for West Papua is your chance to add your voice and demand the United Nations uphold their mandate and put human rights before mineral rights, so the West Papuan people can determine their own future without fear of reprisal. You can make a difference. Sign the petition here.

Add you voice, #BackTheSwim and help #LetWestPapuaVote.

The United Liberation Movement for West Papua - ULMWP has released this media statement on the manual petition being launched by the people of West Papua today.

Sign the petition to be delivered to:

Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres

As concerned citizens from around the world, we call on you to urgently address the human rights situation in West Papua and to review the UN's involvement in the administration of West Papua that led to its unlawful annexation by Indonesia -- and the human rights abuse that continues today. We call upon you to: - appoint a Special Representative to investigate the human rights situation in West Papua; - put West Papua back on the Decolonisation Committee agenda and ensure their right to self-determination -- denied to them in 1969 -- is respected by

holding an Internationally Supervised Vote (in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolutions 1514 and 1541 (XV)).

MEDIA STATEMENT

5th April, 2017

United West Papuan people launch the manual petition for an Internationally Supervised Vote

Today 5th April 2017 marks exactly 56 years to the day that the Nieuw Guinea Raad or New Guinea Council first met in West Papua and affirmed the fundamental right to self-determination of the West Papuan people. This council was the first parliament of the West Papuan people and it was tasked to help ensure a peaceful path to a decolonised and Independent West Papua.

In commemoration of the Nieuw Guinea Raad, today the people of West Papua reaffirmed our fundamental right to self-determination. A gathering attended by around 1000 people was held in Waena to launch the manual petition for an Internationally Supervised Vote for West Papua.

The three main Independence organisations within West Papua: the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation (WPNCL), the Federated Republic of West Papua (NRFPP) and the West Papua National Parliament (PNWP), were all represented under the umbrella of the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP).

All three organisations stood together to declare their support for this petition, thereby supporting the Westminster Declaration for an Internationally Supervised Vote for West Papua. The vote itself is to be held in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolutions 1514 and 1541 (XV).

This global petition which was originally launched at the UK Parliament in Westminster has gone around the world collecting tens of thousands of signatures in both manual and digital format.

Speaking on the launching of the manual petition in West Papua today, ULMWP Spokesperson Benny Wenda said "This is a truly historic and important moment for the people of West Papua as it is the first time the three main Independence organisations have signed the petition calling for an Internationally Supervised Vote in West Papua. I emphasise the need for unity among all West Papuan people and organisations to support this petition. We are united as one in our struggle for our fundamental right to self-determination."

Benny Wenda went on to say "We hope that this will also encourage further international solidarity for West Papua, at a parliamentary and grassroots level. The time is now. I appeal to everyone around the world to support the West Papuan people's campaign for self-determination. Let West Papua Vote."

After collecting many more signatures from around the world, in August the petition will be taken by a team of swimmers across Lake Geneva and into the United Nations. More information about the movement to Back The Swim can be found on the Swim for West Papua website www.swimforwestpapua.com

5 FACTS EVERY AUSTRALIAN should KNOW about the LOMBOK TREATY



image: Australian Boss of the Department of Foreign Affairs Peter Varghese (front left) with Indonesian Head of Counter Terrorism Saut Usman (front right), Back - Australian Defence Minister Payne (back left), Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi and Indonesian Defence minister Ryamizard Ryacudu.

1. Indonesia pressured Australia to sign a treaty in Lombok in 2006. The treaty ensured Australia's recognition of Indonesia's claim to sovereignty of West Papua. The treaty meant that Australia could not support West Papua's legal right to self determination or draw attention to Indonesia's human rights violations in West Papua. It also meant Australia would no longer accept West Papuan refugees' claim to political asylum and send them back.
2. The treaty was Indonesia's response to the Howard Government's decision to grant asylum to 43 peaceful West Papuan refugees. Indonesia made it clear they did not want Australia to become a stage for the West Papuan refugees and their struggle for Independence.
3. Indonesia thought that the Lombok Treaty agreement also meant that Australia would outlaw West Papuan Independence or separatism activities in Australia.
4. In 2014, new treaty terms were signed as a result of Australia getting caught spying on Indonesia. The Indonesian ambassador was recalled and new terms of the Lombok Treaty were signed by Foreign Minister Julie Bishop who gushed that she "looked forward to gaining benefits of working more closely together".
5. Australia's Army Chief apologised to Indonesia on February 9, 2017 for what Indonesia saw as disobeying the Lombok Treaty. (displaying West Papuan Independence materials in an SASR military base in Perth). The President of Indonesia made a noticeably upgraded visit to Australia and announced that the President of Indonesia would meet Malcolm Turnbull on February 26. No doubt Widodo will place further demands on Australia and this is likely the reason for his visit. Indonesia have made it more than clear that their intention is to attempt to shut up the voice of the Australian people in support of West Papuan independence and the increasing support for West Papuan self determination.

image taken from getty images
Free West Papua Campaign
Rob Wesley-Smith

Indonesia fails to address major human rights issues: Coalition

Safrin La Batu
The Jakarta Post
Jakarta | Fri, April 7, 2017 | 01:37 pm

Indonesia has not yet improved its policies on the promotion and protection of human rights, despite the evaluations in 2008 and 2012 of the United Nations-sponsored Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a coalition of civil society groups has said.

The Civil Society Coalition for the Third UPR said Indonesia agreed to receive 150 of the 180 recommendations issued by the UPR in 2012 that highlighted major human rights violations in the country and provide ways to address the problems.

"The government has not held a formal, open and participatory mechanism to follow up on the recommendations. We see the government has not executed most of the recommendations," the coalition said in a statement sent from Geneva, Switzerland.

Among the issues highlighted in the 2012 recommendations were 20 regarding freedom of religion. The UPR said mob violence involving hard-line Islamic groups was still rampant in the country.

"A number of recommendations in the 2012 UPR have not been clearly, firmly and constitutionally implemented," said Elga Sarapung, who represents the Indonesian Interreligious Network (JAIL), which is part of the coalition.

"The right to have a house of worship and the right to exercise beliefs, as well as to be free from intimidation and violence made in the name of religion, are not fully protected by the government," he added.

Besides freedom of religion, the coalition also highlighted a number of other human rights issues, such as foreign journalists being barred from entering Papua and Indonesia's death penalty for convicted drug traffickers.

Indonesia: Child marriage, genital cutting 'unacceptable' – UN

By Max Walden | 5th April 2017 in Asian Correspondent

UNITED Nations special rapporteur on the right to health Dainius Pūras has released the preliminary observations from his first trip to Indonesia, stating that gendered inequality leading to "early marriage and female genital mutilation" is "not acceptable".

Addressing the media on Monday, the special rapporteur emphasised the need to improve access to health for women and girls, particularly reproductive health education, in addition to the need to address high rates of HIV/AIDs in Papua and improve mental health services.

Pūras said a range of important legal and practical barriers remain to the realisation of the right to health, and that certain groups including women are still subject to violence and discrimination.

“I was discouraged to hear that planning and delivery of [women’s health] services and sexuality education is being influenced by certain groups who continue to oppose policies, instruments and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health rights,” he said.



People take part in a rally calling for women’s rights and equality ahead of International Women’s Day in Jakarta, Indonesia, March 4, 2017. Source: Reuters/Fatima Elkarrim

It is estimated that around 60 million Indonesian women, or half the female population, has undergone female circumcision. Pre-marital sex is heavily stigmatised, so access to female contraception and sexual health tests is minimal.

During his time in Indonesia, Pūras met with a number of civil society organisations, including the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), the Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) and the Indonesia Child Protection Commission.

The special rapporteur visited a range of locations across the archipelago, including the capital Jakarta, Padang in Sumatra, Flores in impoverished eastern Indonesia, as well as Jayapura in the restricted province of Papua.

“I am concerned about the health status of ethnic Papuans, who are two times more likely to have HIV/AIDS than the rest of the population, and new infections are on the rise,” said Pūras who urged stakeholders to build trust and enhance access to culturally-sensitive health services.

The special rapporteur also raised concern with Indonesia’s hardline drug policies – a hallmark of Joko Widodo’s presidency.

“Criminalisation of drug use only fuels discrimination, violence and exclusion driving people away from the health services they need and seriously undermining public health efforts,” he said.



The UN says Indonesia needs better mechanisms for the promotion and protection of women’s sexual and reproductive health rights. Source: Reuters/Beawiharta

Pūras also explained that mental health awareness was emerging, however that “it needs additional commitment and resources to develop a system that promotes the mental health of everyone.”

Strong stigma against mental illness in Indonesia means there is a profound lack of community-based support services.

The country needs to implement a system that “effectively treats and prevents common mental health conditions at the community level and respects the rights of persons with psycho-social and intellectual disabilities,” he said. Human Rights Watch released a report into the state of mental health treatment in Indonesia entitled *Living in Hell* in 2016, which documented the horrific abuse of people with psychosocial disabilities placed in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions.

The Special Rapporteur will present a comprehensive report on his visit to Indonesia to the UN Human Rights Council in June 2018.

22 February 2017

A Written Submission to the UN Human Rights Council by the Asian Legal Resource Centre

INDONESIA: No justice for past human rights abuses as the government aims to avoid the Human Rights Court

The Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC) wishes to inform the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) of the following: No progress is being made. There is an unwillingness on the part of the government to resolve past human rights abuses using proper mechanisms. These mechanisms are under the standard of fair trial principles, the rule of law and international human rights instruments to which Indonesia is a State party. For the past two years, under President Joko Widodo’s administration, the government has aimed at avoiding judicial mechanisms and introduced a new alternative mechanism. It is called the National Council. It would settle disputes between victims and perpetrators of past human rights abuses, by compromise and consensus. The National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas Ham) has issued an investigative report that concluded seven cases fall within the allegations of gross violations of human rights. However, the Attorney General (AG) is reluctant to bring the cases to the ad hoc Human Rights Court as mandated by Law No. 26 of 2000 on Human Rights. These seven cases are: student shootings in Trisakti and Semanggi 1998-1999, enforced disappearances of student activists 1997-1998, May tragedy 13-15 May 1998, Talangsari massacre 6-7 February 1989, 1965-1966 massacre, Mysterious shooting 1981-1983, Wasior and Wamena Papua 2001-2003

Recently, the government through the Coordinating Minister of Politics, Law and Security, retired Army General Wiranto, introduced a National Council. It is to bring back assembly and consensus (Dewan Kerukunan Nasional) in resolving past human rights abuses under Suharto. Moreover, the government wants to set up a reconciliation mechanism without having a clear concept of what kind of justice for the victims. Ironically, this idea is supported by the National Commission on Human Rights. It has a specific mandate under Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights and Law No. 26 of 2000 on the Human Rights Court. Their task is to investigate and submit an investigative report to the Attorney General. To further complicate matters, the Attorney General does not agree to the gov-

ernment proposal to resolve past human rights abuses through a non judicial-process.

This year, the government, through Army General Wiranto (retired) and Komnas HAM, announced that the case of student shootings in Trisakti and Semanggi 1998-1999 will be resolved through a non-judicial process. The decision has been made without a clear reason and due consideration. There is no explanation about the investigative report issued by Komnas HAM in this case. The report concluded that there is an alleged gross violation of human rights in the case of student shootings in Trisakti and Semanggi 1998-1999. Moreover, the report clearly stated that the case falls within the requirements of crimes against humanity. The announcement of a non-judicial process to be followed was made by Army General Wiranto (retired). He is a person with a dubious human rights record who should be prosecuted for his actions, rather than awarded a seat in government. This appointment created a controversy as the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) had issued a final investigative report on the alleged involvement of Wiranto in the shooting of student activists at Trisakti and Semanggi 1998-1999. One can add to this: State negligence in handling the riots and mass rapes against Indonesian Chinese 13-15 May 1998 plus Crimes against Humanity in East Timor after the referendum in 1999.

An arrest warrant was filed at the Dili district court by the Attorney General of East Timor against retired Army General Wiranto. But President Widodo gave no consideration to this matter.

Parliament issued four recommendations in the case of the enforced disappearances against student activists 1997-1998. One of the recommendations was the setting up of an ad hoc Human Rights Court for this case. It has never been implemented. During his presidential campaign, President Widodo promised to initiate a search for the missing persons--it never took place. In fact, President Widodo has shown his reluctance to bring the case to the ad hoc Human Rights Court.

A basic problem that the government has yet to resolve in the last ten years is: how to address sluggish communication and coordination between the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) and the Attorney General (AG). The President has authority over the Attorney General but has yet to show any intention of comprehensively evaluating the AG's reluctance to continue the Komnas HAM's investigative report. There was no clear information and direction provided by the AG for Komnas HAM as to which part of the report needed further clarification or additional information. Instead of addressing this problem, the AG and Komnas have changed their stance. They prefer to bring past abuses to a compromise mechanism and avoid the judiciary process altogether.

In the last few months, President Widodo has shown to the public and the media his close relationship to Prabowo Subianto. He was a former commander of the Special Armed Forces (Komandan Jendral Kopassus) and of Army Strategic Reserve (Panglima Kostrad). According to the Komnas HAM's investigative report, Prabowo was allegedly involved in the case of the enforced disappearances of student activists in 1997-1998. Prabowo who was dismissed from military service has never been brought before the Human Rights Court. In contrast, an examination process, conducted by the Soldiers' Honorary Council (DKP) in August 1998, imposed punishments as follows: Lieutenant General Probowo Subianto, Major General Muchdi PR and Colonel Chairawan K. Nusyirwan, all relieved of their military duties; Jakarta Military Commander (Pangdam Jaya), Major General Sjafrie Syamsudin, allegedly involved in the case, remains unaffected.

The ALRC recommends that the Government should take all necessary measures to ensure that past human rights violations are redressed. Therefore the government needs to:

- a. Evaluate and stop any decisions to set up a compromise mechanism, without a clear concept of justice with compensation for victims.
- b. Evaluate and replace the Attorney General as Chairperson. Choose a new person with strong motivation and commitment to continue the investigative report of past human rights abuses.
- c. Implement, consistently, the Nawacita Document (vision and mission). Prioritize the following items--past human rights abuses, compensation for victims, guarantees of non-recurrence and a stop to impunity.
- d. Use the judicial process under Law No. 26 of 2000 on the Human Rights Court. Support judicial and reconciliation mechanisms which should be complementary. They cannot replace or avoid each other in the fight against impunity of past human rights abuses.

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AWPA SA Incorporated is a Non Government Organisation that supports West Papuan Human rights and Papuans rights to self determination . Our newsletter is published every 3 months. For those wanting more frequent news please email us to arrange monthly or even daily email updates .