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Historical background

The territory of West New Guinea (West Irian) had been in the possession of the Netherlands since 1828. When the Netherlands formally recognized the sovereign independence of Indonesia in 1949, the status of West Irian remained unresolved. It was agreed in the Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty C concluded between the Netherlands and Indonesia at The Hague, Netherlands, in November 1949 C that the issue would be postponed for a year, and that "the status quo of the presidency of New Guinea" would be "maintained under the Government of the Netherlands" in the mean time. The ambiguity of the language, however, led the Netherlands to consider itself the sovereign Power in West New Guinea, since this would be a continuation of the "status quo". Indonesia, on the other hand, interpreted the Dutch role there to be strictly administrative, with the implication that West Irian would be incorporated into Indonesia after a year.

The status of the territory was still being disputed when Indonesia brought the matter before the United Nations in 1954. Indonesia claimed that the territory rightfully belonged to it and should be freed from Dutch colonial rule. The Netherlands maintained that the Papuans of West New Guinea were not Indonesians and therefore should be allowed to decide their own future when they were ready to do so. The future of the territory was discussed at the General Assembly's regular sessions from 1954 to 1957 and at the 1961 session, but no resolutions on it were adopted.

In December 1961, when increasing rancour between the Indonesian and Dutch Governments made the prospect of a negotiated settlement even more elusive, Secretary-General U Thant, who had been appointed Acting Secretary-General following the death of Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, undertook to resolve the dispute through his good offices. Consulting with the Indonesian and Dutch Permanent Representatives to the United Nations, he suggested that informal talks take place between the parties in the presence of former United States Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, who would act as the Secretary-General's representative. The parties agreed, and talks were begun in early 1962.

A sharpening of tension between the two Governments occurred shortly thereafter, however, when Indonesia landed paratroops in West New Guinea. The Netherlands charged that the landings constituted an act of aggression, but Indonesia refuted this on the grounds that "Indonesians who have entered and who in future will continue to enter West Irian are Indonesian nationals who move into Indonesia's own territory now dominated by the Dutch by force". Secretary-General U Thant urged restraint by both parties but declined a Dutch request to send United Nations observers to the scene, noting that such action could only be considered if both Governments made the request. Further incidents were reported by the Netherlands during the first months of 1962, and there were intermittent lulls in the progress of Ambassador Bunker's talks.

The Acting Secretary-General was at last able to announce, on 31 July 1962, that a preliminary agreement had been reached, and that official negotiations were to take place under his auspices. The final negotiations were held at United Nations Headquarters under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, with Ambassador Bunker continuing to act as mediator. An agreement was signed at New York by Indonesia and the Netherlands on 15 August 1962. Ratification instruments

were exchanged between the two countries on 20 September 1962 and, the next day, the General Assembly took note of the agreement in resolution 1752 (XVII) of the same date, authorizing the Secretary-General to carry out the tasks entrusted to him therein.

The agreement provided for the administration of West New Guinea (West Irian) to be transferred by the Netherlands to a United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), to be headed by a United Nations Administrator who would be acceptable to both parties and who would be appointed by the Secretary-General. Under the Secretary-General's jurisdiction, UNTEA would have full authority after 1 October 1962 to administer the territory, to maintain law and order, to protect the rights of the inhabitants and to ensure uninterrupted, normal services until 1 May 1963, when the administration of the territory was to be transferred to Indonesia.

The agreement also stipulated that the Secretary-General would provide a United Nations Security Force (UNSF) to assist UNTEA with as many troops as the United Nations Administrator deemed necessary. In "related understandings" to the main agreement, it was established that United Nations personnel would observe the implementation of the ceasefire that was to become effective before UNTEA assumed authority. The United Nations was therefore entrusted with a dual peacekeeping role in addition to its administrative responsibilities as the executive authority.

Arranging a ceasefire

To pave the way for the arrival in West Irian of UNTEA and UNSF, a ceasefire between Indonesian and Netherlands forces had to be enforced. The memorandum of understanding concerning the ceasefire C presented on 15 August 1962 in a note to the Acting Secretary-General from the representatives of Indonesia and the Netherlands C requested that the Secretary-General undertake immediately some of the functions outlined in the main agreement, so as to effect a cessation of hostilities as soon as possible. Such action would constitute an "extraordinary measure", because the General Assembly would not be voting on the establishment of UNTEA and UNSF until it convened in late September.

The Secretary-General responded promptly, stating that he was prepared to undertake the responsibilities mentioned in the note. The memorandum on the cessation of hostilities specified that the Secretary-General would assign United Nations personnel to perform certain tasks, including: observing the ceasefire; protecting the security of Dutch and Indonesian forces; restoring the situation in the event of breaches of the ceasefire; assisting in informing Indonesian troops in the jungle of the existence of the ceasefire; and providing a non-military supply line to Indonesian troops.

Although there was no explicit reference to military observers in the memorandum, the Secretary-General selected them to perform these tasks. Furthermore, he agreed to dispatch them without the prior authorization of the General Assembly or the Security Council, a step never before taken by a Secretary-General. Reference was made in the memorandum to UNSF and its law-and-order maintenance role, with the implication that the Secretary-General should address this responsibility with all possible speed.

The Secretary-General appointed Brigadier-General (later Major-General) Indar Jit Rikhye, his Military Adviser, to head the military observer team that was to supervise all arrangements for the ceasefire. Six Member States (Brazil, Ceylon, India, Ireland, Nigeria and Sweden) agreed to provide 21 observers for this purpose. They were drawn from troops of these nations then serving either in the United Nations Emergency Force or the United Nations Operation in the Congo.

The observer force was assembled in West Irian within days of the signing of the agreement at United Nations Headquarters. The observers were informed at that time that the Netherlands military command had proclaimed a ceasefire as of 0001 GMT on 18 August 1962, and had ordered its ground forces to concentrate in the main garrison towns, although air and naval forces continued to patrol the territory. After a visit to Djakarta by General Rikhye, contacts were established with the Indonesian troops in the jungle. In this connection, frequent radio broadcasts on both the Netherlands-owned and Indonesian stations told the troops that hostilities had ceased. Printed

pamphlets carrying the ceasefire message were dropped from airplanes over the jungle.

Besides supervising the ceasefire, the United Nations observers helped resupply the Indonesian troops with food and medicines and helped them regroup in selected places. The effort was successful owing to the full cooperation of the Indonesian and Netherlands authorities. Aerial support was given by the Thirteenth United States Task Force for the Far East and the Royal Canadian Air Force. Most of the emergency supplies were provided by the Netherlands military command, which also treated any Indonesian troops who were seriously ill. United Nations aircraft landed supplies in four staging areas: Sorong, Fakfak, Kaimana and Merauke.

By 21 September 1962, General Rikhye was able to report that all Indonesian forces in West Irian had been located and concentrated, that resupply had been assured and that over 500 Indonesian political detainees had been repatriated in accordance with the memorandum. The observers' mandate had thus been fulfilled and all actions concerning the cessation of hostilities had been completed without incident.

Establishment of UNSF

With the cessation of hostilities, the next step was to ensure the maintenance of law and order in the territory. In addition to supervising the observer team, General Rikhye had been charged with making preliminary arrangements for the arrival of UNSF.

Article VIII of the Indonesian-Netherlands agreement stipulated the role and purpose of such a force:

The Secretary-General would provide the UNTEA with such security forces as the United Nations Administrator deems necessary; such forces would primarily supplement existing Papuan (West Irianese) police in the task of maintaining law and order. The Papuan Volunteer Corps, which on the arrival of the United Nations Administrator would cease being part of the Netherlands armed forces, and the Indonesian armed forces in the territory, would be under the authority of, and at the disposal of, the Secretary-General for the same purpose. The United Nations Administrator would, to the extent feasible, use the Papuan (West Irianese) police as a United Nations security force to maintain law and order and, at his discretion, use Indonesian armed forces. The Netherlands armed forces would be repatriated as rapidly as possible and while still in the territory will be under the authority of the UNTEA.

UNSF was thus essentially an internal law and security force or the "police arm" of UNTEA whose responsibilities would range from ensuring the smooth implementation of UNTEA's administrative mandate to supervising the buildup of a viable, local police force.

In the memorandum of understanding on the cessation of hostilities, it was provided that UNSF would commence its duties as soon as possible after the General Assembly adopted an enabling resolution, but no later than 1 October 1962. In fact, the UNSF Commander arrived in West Irian weeks before the Assembly resolution was passed.

Major-General Said Uddin Khan (Pakistan), appointed by the Secretary-General as Commander of UNSF, arrived in Hollandia on 4 September for preliminary discussions with Netherlands authorities and for a survey of future requirements. Similar efforts had already been exerted to some extent by General Rikhye, who had been charged earlier with making preliminary arrangements for the arrival of UNSF. The two men cooperated closely before and after the establishment of UNSF in West Irian.

UNSF comprised 1,500 Pakistan troops, made available at the request of the Secretary-General, as were the support units of Canadian and United States aircraft and crews.

By 3 October, an advance party of 340 men of UNSF had arrived in the territory. On 5 October, the balance of the Pakistan contingent took up its positions. Also included in UNSF were some 16 officers and men of the Royal Canadian Air Force, with two aircraft, and a detachment of approximately 60 United States Air Force personnel with an average of three aircraft. These provided troop transport

and communications. The Administrator also had under his authority the Papuan Volunteer Corps, the civil police, the Netherlands forces until their repatriation, and Indonesian troops, totalling approximately 1,500.

Establishment of UNTEA

UNSF was created to uphold the authority of UNTEA. Whereas groundwork for the arrival of UNSF troops had been laid in West Irian prior to the General Assembly's recognition of the agreement, it was not until Assembly resolution 1752 (XVII) was adopted that personnel associated with UNTEA were dispatched. This resolution, which would make the United Nations directly responsible for the administration of the western half of New Guinea, was approved by a vote of 89 to none, with 14 abstentions.

In the resolution, the Assembly took note of the agreement between Indonesia and the Netherlands concerning West New Guinea (West Irian), acknowledged the role conferred by it upon the Secretary-General, and authorized him to carry out the tasks entrusted to him in the agreement.

Upon adoption of the resolution, the Secretary-General noted that for the first time in its history the United Nations would have temporary executive authority established by and under the jurisdiction of the Secretary-General over a vast territory. He dispatched his Deputy Chef de Cabinet, Mr. José Rolz-Bennett, as his Representative in West New Guinea (West Irian), where he would make preliminary arrangements for the transfer of administration to UNTEA. Mr. Rolz-Bennett arrived in the territory on 21 September 1962, the date the enabling resolution was passed.

Under the agreement, neither Dutch nor Indonesian officials were to hold any of the top administrative positions during the seven-month transition period. In addition, three quarters of the Dutch civil servants of lesser rank had decided to leave the territory before 1 October, thereby creating a vacuum that would have to be filled to prevent a disruption of essential functions and services. In some instances, this was accomplished by promoting Papuan officials to the vacant posts. There was, however, a great shortage of adequately trained Papuans.

Mr. Rolz-Bennett immediately set about assembling an emergency task force to be deployed in key areas of the administration, recruiting international as well as Dutch and Indonesian personnel. The Netherlands Governor of the territory and his senior officials assisted in this effort; measures were also taken by the Netherlands Government to encourage Dutch officials to remain and serve the Temporary Executive Authority. In addition, the Indonesian Government was requested to provide urgently a group of civil servants to fill certain high-priority posts. This request was made with a view to the gradual phasing in of Indonesian officials, whose presence thus facilitated the subsequent transfer of administrative responsibilities to Indonesia. In all, 32 nationalities were represented in UNTEA, among them both Dutch and Indonesian personnel.

The transfer of the administration from the Netherlands to UNTEA took place on 1 October 1962 and, in conformity with article VI of the agreement and its related aide-mémoire, the United Nations flag was raised and flown side by side with the Netherlands flag.

Before his departure from the territory on 28 September, the Netherlands Governor, Mr. Peter Johannis Plateel, appealed to the population to give its support to the United Nations administration. In messages from the Secretary-General and from Mr. Rolz-Bennett (who was designated as Temporary Administrator for approximately six weeks), the population was informed that UNTEA would endeavour to ensure the welfare of the inhabitants. The Temporary Administrator signed an order effective 15 October granting amnesty to all political prisoners sentenced prior to 1 October 1962.

On 1 October, Indonesia and the Netherlands established liaison missions to UNTEA in Hollandia/Kotabaru. An Australian liaison mission replaced one which had formerly served in Hollandia/Kotabaru as an administrative liaison between the authorities of the territory of Papua/New Guinea and West New Guinea, and now provided effective liaison with UNTEA on matters of mutual

interest.

The United Nations Administrator, Mr. Djalal Abdoh (Iran), was appointed by the Secretary-General on 22 October 1962, under article IV of the agreement. On 15 November, he arrived in the territory to take up his assignment and Mr. Rolz-Bennett returned to Headquarters the following day.

Activities after the creation of UNTEA

The agreement between the Netherlands and Indonesia entrusted to UNTEA a number of broad powers: to "administer the territory"; to appoint government officials and members of representative councils; to legislate for the territory, subject to certain qualifications; and to guarantee civil liberties and property rights.

Once the international team that comprised UNTEA was assembled in the capital of the territory, they immediately began to address the vast economic and social problems facing them.

The very nature of the country presented major difficulties. Roads were practically non-existent, with a total length estimated at 900 kilometres. There was no other means of land transportation, which made air transport of all supplies from ports to the hinterland essential. Coupled with the difficulties of physical movement were problems of communication. Telephone systems existed only inside the major towns. UNSF was, however, able to tackle adequately the problems which faced it.

The transfer of authority implied a need to adapt existing institutions from the Dutch pattern to an Indonesian pattern. The first problem was to rebuild the officer and inspection cadres which had almost completely disappeared with the exodus of Dutch officers, and to reinstate a sense of loyalty and discipline in the rank and file, at the same time keeping the police service serving the public. The second problem was to reorient the entire service, substituting the Indonesian language and procedures for those of the Dutch so that there would be no upheaval when UNTEA handed over the reins of government to the Republic of Indonesia.

In accordance with the terms of article VII of the Indonesia-Netherlands agreement, the Papuan Volunteer Corps ceased to be part of the Netherlands armed forces upon the transfer of administration to UNTEA. The Corps, consisting of some 350 officers and men, was concentrated at Manokwari and was not assigned any duties in connection with the maintenance of law and order. As Dutch officers and non-commissioned officers left the area, they were replaced by Indonesian officers. This process was completed on 21 January 1963, when the command of the Corps was formally transferred to an Indonesian officer and the last Dutch officers left the territory.

During the period of UNTEA administration, the Papuan police were generally responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the territory. Before the transfer of administration to UNTEA, all the officers of the police corps were Dutch, there being no qualified Papuans. By the time UNTEA had assumed responsibility for the territory, almost all officers of Dutch nationality had left, having been temporarily replaced by officers from the Philippines who, in turn, were later replaced by Indonesians. By the end of March 1963, the entire corps was officered by Indonesians. However, in accordance with the provisions of article IX of the agreement, the chief of police continued to be an international recruit.

On 1 October 1962, when authority was transferred to UNTEA, the Indonesian troops in the territory consisted of those who had been brought in by parachute during the Dutch-Indonesian conflict and those who had infiltrated the territory. Agreement was reached with the Indonesian authorities to replace a large number of these troops with fresh territorial troops from Indonesia. It was also agreed that the number of Indonesian troops in the territory would not exceed the strength of the Pakistan contingent of UNSF, except with the prior consent of the UNTEA administration.

The withdrawal of the Netherlands naval and land forces from the territory was effected in stages in accordance with a timetable agreed upon by the Temporary Administrator, the Commander of UNSF and the Commander-in-Chief of the Netherlands forces in the territory. By 15 November 1962, this

process had been completed without incident.

The situation was generally calm throughout the period of UNTEA. On 15 December 1962, however, two incidents involving the police and a small group of Indonesian troops occurred in Sorong and Doom. One police constable was killed and four wounded. Order was immediately restored by UNSF units while the civil administration continued to perform its normal functions. The area remained quiet for the rest of the temporary administration. In general, the inhabitants of the territory were law-abiding and the task of maintaining peace and security presented no problems. The United Nations Administrator had no occasion to call on the Indonesian armed forces in that connection but only for the purpose of occasional joint patrols with elements of the Pakistan contingent.

With regard to UNTEA's responsibility to uphold the rights of the territory's inhabitants (as outlined in article XXII of the agreement), the Administration ensured the free exercise of those rights by the population, and UNTEA courts acted as their guarantor. One of UNTEA's first concerns was, in fact, the reactivation of the entire judiciary since, with the departure of Netherlands personnel from various judiciary organs, the administration of justice practically came to a standstill. Once UNTEA was established, all the vacant positions in the judicial offices were filled through recruitment of qualified judicial officers from Indonesia.

UNTEA was also responsible for opening and closing the New Guinea Council and for appointing new representatives to the Council, in consultation with the Council's members. On 4 December 1962, the Council members met in the presence of the Administrator and took their new oath of office. The Council's Chairman and all members pledged to support loyally the provisions of the agreement and swore allegiance to UNTEA. As it seemed desirable that members should return to their constituencies in order to explain personally to their constituents the new political situation of the territory, the session was closed on 5 December, after consultation with the Chairman.

During the period of UNTEA's administration, a number of vacancies in the membership of the New Guinea Council occurred because of resignation, departure or absence of members. At the request of the Council's Chairman to fill some of these vacancies, the United Nations Administrator, in conformity with article XXIII, signed appropriate decrees appointing two new members. However, no consultation could take place with representative councils since none existed in the districts from which the two members were appointed.

In addition to the New Guinea Council, there were 11 representative councils, known as regional councils, in the various districts. On 14 February 1963, the Administrator opened the new regional council at Ransiki, Manokwari, elections to which had been held in December 1962.

The United Nations Administrator also toured the territory extensively in conjunction with article X of the agreement, which required that UNTEA widely publicize and explain the terms of the agreement. He took part in all public functions in order to explain personally those parts of the agreement which related to the United Nations presence in the territory and the changes that would take place on 1 May 1963. These efforts supplemented a United Nations information campaign which, with the help of special features, texts, posters and discussion groups, helped prepare the population for the transfer of administration to Indonesia, and informed them regarding the provisions of the agreement on the question of self-determination.

Articles XVII through XXI addressed the issue of self-determination. The relevant clauses of the agreement required that Indonesia make arrangements, with the assistance and participation of the United Nations Representative and his staff, to give the people of the territory the opportunity to exercise freedom of choice. The inhabitants were to make the decision to "remain with Indonesia" or to "sever their ties with Indonesia", under the auspices of a plebiscite to be held no later than 1969.

Day-to-day problems of the territory were addressed and handled smoothly by the civilian administration under UNTEA. In the sphere of public health, UNTEA had to deal with an epidemic of cholera which had begun to spread on the south-west coast of the island shortly after its administration was established. In this, it received valuable assistance from the World Health Organization, which provided a health team and the necessary medical supplies. The administration

was able not only to contain the epidemic within a short period but also to declare the whole territory free of cholera. The administration also vigorously pursued plans for establishing hospitals and clinics in various parts of the territory.

In the economic sphere, the administration was mainly concerned with maintaining stability and dealing with a serious unemployment problem. Only 32 of a total of 317 Netherlands officials engaged in public works had been willing to stay on after UNTEA's takeover. Contractors stopped work, and gradually maintenance and repair services came to a halt. Over 3,500 men were idle. In a land where only 300,000 people (a third of the population) were in regular contact with the administration and where skilled labour was at a premium, this was a significant figure. With the cooperation of the Indonesian liaison mission, UNTEA was able to reactivate work on existing projects and draw up plans for similar projects which would be useful for the development of the territory. Forty-five projects were completed by the end of UNTEA, and 32 others were under construction. UNTEA was also able to keep in check the general price level of commodities, most of which had to be imported, and ensure adequate supplies for the population.

All costs incurred by UNTEA during its administration were borne equally by the Netherlands and Indonesia in compliance with article XXIV of the agreement. Consultations between the Secretariat and the representatives of the two Governments regarding the preparation of the UNTEA budget had taken place shortly after the agreement was signed. Later, at Hollandia/Kotabaru, a committee composed of the representatives of the two sides met under the chairmanship of the Deputy Controller of the United Nations and agreed on an UNTEA budget for the period 1 October 1962 to 30 April 1963, which was subsequently approved by the Secretary-General. As the budget committee doubted that UNTEA would be able to collect any revenue, no estimates of income were prepared. The Department of Finance was, however, able to collect a total of 15 million New Guinea florins by the end of the UNTEA period through taxes and customs duties. This was credited to the final budget figure.

On 31 December 1962, the Netherlands flag was replaced by the Indonesian flag, which was raised side by side with the United Nations flag, as contemplated in an aide-mémoire attached to the agreement.

In the last months of 1962 and the beginning of 1963, a number of communications from Papuan leaders and various groups in the territory were addressed to the Secretary-General and the United Nations Administrator requesting that the period of UNTEA administration in West Irian be shortened. On 21 November 1962, a joint declaration by the representatives of the New Guinea Council was transmitted to the Secretary-General asking for the early transfer of the administration to Indonesia. A demonstration to the same effect took place on 15 January 1963, when a petition was presented to the Administrator by 18 political leaders from the area of Hollandia/Kotabaru.

These requests were brought to the attention of the Secretary-General in January 1963 by Mr. Sudjarwo Tjondronegoro, head of the Indonesian Liaison Mission to UNTEA. After consultation with the representative of the Netherlands, the Secretary-General decided that any shortening of UNTEA would not be feasible. However, he sent his Chef de Cabinet, Mr. C. V. Narasimhan, in February 1963, to consult with the United Nations Administrator and the Government of Indonesia, with a view to facilitating the entry of Indonesian officials into the administration of West Irian in order to ensure the continuity and expansion of all essential services. Following these consultations, the Chef de Cabinet announced in Djakarta that the transfer of administration would take place as scheduled on 1 May 1963, and that the replacement of Netherlands officials by Indonesian officials would be accelerated. By the end of March 1963, Indonesian nationals occupied the second highest post in every administrative department in all six divisions in the territory.

The gathering momentum of the phasing in operation was accompanied by an encouraging development in a different sphere. The resumption of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands was announced on 13 March 1963. Thus began a new era in the relationship between the two countries, one which notably helped UNTEA's work as the time approached for the transfer of authority.

In April, the Indonesian Government announced that a Papuan member of the New Guinea Council, Mr. E. J. Bonay, would be installed on 1 May as the first Governor of Irian Barat (the Indonesian name for West Irian). He would be assisted by an Indonesian deputy, and the territory would be administered as a province of the Republic of Indonesia.

The number of Indonesian officials in the Administration towards the end of April reached 1,564, while Papuans and other indigenous people of West Irian occupied 7,625 civil service posts. Only 11 Netherlands officials remained; they were to leave upon the transfer of authority to Indonesia. Stores of goods were procured to ensure adequate supplies for a period after the transfer. Direct negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia for the purchase of a number of Dutch interests proceeded smoothly. The economy had been largely stabilized, health and education services were in good order, and all the provisions of the agreement leading up to the transfer of administration fully implemented.

During the last days of April, some 30 Indonesian warships arrived in Biak and Hollandia for the ceremony, as had service squadrons of aircraft of the Indonesian air force. The Pakistan units of UNSF began their withdrawal to Biak, ready for embarkation; the various UNSF garrisons were replaced by incoming Indonesian troops.

Transfer of administration to Indonesia

In accordance with article XII of the agreement, the UNTEA Administrator transferred full administrative control to the representative of the Indonesian Government, Mr. Tjondronegoro, on 1 May 1963. The ceremony was performed in the presence of the Chef de Cabinet as the Secretary-General's personal representative for the occasion, and the Indonesian Foreign Minister. At that time, the United Nations flag was taken down.

Secretary-General's observations

On the completion of UNTEA, the Secretary-General declared that it had been a unique experience, which had once again proved the capacity of the United Nations to undertake a variety of functions, provided that it received adequate support from its Member States. He also announced that, in consultation with Indonesia, he had decided in principle to designate a few United Nations experts, serving at Headquarters and elsewhere, to perform the functions envisaged in article XVII of the agreement, in so far as the article required that the Secretary-General advise, assist and participate in arrangements which were the responsibility of Indonesia for the act of free choice. Those experts would visit West Irian as often as necessary and spend as much time as would enable them to report fully to him, until he appointed a United Nations representative to preside over them as a staff.

Looking to the future, the Secretary-General stated that he was confident that Indonesia would scrupulously observe the terms of the 1962 agreement, and would ensure the exercise by the territory's population of their right to express their wishes as to their future.

Implementation of the 1962 agreement

In accordance with the Indonesia-Netherlands agreement, the Secretary-General on 1 April 1968 appointed a representative, Mr. Fernando Ortiz-Sanz, to advise, assist and participate in arrangements which were the responsibility of Indonesia for the act of free choice, on retaining or severing ties with Indonesia.

In a report submitted to the Secretary-General, the Government of Indonesia stated that between 14 July and 2 August 1969, the enlarged representative councils (consultative assemblies) of West New Guinea (West Irian), which included 1,026 members, were asked to pronounce themselves, on behalf of the people of the territory, as to whether they wished to remain with Indonesia or sever their ties with it. All those councils chose the first alternative without dissent.

The representative of the Secretary-General reported that within "the limitations imposed by the

geographical characteristics of the territory and the general political situation in the area, an act of free choice has taken place in West Irian in accordance with Indonesian practice, in which the representatives of the population have expressed their wish to remain with Indonesia".

Those reports were transmitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, which, by resolution 2504 (XXIV) of 19 November 1969, acknowledged with appreciation the fulfilment by the Secretary-General and his representatives of the task entrusted to them under the 1962 agreement.



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