

TOK BLONG PASIFIK

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email • general@pacificpeoplespartnership.org

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'Papua, Land of Peace'

Written By | Neles Tebay

Since 2000, the leaders of all religions, including Christianity (Catholic and Protestant Churches), Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, in West Papua have been united to work together for peace. Their peace campaign is now conducted under the motto 'Papua, Land of Peace.'

natural resources, stigmatization, the imposition of government policy, military operations, extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary detention, sexual harassment, as well as the denial of their rights to participation, freedom of expression and of assembly, and cultural identity and expression. The Papuans' support

for the declaration of West Papua as 'a zone of peace' reflects their deepest desire to live in dignity on their own land, where they are not treated as separatists but as human beings.

Supporting the Papuans' peace initiative, the Lembaga Study

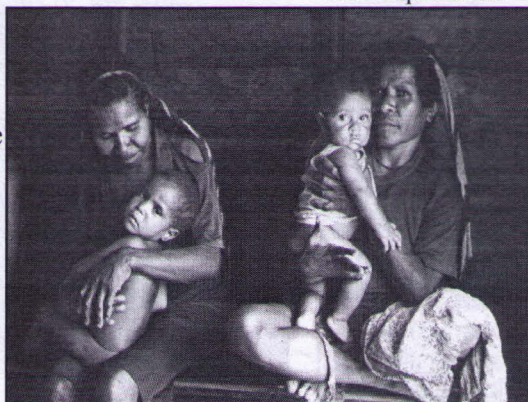
dan Advokasi Hak-hak Asasi Manusia (ELSHAM), a Jayapura-based human rights NGO, was joined by the provincial government, the Provincial Legislative Council and the police in holding a conference to discuss the concept of Papua as 'a zone of peace'. The religious leaders also support the idea of West Papua as a peace zone for all peoples without discrimination, not only a territory without violence, but "a region in which people uphold brotherhood, reject violence, and refrain from all conflict." 'Papua, Land of Peace' has now been adopted as a shared vision, meaning that West Papua should be a territory, where all people can enjoy harmonious relationships with God, themselves, others, and the whole of creation, and can grow and realize their potential as full human beings.

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The interfaith peace campaign was initiated by indigenous Papuans. In June 1999, young Papuans and students brought up the idea of 'a zone of peace' at a meeting held in Serui, the capital of Yapen Waropen district. After obtaining support from the Papua Presidium Council (Presidium Dewan Papua/PDP), Marthen Tanawane, the Papuan tribal leader in Serui, declared Yapen Waropen district as 'a zone of peace'.



The idea of a peace zone was then discussed in more detail by the leaders of some 252 tribes who are united in the Papuan Customary Council (Dewan Adat Papua/DAP). West Papua, for the tribal leaders, should be "a territory free from violence, oppression, and grief" because it has become a land of oppression since the beginning of Indonesian occupation over the territory in 1963.

The Papuans have been victimized by Indonesian oppression through psychological repression, social domination, unfair exploitation of



Pacific Peoples' Partnership
407-620 View Street
Victoria BC, Canada, V8W 1J6
Phone 250-381-4131
www.pacificpeoplespartnership.org

WHO WE ARE

Established in 1975, Pacific Peoples' Partnership is a unique non-governmental, non-profit organization working with communities and organizations in the South and North Pacific to support shared aspirations for peace, cultural integrity, social justice, human dignity, and environmental sustainability by:

- Promoting increased understanding among Canadians on issues of importance to the people of the Pacific islands.
- Advocating for social, political, and economic policy change at all levels.
- Fostering the development of sustainable communities in the Pacific.
- Facilitating links between indigenous peoples of the Pacific islands and Aboriginal peoples of Canada.
- Strengthening relations between Canadian and Pacific island communities and civil society organizations.

Tetepare Island – Rangering in the South Pacific

CUSO Cooperants at Work

Written By | Jeanine and Mike D'Antonio

Most rangers that I know wear shoes when they patrol the back-country or pick up a chainsaw to clear out some deadfall. Most rangers that I know use a myriad of compasses, maps and GPS units to navigate through unfamiliar territory. Most rangers that I know do up their shirts

Not the rangers we work with these days. Their toes are splayed and grip the muddy trail, their shirt tails flap and they never become “temporarily disoriented”. I follow slowly, picking my way through the quagmire, the treads of my boots gummed up like platform shoes with clay. These are the rangers of Tetepare Island, and there's no one I am happier to follow into the Solomon Islands bush.

My husband and I are funded by CUSO, a Canadian volunteer organization. Our family has taken up residence for the next two years on the largest uninhabited island in the South Pacific. Tetepare Island, at 120 square kilometers is a pristine jungly place with aquamarine lagoons and fringing reefs, where populations of dugong, leatherback turtles and estuarine crocodiles reside. The only structures on the island, our leaf house, a field station and eco-lodge are located on the western tip in an abandoned coconut plantation. They are the only evidence of human activity for the last 150 years.

No one is sure what happened 150 years ago to the villagers of Tetepare. Malevolent spirits are blamed for letting disease and headhunting devastate the local populous. A handful of survivors made it off the island and their genealogy has been traced back eight or nine generations. Under customary land tenure that follows matrilineal lines, these descendants have come together to form the Tetepare Descendants' Association (TDA). With over 2,000 financial members, it is today the largest land holding group in the Solomon Islands.

TDA is a community conservation group, working to protect the resources of Tetepare and their traditional way of life. TDA has already established a Marine Protected Area, permanently closed to harvest and is working towards legislation that would protect the entire island. Our jobs are to help TDA develop a system of resource management which combines the structure and experience

of western style organizations with the unique qualities of Solomon Island resources and culture. We are challenged and often frustrated by this task. But it takes just one trip into the bush with a local guide telling us the names of birds we can only hear and the many uses of plants we can't distinguish one from another for us to realize how worth it the frustration is. We have a lot to learn about how we look at the natural world, and it would be hard to find better teachers.



Photo Courtesy Jeanine D'Antonio

Tetepare rangers are a hardy and dedicated lot. They have easily made the transition from logging and plantation work to conservation now that TDA has provided that opportunity. They happily work week long shifts that take them away from family and their coconut groves to protect the resources and way of life they love and hope for their children. They all come from traditional villages on the neighboring island of Rendova where they survive by subsistence farming with only a hint of a cash economy starting. Though they have little formal education, they speak proudly and well about their jobs and conservation. They have risen to the tasks of mist netting and banding birds, catching and tagging sea turtles and becoming research assistants to visiting bat, butterfly and freshwater biologists.

Tetepare Island is used by descendants as the area's supermarket and hardware store. The marine resources are plentiful with fish and invertebrates for food and shells and lobster to sell.

On land, hunting parties find wild pig and coconut crab. The forest has always provided building materials from canoe trees and house poles to leaves and vines for making and securing wall and roof panels. Harvesting is closely monitored and the number comparisons provide a compelling argument for the conservation of these resources.

Every month on the new moon, TDA rangers sample the islands' population of coconut crabs, the world's largest terrestrial invertebrate. This data is gathered in order to compare the population level of this highly sought after food source inside and outside the Marine Protected Area. Then for four months, between November and February, they camp out on the island's black sand beaches to monitor and protect the yearly nesting of the endangered leatherback turtles.

There are striking similarities between TDA and ranger organizations in North America. The US Forest Service has a similar multiple use mandate. Parks Canada has seasonal closures on marine and freshwater catches and allows subsistence hunting by native groups in some parks. Everywhere, research and monitoring programs are the standard to evaluate our management effectiveness and population changes over time. Amongst all our fellow rangers, warder and managers, there's a commitment to the land, water and its resources that is mirrored in the rangers of Tetepare Island. For more about Tetepare Island and conservation in the Pacific, please check their website at www.tetepare.org.

Mike and Jeanine D'Antonio are currently on a two year contract as CUSO cooperants, now making their home with their three year old son, Camas, on Tetepare Island. They have worked in protected areas throughout Canada, the US and Africa.

CUSO

WE STAND FOR PEOPLE

For more information on exciting opportunities with CUSO visit their website at:
www.CUSO.org

UN News Centre, 20 September 2006

South Pacific countries sound alarm at UN debate on impact of global warming –

The South Pacific nations of Papua New Guinea and Kiribati have used their addresses to the annual debate of the General Assembly to voice concern about rising sea levels in the region and to urge United Nations Member States to do much more to reduce global warming.

Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister Michael Somare warned the Assembly that small islands and low-lying atolls across the Pacific are already being submerged by rising sea levels.

"For us, this is not academic, it is reality!" he said, adding scientific studies indicate that climate change is also responsible for the increasing frequency of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, tsunamis, flash floods and landslides.

Mr. Somare called on industrialized nations to slash their greenhouse gas emissions and on those countries which have not ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so.

He said Papua New Guinea would play its part to stabilize the Earth's climate by doing more to protect its reserves of tropical rainforest.

In an address, Kiribati's Vice-President Teima Onorio explained that her country is especially vulnerable to the impact of global warming because it consists of low-lying coral atolls.

"For countries such as Kiribati, global warming and sea level rise are critical security issues," she said.

Although Ms. Onorio welcomed the support her country has received in adjusting to the changes wrought by global warming, she added "there is a limit to how far we can adapt." Rising sea levels will affect Kiribati's groundwater supply and gradually erode whatever land is available on its 33 islands, she noted.

"Yes, we could always move inland to avoid the rising sea levels. But with our narrow islands if we move inland, too far we risk falling into either the lagoon or the ocean."

The Vice-President reiterated Kiribati's long-standing call for a unified international response to global warming.

"We have been disappointed with the lack of consensus on these critical

environment issues. Indeed, we deplore the notion that economic growth should take precedence over environmental issues when the quest for that growth will threaten the very survival of some members of this Organization," she said.

Australia, NZ Respond to Tonga Riots

Following riots in Tonga's capital that claimed eight lives, troops and police from Australia and New Zealand are now on short term assignment in the island kingdom at the request of the Tonga government. Australia has sent about 50 troops and 35 police officers, including forensic experts, to help restore security on the island and investigate the deaths caused by the riots. New Zealand has sent about 60 troops, mostly to provide security for the airport in the capital, Nuku'alofa.

According to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, three Australian navy ships are already in the southwest Pacific, having been deployed to the region last month because of fears of a coup in Fiji. The ships will remain in international waters and the crews are ready to be deployed to Tonga if required.

Damage done in the central business district was quite massive, with reports of up to 80% of buildings torched and looted. Soldiers and police cordoned off streets in the centre of the capital as the government enacted emergency powers to secure government offices, oil depots, shops and the hospital. Among the buildings damaged were the prime minister's office, the financial department, offices of power company Shoreline, which is partly owned by King George Tupou V, the town's only bank, and Chinese-owned shops and businesses.

The rioting in Tonga began after parliament went into recess for the year without voting on proposals for sweeping democratic reforms to Tonga's semi-feudal system. Late on November 16, the government bowed to the protesters and agreed to new elections in 2008 in which a majority of the parliament would be directly elected by popular vote. At present, nobles and appointed MPs outnumber elected representatives.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard expects the deployment to be rela-

tively short, with no need to evacuate his country's nationals. New Zealand's Helen Clark noted that Tonga's riots follow similar unrest in Solomon Islands and the threat of a coup in Fiji.


"Everyone is aware of what fragile and failed states mean in today's world," she said. "It can mean penetration of financial systems, lax borders, drug trade, financing terrorism or other activities. No-one wants that in the Pacific."

Prime Minister Howard reinforced her comments, "It's too important to the stability of the whole region for us to be less than willing to respond to a request... to a country that looks to Australia and New Zealand in its hour of need."


Compiled from Australian Broadcasting Corp and TVNZ reports, November 18, 2006.

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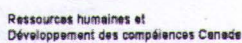
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WEST PAPUA: MANY FORMS OF RESISTANCE

Written By | Carmel Budiardjo

From the mid-1960s when Indonesia became a military dictatorship under Suharto until May 1998 when he was forced to resign, military operations in West Papua and resistance to them were a regular occurrence. Both have continued to the present. In the early days, the Free Papua Organisation, OPM (Organisasi Papua Merdeka) first formed to wage resistance to the takeover in 1963, had scattered units throughout the vast territory of West Papua and were armed only with traditional, makeshift weapons. They were hard-pressed to mount any operations of their own. Yet according to Catholic priest, Neles Tebay, who has written extensively about the plight of his people, there have been no fewer than twelve major operations by the Indonesian military, starting with Operasi Sadar (Operation Consciousness) in 1965 that lasted two years. According to Eliezer Bonay, who served as the first Indonesia-appointed governor of West Papua in 1963 until he was dismissed and detained for his anti-Indonesian views two years later, some 30,000 Papuans were murdered by the Indonesian military between 1963 and 1969.

Yet, in spite of tremendous odds stacked against it, OPM conducted a number of strikes. The best known was an action in 1977 when they blew up the pipeline transporting copper from the Freeport copper-and-gold mine and destroyed several oil storage tanks. The company sustained millions of dollars in losses. A counter attack by the Indonesian military resulted in a massacre which, according to a leading Indonesian human rights organisation ELSHAM, killed 12,397 Papuans.

West Papuan resistance has taken many other forms for which courageous Papuans have usually paid with their

lives. In 1978, some Papuans formed a music group to popularise Papuan music and dance. Members travelled far and wide to collect local songs which became a feature of their performances. The leader of the band was an anthropologist

and musician, Arnold Ap, director of the Museum of Cendrawasih University in Jayapura. Weekly performances on the radio were hugely popular, and they

were often asked to perform for visiting dignitaries. The band bore the name Mambesak, for the Cendrawasih bird, a bird symbolising Papua's rich natural heritage. Their programs also included popular jokes and stories known as mop.

In November 1983, Ap was asked, during a performance for local military officers, to hand over the Cendrawasih



Demonstration against Freeport
(Timika, W.Papua)

www.melanesiannews.org

plumes he was wearing on his head but he refused. Very soon after, he and several others were arrested and held for several months at the interrogation headquarters of Kopassandha, the army's elite force now known as Kopassus. They were later moved to a police post where a Papuan police officer told them that, if they wanted to escape, a boat would be waiting to take them to neighbouring Papua New Guinea. Arnold Ap and three others were driven to the coast and told to wait for the boat.

Another in their group, Eddie Mofu, who became separated, was later found dead from drowning. After waiting several days, Ap and his colleagues were accosted by heavily-armed soldiers, supposedly delivering food. Realising that they had been trapped, Ap fled to a nearby hill and was shot in the back. Fatally wounded, he was taken by boat to a nearby hospital where he died, three bullets lodged in his abdomen and one in his right arm.

Many hundreds attended his funeral on 27 April 1984, with heavily-armed troops lining the way to the cemetery. The event has been compared by one Indonesian writer who was present to the funeral of

Martin Luther King. The assassination struck fear into members of Mambesak and the group disbanded.

Dr Thomas Wanggai was a lecturer at Cendrawasih University. On 14 December 1988, he led a group of Papuans in a flag-raising ceremony at the Mandala stadium in Jayapura. This has long been a peaceful way for Papuans to express opposition to the Indonesian occupation. Among the

one hundred or so supporters were several Protestant ministers. Before hoisting the Kejora (Morning Star) flag, they pulled down the Indonesian flag and proclaimed the establishment of a West Melanesian State. Troops charged in and beat up many taking part. Along with Wanggai and his Japanese wife Teruka, dozens were rounded up. He and his wife, whom he had met while studying in Japan, went on trial. He got twenty years, while his wife was sentenced to eight years for sewing the flag.

Two years later, the couple were moved to prisons in Jakarta, because the authorities realised that their presence in Jayapura was a constant source of unrest. Teruka was released after serving half her sentence, but Wanggai remained in Cipinang Prison. In March 1996, he complained of stomach pains. Believing that food he was being given had been poisoned, he stopped eating. When his condition deteriorated, a request to be examined at a Christian hospital was refused. As his condition worsened, he was taken to a police hospital but was dead on arrival. An autopsy request by the International Red Cross was refused; the prison doctor alleged that he died of a heart attack.

Wanggai's body was returned to West Papua for burial despite army fears this would provoke unrest. When the coffin arrived at Sentani Airport, hundreds were waiting to carry it to Cendrawasih University for a lying-in-state, but it was driven away at high speed by a military truck. The burial a few days later was attended by thousands.

Cont'd on next page...

Thomas Wanggai's name has lived on. His son David organised the flight of forty-three Papuans who left West Papua by sea to seek asylum in Australia in January 2006, and his nephew Herman who had served two years in jail for flying the Kejora flag, was also in the group.

Theys Hiyo Eluay was a highly respected tribal leader. In 2000, two historic meetings took place in Jayapura, attended by thousands of people. The Grand Congress in June 2000 adopted a program of peaceful actions in pursuit of the demands of the Papuan people. Theys was elected chairman of the Papuan Presidium Council (PDP).

Two years later, on 10 November 2002, he accepted an invitation from the local Kopassus commander in Jayapura to attend a gathering to mark Indonesia's Heroes' Day. On the way home, in the company of Kopassus officers, he was strangled and left for dead. His body was dumped in the road where it was found the following day. Officers later sought to justify the killing, saying they had tried to persuade him to stop talking about independence but he refused. After the murder, his driver returned to the Kopassus base to inform officers of what had happened, but as the only civilian witness of the crime, he was abducted and nothing has since been heard of him.

Following many condemnations of the murder, there were calls for an independent inquiry. Instead, the army tried the men responsible for the killing before a military tribunal, on charges of 'causing the death of Theys Eluay' and 'insubordination'. The men were given sentences of between two and three-and-a-half years. The names of more senior officers who had ordered the killing have never been revealed. Compare these sentences to the 15 and 10 years meted out in 2004 to two Papuans for peacefully raising the Papuan flag.

After the verdicts were announced, the chief of staff of the Indonesian army, General Ryamizad Rycudu said: "People say they did wrong, they broke the law. What law? Okay, we are a state based on the rule of law, so they have been punished. But for me, they are heroes because the person they killed was a rebel leader."

All these acts of brutality against Papuan leaders have been intended to raise fear among Papuans, a warning of what befalls anyone who dares to challenge the unlawful occupation of their land. Efforts by Papuan leaders to call for dialogue with Jakarta have so far fallen

on deaf ears but some day Indonesia will have to come to terms with the fact that the Papuan cause is a just cause.

In 1973 Carmel Budiardjo founded TAPOL, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, originally set up to lobby for release of tens of thousands of political prisoners (tapol) in Indonesia. She spent three years, 1968-1971, as a political prisoner in Indonesia before being expelled back to the UK, her home country, where she works full time for TAPOL. She was a recipient of the Right Livelihood Award in 1995.

Message From the Executive Director

Written By | Glenn Raynor

Summer and fall 2006 have been dynamic and busy at PPP. Our **20th Pacific Networking Conference** doubled as the **Sixth International Solidarity Meeting for West Papua** and drew delegates from as far away as Europe, Indonesia, New Zealand, Australia, The USA and Canada who joined respected Papuan Human Rights leaders seeking a just and peaceful resolution to the crisis in their homeland. They included Ketrina Yabansabra of the Papuan Women's Solidarity Movement Yan Christian Warinussy of LP3BH, Jacob Rumbiak of the West Papuan National Authority in Australia and Denny Yomaki of ELSHAM.

This 3 day gathering on the shores of Lake Cowichan allowed Papuans and supporters to devise joint strategies to promote self-determination, human rights, demilitarisation and peaceful dialogue between the Papuan people and Indonesian authorities leading to the "Land of Peace" (please see Neles Tebay's excellent article in this issue). Special attention was also given to the plight of Papuan women who suffer from widespread discrimination, extreme poverty, domestic abuse and a growing HIV/AIDS crisis.

We would like to offer a heartfelt *Huy ch q'u Si'em* (thank you) to the Cowichan Tribes and Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group for their generous support and sharing of insights.

October saw two very successful public events. In addition to **Indigenous Journeys - An Exploration of Indigenous Wines and First Nations Fashions** featured in this issue we hosted **Islands Between - Working in Common Cause with Pacific Islanders**, an exciting

WHO'S WHO

Executive Director
Glenn Raynor

Events Coordinator
Jessica Stephens

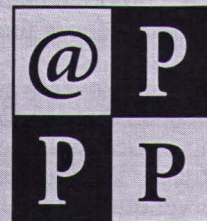
Communications and Media Coordinator
Kelly Kerr

Volunteer and Fundraising Coordinator
David Walker

TBP Editor
Alison Gardner

Financial Officer
Susan Albion

Project Support Facilitator
Elvira Perella



evening of music and fashion held at the Fran Willis Gallery in Victoria. Organised by PPP board member and former Indigenous Peoples Abroad participant Michelle Morfitt and friends this fabulous evening featured emerging artists, designers, DJs and models. PPP would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the many generous organizations and individuals who donated services, art and silent auction items to both these events.

For 31 years now Pacific Peoples' Partnership has worked to support the aspirations of Pacific Islanders for peace, justice and dignity. We continue this work with virtually no government funding. It is thanks to the generous support of friends like you that we're able to continue this vital work.

Merry Christmas and wishes for an inspired holiday season from all of us here at PPP!

US Foreign Policy In West Papua

Mid-Term Elections Bring Hope For Change

Written By | Edmund McWilliams

Perhaps no government has greater capacity to influence the course of events in West Papua than does the U.S. Government. This troubling reality derives from the still preeminent US military power in the region, as well as Washington's largely unparalleled diplomatic and economic power regionally and globally. On occasion, over the last few decades, that power has been used in the region for good. Very belatedly, the U.S. pressed Jakarta to accept UN intervention in East Timor in 1999. Moreover, restrictions on U.S. assistance to the Indonesian military through the 1990's and the first Bush Administration was an appropriate policy given the Indonesian military's unreformed, rogue behavior and utter unaccountability before Indonesian law.

Beginning with the US intervention in the 1960's, US Administrations have conspired with brutal and corrupt Indonesian individuals and institutions, and with rapacious U.S. corporate interests to the great detriment of the people of West Papua. Dispute between Indonesia and the Netherlands over West Papua's future have extended through to the 2005 resumption of US assistance to the Indonesian military. Without exception, policies and intervention of the U.S. Administrations in West Papua have been antithetical to the rights & welfare of Papuans.

Throughout this period, extending back more than four decades, the role and influence of the U.S. Congress in shaping U.S. policy toward Indonesia and West Papua specifically has been more positive. Congressional initiatives over the years have offered some basis for hope that human rights and humanitarian concerns might broaden U.S. goals beyond their historic geopolitical, military and mercenary foci as advanced by both Democratic and Republican administrations.

Following the Indonesian military massacre in Dili 15 years ago, the U.S. Congress imposed strict limitations on U.S. military assistance to and cooperation with the Indonesian military. Over the years, a bi-partisan, bi-cameral U.S. Congressional consensus annually reinstated those limitations. These restrictions arguably constituted one of the few explicit sanctions against the Indonesian military and, in the view of some observers, constituted a constraint

on the worst excesses of the Indonesian military. While those restrictions were based largely on the Indonesian military's extraordinary brutality in East Timor, especially their savagery there in 1999, over the last ten years the military's excesses in West Papua have also drawn U.S. Congressional attention.

Beginning in 2001, human rights advocates have succeeded in raising the profile of West Papua among members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. The Indonesian military's murderous Mapenduma campaign in the 1996-98 period, the slaughter of Papuan civilians in Biak in 1998, the police assault on students in Abepura in 2000, and the torture-murder of leading Papuan political figure Theys Eluay in 2001 roused significant concern in the U.S. Congress.

"Republican members generally have followed the Bush Administration's lead on Indonesia.."

This educational effort by human rights advocates has not only focused on Indonesian military brutalization of the Papuan people. After several years of campaigning to build awareness in the Congress about the fraudulent "Act of Free Choice" through which Jakarta seized West Papua in 1969, 37 U.S. Congressman, in 2005, signed a letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan calling for a UN review of the "Act of Free Choice."

In 2005, U.S. Congressman Eni Faleomavaega, long an advocate of human and civil/political rights for Papuans, succeeded in attaching language to key State Department authorization legislation that described extensively the abrogation of Papuan rights in the context of the fraudulent "Act of Free Choice." The language also drew upon 2004 research by the Allard K. Lowenstein Center at Yale University which asserted that Jakarta agents had perpetrated crimes against humanity in West Papua and possibly genocide. While that language has not had tangible impact on U.S. policy, associated language requiring the State Department to report to Congress on developments in West Papua has forced the Bush Administration to acknowledge ongoing problems there.

In August 2002, an incident involving U.S. citizens tended to eclipse the growing Congressional attention on the plight of Papuans. On August 31, 2002,

gunmen fired on U.S. contact employees and Indonesian citizens near the Freeport McMoRan copper and gold mine between Timika and Tembagapura.

The killing of two U.S. citizens and wounding of eight others (one Indonesian citizen was also killed) and subsequent reporting by the police, human rights organizations and the media pointing to Indonesian military involvement in the attack came to dominate Congressional focus on West Papua. Broad suspicion within Congress of Indonesian military involvement in the "Timika case" and subsequent Indonesian refusal to cooperate with U.S. authorities in the investigation of the killings led to strong new language conditioning any assistance to the Indonesian military.

Welcome and appropriate as Congressional attention to this incident has been, the intense focus on this matter has had the effect of blurring Congressional

focus on the plight of Papuans and has led to replacement of Papuan human rights focus language which had previously conditioned U.S. military-to-military relations with Indonesia. This reality played a part in the resumption of U.S. military cooperation with the Indonesian military in 2005. Administration assurances of progress on the "Timika case" and its contentions that the "war on terror" necessitated cooperation with the Indonesian military enabled the Administration to waive congressional constraints on resumption of U.S. support for the Indonesian military.

The election on November 7 of a Democratic controlled U.S. House of Representatives Senate has significant implications for U.S. Congressional action relating to West Papua. While a number of Republican members of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate have been staunch supporters of Papuan human rights, Republican members generally have followed the Bush Administration's lead on Indonesia which has included reluctance to raise human rights problems in West Papua (and elsewhere) with Jakarta, and a rapid expansion of U.S.-Indonesian military-to-military ties.

Cont'd on page 8...

Papua, Land of Peace Campaign....from page 1

Eight Principles of Peace

The concept of 'Papua, Land of Peace' consists of eight fundamental values, namely, awareness and respect for plurality, justice, unity, harmony, solidarity, togetherness, sincere fraternity, and welfare. They are the guiding principles and the criteria for judgment. These values determine which plan and activity should be supported or rejected by people in West Papua.

Given the existence of a Papuan resistance movement (internationally known as the Free Papua Movement/OPM) that has been resisting Indonesian occupation, any peace initiative could be mistakenly interpreted as advocating an independent state of West Papua. The Indonesian authorities are therefore suspicious of all peace-building initiatives in West Papua.

Addressing this suspicion, the religious leaders have made it clear that the peace campaign has nothing to do with the campaign for the independent state of West Papua launched by the OPM. The main aim of the peace campaign is to ensure that peace prevails in West Papua, irrespective of whether West Papua remains an Indonesian province or becomes an independent state. The concept of 'Papua, Land of Peace' includes all aspects of human life from physical health, social relationships and prosperity, mutual trust and respect, justice, fair opportunities for development, socio-economic development, cultural rights, and human security.

Based on the above understanding, the religious leaders have been jointly speaking out on injustice, collaborating with others for the respect of human rights, preventing violent conflict, rejecting militias such as jihad fighters (laskar jihad), defending the right to life, supporting the Indigenous Papuans to become agents of development, and promoting 'Papua, Land of Peace' as a platform for development. They jointly call for the government to engage in dialogue with the Papuans, address the unsettled rights abuses, and implement consistently Law No.21/2001 on the Special Autonomy for Papua Province.

In order to highlight the promotion of peace and reflect its significance in everyday life, the religious leaders lead people to celebrate 5 February as Papuan Peace Day and the International Peace Day on 21 September.

The local government in West Papua is called to support the peace campaign by improving the quality of education sector and health service, addressing the spread of HIV/AIDS, tackling the problem of malnutrition, and eradicating rampant corruption.



PPP File Photo

Neles Tebay is a priest in the diocese of Jayapura, West Papua. From 1998 to 2000 he worked as a journalist for The Jakarta Post (English-language daily published in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta). He was educated at the Catholic Institute for Philosophy and Theology in Jayapura and obtained his PhD in Missiology from the Pontifical Urban University in Rome in March 2006. He is author of "West Papua: The Struggle For Peace With Justice" and "Interfaith Endeavours for Peace in West Papua".

The International Community Can Help

The international community can contribute to the creation of West Papua as a Land of Peace by continuously encouraging the Indonesian Government to:

1. Open the territory of West Papua to visiting foreign journalists, researchers, and international humanitarian workers;
2. Implement, effectively and consistently, the Papuan Autonomy Law and dismiss the West Irian Jaya Province that has been established by violating the Law;
3. Settle the West Papua case through dialogue facilitated by a third party as that of Aceh's;
4. Address the crimes against humanity committed by the security forces in Manokwari (2001) and Wamena (2003), which have already been investigated by the National Commission on Human Rights but ignored by the Attorney General's Office;
5. Eradicate the culture of impunity by addressing the alleged human rights violations committed against the Papuans since 1 May, 1963;
6. Invite to West Papua the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution and the special rapporteur on torture;
7. Stop increasing the number of troops in West Papua (there are over 12,000 troops, excluding thousands of troops annually rotated, and 2,000 to 2,500 police);
8. Invite the United Nations, the US, and the Dutch government to review their respective conduct in the run-up to, during, and after the exercise of the Act of Free Choice in West Papua in 1969.

Indigenous Journeys

A Modern Exploration of Indigenous Culture
from Wines to First Nations Fashions

Written By | Jessica Stephens PPP Staff

On October 24, Pacific People's Partnership (PPP) held a fundraising Wine and Fashion Show at the University of Victoria to rave reviews. Focusing on information-sharing, a compelling power point presentation of the South Pacific Islands assembled by Kelly Kerr played as a reminder to the injustices to Indigenous peoples of these Islands. It also gave participants ideas on how to volunteer and get involved.



Jessica Stephens and Norma Robson

MC for the night was the ever-elegant Ron Rice who thanked the First Nations people whose land the event was held on and introduced the President of the Board, Margaret Argue, who gave a fascinating history of PPP to the audience.

Alan King Jones, Sommelier and chef of IQ Bistro at the University of Victoria, poured wines from Tohu Wines (New Zealand), Nk'mip Cellars (Osoyoos First Nations) and Cherry Point Vineyards (Cowichan Tribes). He also supplied delicious platters of seafood and deli favourites.

Tse-shaht First Nations designer Jo Little (Mahima) of Ethnic Elegance, Port Alberni demonstrated her flashy trademark on the fashion industry while models displayed her vibrant and sassy clothes bearing animal imprints. Victoria-based Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations designer Denise Williams of House of Win-Chii ended the evening with elegant styles of affordable clothing.

The evening saw everyone a winner with 50/50 draws, a silent auction and door prizes.

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Democratic party control of key House and Senate committees and subcommittees will inevitably lead to much tighter scrutiny of Bush Administration policy initiatives and analyses related to Indonesia and West Papua. Over coming weeks and months, those organizations and individuals engaged in "educating" the U.S. Congress regarding the plight of Papuans under Indonesian rule will need to re-double their efforts so as to restore Congressional influence and oversight of U.S. foreign policy vis-a-vis Indonesia and especially, West Papua.

Edmund McWilliams is a retired senior U.S. Foreign Service Officer who served as Political Counselor in the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta (1996-99). Since retirement in 2001 he has been a pro bono human rights advocate engaged in lobbying to advance human rights concerns in the U.S. Congress and with the U.S. Administration.

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