

Press Release

Current Fatalities in Intan Jaya, West Papua

24 September 2020

The OPM Diplomatic Board is calling on Indonesia to end the ongoing military occupation of West Papua. The members of United Nations General Assembly should condemn the current fatality where the Indonesian military (TNI) shot dead Papua Priest Yeremia Zanabani in Intan Jaya on 22 September 2020. Yeremia was in his garden at the time and received six bullets to his body. An estimated 600 civilians have been murdered by the Indonesian armed forces in West Papua over the last two years. For 58 years now since the illegal take-over of West Papua by Indonesia, the TNI continues to violate international humanitarian principles by targeting the civilian population.

The murder of Priest Yeremia is yet another number to be added to an estimated 500,000 civilians murdered during the illegal occupation. Instead of targeting the West Papuan OPM resistances fighters, the TPNPB, Indonesia continues to kill innocent civilians. The Indonesian military and government thus classify themselves as war criminals. This is a crime against humanity.

As widely reported, Indonesia's military-controlled 'Act of Free Choice' in 1969, hand-picking 0.1% of the Papuan population to agree to Indonesian annexation, failed to meet the United Nations requirement of self-determination and UN resolution 2504 only took note of the Secretary-General's report. There has never been a UN resolution recognising Indonesian sovereignty over West Papua and the people of West Papua continue their legitimate struggle for freedom as available under UN resolution 2621.

The U.N. members during the current General Assembly must demand access to West Papua and allow the U.N High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit and access the Territory. Despite repeated promises from Indonesia's President Widodo, access by UN officials, foreign diplomats, academics and journalists is still denied. It is also vital that pressure be applied to Indonesia to complete ratification of the International Criminal Court so that these war criminals can be held to account.

Some 45,000 people have been internally displaced since military operations recommenced in 2018. Women, the elderly, and children in particular have died due to exposure and malnutrition. Civilian men are the target of the Indonesian military and shot and tortured indiscriminately. Thousands have fled to neighbouring Papua New Guinea seeking refuge.

Amatus Douw, the International Representative for OPM's Diplomatic Board, strongly condemns these ongoing civilian fatalities and atrocities, and prevention of access to West Papua by UN diplomats, UN agencies, and the media. Indonesia must open the door to the UN Human Rights Commissioner, foreign aid workers, and foreign journalists. UN members must demand that Indonesia be held to account otherwise they are also complicit.

If West Papua remains closed to UN agencies and foreign media and academics, the armed conflict will further escalate and require United Nations Security Council intervention in order to maintain international peace and security. A Peacekeeping Mission is urgently required

because Indonesia is deploying tens of thousands of soldiers across the Territory and ignoring the U.N Secretary-General's call to renounce armed conflict during the Covid -19 pandemic.

Therefore, we are calling on the U.N. Secretary-General to use his good office to provide recommendations to the Security Council concerning this armed conflict and its ongoing fatalities in order to bring a peaceful and lasting settlement and freedom to the people of West Papua as available under UN resolution 1514 (XV).

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