

Australia West Papua Association (Sydney)
PO Box 28, Spit Junction, NSW 2088

West Papua update. January 2008
Summary of events

On the 8 January 2009, 11 West Papuan men were sentenced to three or three and a half years jail by the district court in Manokwari, having been found guilty of subversion. The men (known as the Manokwari eleven) were arrested in March 2008 simply because they took part in demonstrations where the West Papuan national flag was displayed. The men were protesting against the special autonomy law which they say has failed and has brought no benefit to the West Papuan people. NGOs' around the world including AWPAs and Amnesty International have called on their governments to raise the jailing of the Manokwari eleven with the Indonesian government and calling for their release.

It was reported in the Straits Times (19 January) that during a police operation a large number of houses were destroyed in Tingginere village. It quoted a spokesperson from the Papua Customary Council, who said that 'About 500 police burnt down 30 houses and killed 32 pigs at Tingginere village'. The Papua Customary Council, represents tribal interests in Papua.

Five Australians jailed for Papua visa breaches

The pilot of the light plane who flew into Merauke last September has received a jail sentence of three years while his four passengers received two years each. They were also fined \$3,400 each. They were found guilty of entering Indonesian territory without the proper documents. In a Radio New Zealand report, Damien Kingsbury from Australia's Deakin University said the tough sentences "could reflect the sensitivity and the difficulty of the Australia/Indonesia relationship around West Papua".

International Parliamentarians for West Papua

The International Parliamentarians for West Papua (IPWP) was launched in London in October 2008. We encourage people to contact their local Parliamentarian/Senator informing them of the (IPWP) and asking for their support. Further information concerning the (IPWP) can be found at <http://www.ipwp.org/index.html>

A number of earthquakes occurred off the coast of West Papua in the past month including on the 4 January which caused 4 deaths in Manokwari and one in Sorong. Details at <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/EDIS-7MZKTD?OpenDocument>

Media reports

Protesters in Papua say police beat them
RNZI 30 January, 2009 UTC

The human rights organisation ELSHAM says about 100 demonstrators in the Papua town of Nabire were badly beaten by Indonesian police while they held camp outside the local elections office. The peaceful demonstration earlier this week saw protestors hold an overnight vigil outside the elections office where they were demanding answers from officials over repeated delays in Nabire's PILKADA, or regent and municipal, elections. ELSHAM's Paula Makabori says the elections have been delayed since last October and local people are threatening that if the elections are postponed to next year, they will boycott this year's legislative and presidential elections. Ms Makabori says police attacked the protestors while they slept.

"And this brutal attack and gunshots against the people resulted in some people suffering of bruises and open wounds, and five people suffering from serious bullet wounds. So the victims have been hiding because they think that the police will go there and then take them out."
Paula Makabori.

Rudd urged to speak to Indonesia over Papuan jailings
RNZI 11 January, 2009

The Australia West Papua Association is calling on Australia's prime minister to initiate dialogue with his Indonesian counterpart after eleven West Papuans were jailed for subversion. The eleven were detained in March 2008 on political charges of subversion and have now been given prison sentences of either three or three and a half years. A spokesperson for the Association, Richard Rumbiak, says this is a clear case of state sanctioned political persecution against human rights defenders. He says Indonesia claims to respect and protect human rights but he says this is clearly not true. Mr Rumbiak says Australia is an important advocate for the protection of human rights in the region, but Indonesia exists in a blind spot.

Australians demonstrate over Papuans' jailing
RNZI 12 January, 2009

In Australia, more than a hundred people are demonstrating outside the Indonesian Consulate in Melbourne to ask for the release of all political prisoners in West Papua. The demonstration has been organised by Australia's West Papua Association which is calling on Australia's government to express concern to Indonesia over last week's jailing of 11 West Papuans for subversion. The so-called Manokwari Eleven have been given prison sentences of either three or three and a half years. The Association's spokesman Daniel Scoullar says as an important advocate for the protection of human rights in the region, Australia can't continue to ignore what happens in Indonesia. "The Manokwari eleven are the latest group to be put in jail for expressing their opinions and raising their flag which are things which shouldn't be criminal in any country. It's just making sure that the Indonesian government is aware that you can't imprison people on ridiculous charges like this without some kind of ramification and it is being noted by the community." Daniel Scoullar

Australia/Indonesia Defence pact to add pressure on West Papuans, says Coalition

RNZI 14 January, 2009 UTC

The West Papua National Coalition for Liberation says a new defence pact signed between Indonesia and Australia's defence forces will add to the growing pressure from security forces on West Papuan pro-independence movements.

This week the Australian Defence Force chief co-signed a statement with his Indonesian counterpart, agreeing to build a more secure and peaceful region and claiming a "clear direction" for future cooperation.

The statement outlined Australia's support for Indonesia in areas of counter-terrorism, maritime security and intelligence as well as humanitarian assistance. The coalition's Secretary General vice chairman, Dr John Otto Ondawame, says the pact can be seen as Australia's endorsement of the already strict control of the region by Indonesia's military.

"Giving more power to the Indonesian military to control over the territory (Papua). The consequences will be that our situation will be under pressure because they blame the resistance movement as a terrorist organisation and they will increase their operations in these areas." Dr John Ondawame

Papua gets Rp 19t from central govt

JP. Fri, 01/09/2009 The Archipelago

JAYAPURA, Papua: The Papua provincial administration received Rp 19 trillion (US\$1.72 billion) in development funds from the central government, to be disbursed to the provincial and regional administrations. Papua Governor Barnabas Suebu presented the funds to mayors, regents and agency heads on Thursday. Included in the package was a Rp 1 trillion general allocation fund (DAU) for the provincial administration and another Rp 8 trillion fund for the regency and mayoralty administrations. The province also received a Rp 81.27 billion special allocation fund (DAK) while the regional administrations received Rp 2.6 trillion. Papua also received a special autonomy fund of Rp 2.6 trillion and an infrastructure special autonomy fund of 800 million. In addition to the funds disbursed to the provincial and regional administrations through regional budgets, the central government also provides some Rp 4.9 trillion for regional offices of various ministries including defense, national education, public works and transportation ministries and the National Police. Barnabas said three priorities had been set in 2009: covering basic services and rural development; strengthening economic resilience through agriculture, enhancing the infrastructure and energy sector and enhancing anti-graft efforts, bureaucracy reforms, stabilizing democracy and improving security and defense. – JP

Separatists ambush police post in Papua

The Jakarta Post | Fri, 01/09/2009 2:10 PM | National

Separatist fighters attacked a police post and made off with four firearms in a remote area in Puncak Jaya regency, Papua, on Thursday night, state news agency Antara has reported. Free Papua Movement (OPM) fighters attacked a police post in Tinggi Nambut village. A 21-year-old police officer's wife was stabbed in the chest. Papua Police chief Insp. Gen. Bagus Eko Danto said he has yet to confirm the attack. Separately, Puncak Jaya Regent Lukas Enembe said he

had held a meeting to coordinate security. Enembe said two OPM groups were active in the area, one led by Goliat Tabuni and the other by Anton Tabuni. "We don't know which group carried out this raid," he said. In 2004 Goliat led a 100-strong group which ambushed the same village. Gunmen controlled Tinggi Nambut for four days before leaving when soldiers and police officers stormed the village. The OPM rebels have been fighting for the independence of Papua since the early 1960s. (dre)

Police give three-week ultimatum for return of weapons seized on 7 January in Puncak Jaya

From Tapol

[Comment: The authorities must surely realise that it is unlikely that the group in question will return the weapons. It remains to be seen what will happen when the three-week ultimatum ends. The incident also raised the question of how strong the OPM is in the area and whether further actions can be expected]

Cenderawasih Pos, 13 January 2009

The authorities in West Papua are making strenuous efforts to persuade a group of Papuans who launched a raid on a police post in Tingginambuh to return the weapons along with ammunition which they seized during the raid. Tingginambuh is located Puncak Jaya, in the Central Highlands. The deputy governor, Alex Hese gem said they hoped that the local administration would try to secure the return of the the weapons as the best way to avoid a physical conflict over the incident. If the weapons are not returned the security forces might well carry out sweepings in the area which would cause misunderstandings with the local community. He hoped that the church would assist in the matter. and called on OPM groups not to cause disturbances in the area. We want Papua to be a land of Peace and hope those still in the forest would return to the fold of the Republic of Indonesia.

Meanwhile a report from Puncak Jaya said that incident had caused a halt in the local activities of the government, the schools and other activities. At present efforts to get the return of the weapons were using the persuasive approach, hoping families, customary groups, the youth would help get the weapons back. The incident has caused fear among the local people, many of whom have abandoned their homes and fled into the forest while offices and schools were not functioning, but hopefully things would return to normal in a couple of weeks. The police were questioning a number of people about the incident. A deadline of three weeks has been set for the return of the weapons, after which other action would be taken.

Earlier, the chief of police admitted that the raid had occurred on 7 January because the local policemen had been too lax and there were only two men guarding the post at the time. At the time, around twenty people were watching TV at the post while the police officers were eating in another room. It was while this was happening that the raid took place when the 4 weapons were taken, along with some ammunition. The raid was mounted by a group led by Dekilas Tabuni who had been among the people watching the TV. They are believed to be part of the OPM group led by Goliat Tabuni. He admitted that if they had been more watchful, the incident would not have happened. He said this should be a lesson for the police in an area like Tingginambut in the interior which is an area of unrest and armed rebels are known to be active.

Asked whether the police would bring in other forces to help, he said at the moment they are relying on local leaders to secure the return of the weapons, hoping that they would use the time to make an approach to the OPM to return the weapons. If this doesn't happen within three weeks, the security forces will undertake their own searches, helped by personnel from the Cenderawasih military command

Press releases/reports etc.

Video from Australia Network News: Eleven jailed for raising banned Papuan Flag
Papua rights row. Amnesty wants Australia to raise the jailing of 11 men,
for raising a banned flag, directly with the Indonesian government.
<http://australianetworknews.com/story.htm?id=14356>

Four weeks of protests for shops selling Kwila

Friday, 30 January 2009, 10:23 am

For Immediate Release Joint Media Release- Rainforest Action & Indonesian Human Rights Committee
Friday 30th January

Four weeks of protests for Auckland furniture shops selling Kwila Rainforest Action and the Indonesian Human Rights Committee are planning a month of protests outside all Auckland stores of the nationwide furniture chain Four Seasons, in response to the company's continued selling of outdoor furniture made from illegally logged Kwila. The protests will run over four consecutive Saturdays from 1pm-3pm, beginning on January 31st.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO0901/S00198.htm>

Papuan court clears human rights defender of all charges

Amnesty International welcomes the decision today by the Jayapura District Court to clear human rights lawyer Iwanggin Sabar Olif alias Sabar of all the charges brought against him.

This ruling sends a positive signal to the Papuan human rights defenders community. However, the government needs to do more to ensure that Papuans are free to voice their opinions.

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?id=ENGASA210012009> =e

Letter to Foreign Affairs minister Stephen Smith from AWPA (Sydney)

calling for concrete action on blatant human rights abuses.

<http://sydney.indymedia.org.au/story/letter-foreign-minister-over-political-prisoners>

INDONESIA: RELEASE PAPUAN FLAG RAISERS

14 January 2009

Amnesty International called today for the immediate and unconditional release of 11 Papuan protestors facing three years or more in prison merely because they displayed a banned flag. The organization urged the Indonesian government to withdraw the 2007 government regulation

that bans the display of separatist flags.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/indonesia-release-papuan-flag-raisers-20090114>

'Manokwari 11' Join Ever-Growing Ranks Of Imprisoned Human Rights Defenders In West Papua

The Australia West Papua Association (AWPA) is calling on Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to initiate a dialogue with his Indonesian counterpart in response to fresh evidence that the suppression of civil, political and human rights in West Papua continues with full Indonesian Government support.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0901/S00218.htm>

West Papua: The Police Shooting Season Over

Tuesday, 6 January 2009 Press Release: Matthew Jamieson

West Papua: The Police Shooting Season Over the New Year period makes major concern for upcoming Indonesian General Election

Reports of police violence in Timika, Wamena and Sorong are marked resurgence in Human Rights abuse by the Indonesian security forces in West Papua in the later part of 2008. Also reports of mysterious deaths in Manokwari, before the massive earthquake, suggest 'black killings' have occurred there over the Christmas/New Year period.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0901/S00045.htm>

Free the West Papuan -Flag Raisers

The Indonesia Human Rights Committee urges New Zealand to publicly support this campaign. Eleven West Papuan men were sentenced on the 9 January 2009 to ..

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO0901/S00115.htm>

Appeal To Secretary of State Clinton Regarding Human Rights in West Papua

ETAN webpage

<http://www.etan.org/news/2009/01wpat.htm>

Letter in SMH West Papua Concerns 22 Jan.

West Papuan concerns

The Papua Customary Council, which represents tribal interests in West Papua, has reported that during a security operation by 500 Indonesian police last Sunday, up to 30 houses were destroyed in Tingginiere, central Papua. The Lombok treaty between Australia and Indonesia, which came into force last February, commits us to ties with the Indonesian security forces. Is the aid or training we give to the Indonesian police and military being used against the people of West Papua? Last week 11 West Papuans received jail terms of up to three years simply for raising their banned national flag during a peaceful rally. Until the Indonesian security forces

have been reformed we should not be training or aiding them.
Joe Collins Australia West Papua Association, Mosman

The 19th annual World Report summarizes human rights conditions in more than 90 countries and territories worldwide. It reflects extensive investigative work undertaken in 2008 by Human Rights Watch staff, usually in close partnership with human rights activists in the country in question.

Sixty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the governments demonstrating the clearest vision on international rights protections, sadly, are those seeking to undermine enforcement. In their foreign policies and in international fora, they invoke sovereignty, non-interference, and Southern solidarity to curb criticism of their human rights abuses and those of their allies and friends. Governments that champion human rights need urgently to wrest back the initiative from these human rights spoilers.

<http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2009>

Indonesian chapter

<http://www.hrw.org/en/node/79278>