

The minister of Foreign Affairs  
Drs. Stef A. Blok  
Postbox 20061  
2500 EB The Hague

**Datum:** 4 December 2018

**Betreft:** Open letter about arrests in Indonesia and Papua

**Ons kenmerk:** 2018/04/12/8/KJ

**Uw kenmerk:**

Dear Mr. Blok,

Saturday 1 December marked the 57th anniversary of the first raising of the Morning Star flag of West Papua in that country's capital, then known as Hollandia. The date has deep significance for supporters of West Papua's freedom both in the country and around the world.

Tragically, the Indonesian security forces cracked down on all attempts to commemorate this day both in West Papua and throughout Indonesia. We understand that more than 500 were arrested at peaceful commemorations in Jayapura, Jakarta, Surabaya, Palu, Kupang, Ternate, Makassar, Ambon, Poso, Sula, Timika, Merauke, Waropen and Tobelo. In Surabaya an anti-independence militia group staged a counter demonstration threatening the pro-freedom demonstrators with sharpened bamboo spears.

The widespread protests across Indonesia represent a new era of activism in support of West Papua by Indonesian communities and it is outrageous that they should be attacked by security forces for expressing their views.

Around 90 people are reported to have been arrested in West Papua's capital Jayapura, where the headquarters of one of the main pro-independence organizations, the West Papua National Committee, or KNPB, was raided and vandalized. KNPB offices in other Papuan towns were also targeted by security forces as well a number of student dormitories. Several people were injured and we understand one was hospitalized.

The Indonesian Security forces are continuing to adopt a draconian response to peaceful dissent. This a blatant breach of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Indonesia is a state party.

Rights groups have blasted authorities for the mass detentions, saying it was an assault on Papuans right to freedom of expression and assembly. Responding to the arrests of Papuan students and other peaceful pro-independence activists across the country, Amnesty International Indonesia's Executive Director Usman Hamid said: "This is a clear and shocking violation of Papuans' human rights to freedom of expression and assembly. These people did nothing but peacefully attend public events".

It is imperative that the Netherlands speak out publicly to condemn this shocking affront to the rights and freedoms of the West Papuan people and their supporters in Indonesia. We urge you to raise our concerns again about the grave human rights situation with the Indonesian Government and the crackdown on peaceful civil society groups.

We look forward to your response to this situation.

On behalf of Foundation Pro Papua and Papua Support Foundation HAPIN  
Yours sincerely,

Koen J. de Jager

c.c.: Members of the International Coalition for Papua ICP

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