

This is the 57th in a series of monthly reports that focus on developments affecting Papuans. This series is produced by the non-profit West Papua Advocacy Team (WPAT) drawing on media accounts, other NGO assessments, and analysis and reporting from sources within West Papua. This report is co-published with the East Timor and Indonesia Action Network (ETAN) Back issues are posted online at <http://etan.org/issues/wpapua/default.htm> Questions regarding this report can be addressed to Edmund McWilliams at edmcw@msn.com.

Summary

Unconfirmed reports indicate that Indonesian security forces may have begun sweep operations targeting villages in the central highlands following the alleged theft of four weapons from a police station by individuals claimed by the police to be armed pro-separatists. Amnesty International, noting the sentencing of still more Papuans for peaceful protests, has called for their release and an end to intimidation of peaceful dissenters. The Jayapura District Court has freed a human rights advocate but only after 15 months of detention, including a 15-month trial. President Yudhoyono, under heavy guard, visited Manokwari but failed to meet with ordinary Papuans. The Indonesian central government has significantly underfunded education for Papuans, violating national law and pledges contained in the moribund "Special Autonomy" legislation. The inadequate support for Papuan education also perpetuates the inability of Papuans to compete with better educated migrants. Freeport security personnel have joined with notorious BRIMOB police units to evict traditional gold miners. In separate violence in nearby Timika, the apparent police killing of one man led to violent rioting in which four were wounded. Franciscans International has published a "Factsheet" which offers insights regarding current trends and developments in West Papua. Survival International reports indications of increased repression and State violence in West Papua, noting in part the re-emergence of Indonesian-military backed militias. The West Papua Advocacy Team appealed to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to address human rights abuse in West Papua and end assistance to an unreformed, unaccountable and rights abusing Indonesian military that is not under civilian control.

Correction: The January 2009 West Papua Report, under the heading "Military Occupation of West Papua Continues Despite Absence of Security Threat," due to a drafting error, conveyed the false contention that Papuan human rights groups, religious leaders and academics had only adopted a non-violent struggle for rights "over the past decade." In reality, these groups and individuals have consistently pursued their rights through nonviolent means since the beginning of their struggle.

Contents:

* Sweep Operations Imminent or Underway in Papuan Central Highlands? * Amnesty International Calls for Release of Papuan Peaceful Demonstrators * Papuan Court Frees Human Rights Advocate * President Yudhoyono Visits West Papuans But Fails to Meet with

Ordinary Papuans * The Indonesian government has underfunded education for Papuans * Freeport Security Personnel Join with BRIMOB to Drive Out Local Miners * Police Reportedly Kill One, Wound Four Near Timika * Franciscans International Report on Current Situation in West Papua * Survival International Reports Increased Repression and Violence in West Papua * WPAT Appeals to Secretary of State Clinton Regarding Human Rights in West Papua
Correction: The January 2009 West Papua Report, under the heading "Military Occupation of West Papua Continues Despite Absence of Security Threat," due to a drafting error, conveyed the false contention that Papuan human rights groups, religious leaders and academics had only adopted a non-violent struggle for rights "over the past decade." In reality, these groups and individuals have consistently pursued their rights through nonviolent means since the beginning of their struggle.

Sweep Operations Imminent or Underway in The Central Highlands?

Recent developments in Puncak Jaya District of the central highlands area suggest a return to Indonesian security sweep operations which in the past had led to collective punishment targeting local villages. In recent years these operations have resulted in the death of scores of Papuans and displacement of thousands. Indonesian authorities have set a deadline of three weeks for the return of weapons supposedly stolen January 7 from a police station in Tingginambuh within Puncak Jaya District.

According to reports from the area, schools and government offices are closed. An unconfirmed report from the area contends that that Indonesian military (TNI), BRIMOB and Indonesian police have launched raids on villages around Tingginambut, setting fire to houses and killing two.

Separate reports sourced to a local official and a Papua Customary Council representative claim that on January 18, approximately 500 police attacked the village of Tingginere in Puncak Jaya burning 30 houses and killing 32 heads of livestock (pigs). Reportedly, villagers fled to a neighboring villages. Police have admitted to a search operation in Tingginere but not to any destruction. They claimed they were looking of the weapons stolen earlier in January.

Police reported a clash with members of the Free Papua Movement (OPM) in Tingginambut (Puncak Jaya District) on January 16. Police claimed the OPM element to be the Goliath Tabuni unit and that one man, Yendanak Wonda, was wounded in the skirmish. The spokesperson for a respected NGO, the Institute for the Study and Advocacy of Human Rights (ELSHAM), said that the clash was over police attempts to burn several local houses which OPM elements sought to stop.

Amnesty International Calls for Release of Papuan Peaceful Demonstrators

On January 15, Amnesty International issued a press release that called for the immediate and unconditional release of 11 Papuan protestors who have been convicted and sentenced to three years or more in prison for non violent protest, specifically for display of a banned flag. Amnesty International, in its press release, also called on the Indonesian government to withdraw the 2007 government regulation that bans the display of what are alleged by the government to be

separatist flags.

The 11 activists were arrested in March 2008 during a series of peaceful public demonstrations. The District Court in Manokwari, initially sentenced the activists to eight month's imprisonment. On appeal, the Papua's provincial High Court upheld the guilty verdict on 9 January and extended their sentences. Prominent activist Jack Wanggai was sentenced to three-and-a-half years and 10 others were given three year sentences. The 11 activists were charged with 'rebellion' under Article 106 and 110 of the Indonesian Penal Code. These activists join other Papuans incarcerated for peaceful political protest, including Filep Karma and Yusuf Pakage who were the subject of a 2008 appeal for justice by 40 members of the US Congress.

"Imprisoning protesters for three years just for raising a flag seems designed to make an example of these people in an effort to intimidate other Papuans activists," said Donna Guest, Deputy Director of Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific Program. Amnesty International also pointed out that the arrest and conviction of these protesters violated their right to free expression, opinion and association guaranteed under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party.

In describing the background to the latest arrests, Amnesty International noted: "Papua, Indonesia's eastern-most province, has witnessed a deteriorating human rights situation over the past few years. The indigenous population, ethnically distinct from other parts of Indonesia, has increasingly questioned the Indonesian government's policies regarding Papua's natural resources and the migration of non-Papuans into the area. The Indonesian government maintains a heavy police and military presence, whose members have faced accusations of intimidating and threatening members of the local indigenous community who support greater autonomy or independence from Indonesia through peaceful means."

Papuan Court Frees Human Rights Defender

The Jayapura District Court, on January 29, freed human rights lawyer Iwanggin Sabar Olif (AKA Sabar) of all the charges brought against him. Amnesty International (AI) in a January 29 public statement observed: "Iwanggin Sabar Olif should never have been arrested in the first place. His detention from October 2007 to January 2008 and his subsequent trial took over 15 months, which prevented him from carrying out his legitimate work as a human rights defender in Papua." AI also pointed out that Hina Jilani, then UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, said in her report after her June 2007 visit to Indonesia, procedures should be "instituted to prevent the prosecution of human rights defenders aimed at their harassment for conducting activities that are legitimately a part of their function for the defense of human rights."

Iwanggin Sabar Olif was charged under Article 160 of Indonesia's Criminal Code for "inciting in public to commit a punishable act, a violent action against the public authority or any other disobedience". This article, which carries a maximum sentence of six years' imprisonment, has been used in the past against human rights defenders in Indonesia, including in Aceh, Java, East Kalimantan and Maluku, to suppress freedom of expression and assembly.

In its statement AI called on the Indonesian government "to ensure that Article 160 is no longer used to undermine the right to freedom of expression, which is guaranteed in its Constitution and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Indonesia is a state party."

President Yudhoyono Visits West Papua But Fails to Meet with Ordinary Papuans

A January 23 Jakarta Post article reported on the January 22-23 visit of President Yudhoyono to Manokwari in West Papua's "bird's head" region. The President took the occasion to inaugurate 10 projects worth nearly \$20 million, including road and bridge development, river rehabilitation and the construction of the Raja Ampat beach wall. Yudhoyono also provided Rp 510 billion for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the province in response to the January 4 earthquake and announced loans from Bank Mandiri of Rp 11.22 billion, from Bank BRI of Rp 16.09 billion and Bank BNI of Rp 8.42 billion.

Yudhoyono also provided Rp 154.7 billion for the National Self Reliance Community Empowerment (PNPM) program for people in 8 regencies and municipalities. The loans are for fishing boats which will belong to the government but which will be loaned to people until they can afford to buy new boats. The PNPM program has been criticized for being manipulated by Yudhoyono's Democratic Party for political purposes.

Besides inaugurating the projects, Yudhoyono also donated 3000 packages of food staples for Manokwari residents while First Lady Ani Yudhoyono handed over a car and a motorcycle for a school. In addition to the First Lady, Yudhoyono was accompanied by Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare Aburizal Bakrie, Home Minister Mardiyanto, State Secretary Hatta Rajasa, Public Works Minister Joko Kirmanto, Social Services Minister Bachtiar Chamsyah and the Indonesian Military Chief Gen. Djoko Santoso.

TAPOL reports that the visit of President Yudhoyono was confined to meetings with local officials and that he at no point met with ordinary Papuans. Moreover, during the visit, he was surrounded by a large, heavily-armed security force giving . TAPOL notes, that the precautions reflected a "deep mistrust of Papuans and an unwillingness to use the occasion to listen to their concerns and grievances."

In the days leading up to the visit, Indonesian security personnel warned against demonstrations or protests.

Failing The Children of West Papua

Papua's Cenderawasih Pos, on 29 January, reported that Indonesia's national budget for 2009 failed to fund free compulsory education for the poorer inhabitants of West Papua. The Institute for Civil Society Strengthening, ICS, in Papua and the Indonesia Forum for Budgetary Transparency both spoke out against this shortfall.

While the Law on National Education stipulates that 20 percent of the national budget should be allocated to education, in Papua, in fact it only amounts to 4.7 percent. Moreover, the Special

Autonomy Law of 2001 stipulates an even greater provision for education, namely 30 percent of the budget, whereas the actual amount is 24.18 percent.

But it gets worse. As much as 84.51 percent of this reduced amount goes to the payment of salaries, allowances and bonuses and office administration, which means that the actual amount available for the people's education is only 15.49 percent, for a total of Rp31.52 billion.

The Cenderawasih Pos notes that this means, according to Budi Setyanto of the ICS, that the promise of free education made by the governor of the province and the national government has not been kept. He added, "this contradicts the promise that nine years of education at primary and lower secondary school level for the children of the poorest Papuan families would be provided free of charge." The ICS rep stressed that it is extremely important for the provincial administration to comply with the requirement under the Special Autonomy Law to allocate at the very least 30 percent of the budget to free education for the poorest groups in the territory.

TAPOL, the UK-based human rights advocacy organization observes: "The lack of free education for Papuan children is clearly a contributing factor to the inability of Papuans to compete with migrants from other parts of Indonesia in running the economy and other sectors of public life."

Freeport Security Personnel Join with BRIMOB Forces to Drive out Local Miners

According to the January 24 Jakarta Post, the U.S.-based Freeport McMoran on January 22 used Indonesian security personnel to clear out Papuans who had been conducting traditional gold mining operations in the vast waste produced by the company mine near Tembagapura in West Papua. The local people had been working the tailings and waste which Freeport had dumped into the Kabur River at Kilometer 74.

The eviction operation entailed closing down 22 camps the miners had established in the vicinity of Kilometer 74 at the northern end of the road connecting Timika and the mine. The Mobile Brigade's Amole V task force (BRIMOB) which is specifically assigned to protect Freeport, lead the operation which included over 200 police personnel plus 4 additional platoons of the Brimob personnel. (BRIMOB is a militarized police force which especially brutal with responsibility for well-documented human rights atrocities throughout Indonesia.) Freeport security personnel also participated in the operation.

There was no independent monitoring of the operation by media or NGOs. In the past such operations have been violent resulting in casualties. The police claimed that after initial "resistance" the miners were removed from the area. Reports indicate that the miners' appeal for compensation for the camps and equipment that were lost was rejected.

The local police chief said that the security action was prompted by Freeport complaints that the local miners were "obstructing the company's production operations." He also claimed that pushing the local people out of the area "was for their own good." A Freeport spokesman indicated that more such operations are planned possibly targeting a similar camp at Kilometer 38.

Police Reportedly Kill One, Wound Four in Timika Violence

Various media have reported extensive violence in Timika on January 27 as police fired on hundreds of demonstrators angry over the reported police killing of a man in a bar fight. The demonstrators, apparently migrants and not Papuan, attacked the local police station, a market and other locations, drawing fire from police which reportedly wounded four of the protesters. Protesters were reportedly armed with homemade guns, machetes and wooden stakes.

According to a January 28 report in the Jakarta Globe, the National Human Rights Commission has been monitoring the Timika police because of numerous cases of officers as well as military personnel allegedly shooting civilians, many of which remain unresolved.

It was unclear whether the police action in clearing out itinerant miners described in the preceding report was connected with this violence only days after the police operation.

Franciscans International Report On Current Situation in West Papua

Franciscans International (www.franciscansinternational.org) offers a current " Factsheet" regarding recent developments in trends in West Papua. The Factsheet notes in part:

Destruction of the environment has resulted in violation of economic, social and cultural rights, exacerbating extreme poverty among indigenous Papuans (80% of Papuans live in poverty) particularly through denial of access to education and income.

Major threats to both the environment and lives of indigenous communities whose survival depends on natural resources are: illegal logging, mining and resulting (mine) waste, river pollution and the expansion of palm oil plantations.

More than 242 individual cases of torture and ill treatment have been recorded from 1998 to 2007. This number excludes military operations resulting in collective punishment against villages and other instances of military abuse....

The security apparatus, under the guise of quashing 'separatists,' routinely uses torture, illegal treatment and violence against civilians, including women and children.

Survival International Reports Increased Repression in West Papua

In a 28 January report, Survival International points to mounting evidence of increased State violence and repression in West Papua. It cites recent killings and shootings committed by State Security forces: including "at least four Papuans 'accidentally' shot dead by police in West Papuan towns since Christmas" It also notes that four bodies have been found dumped by the side of the road or in rivers and that security forces have destroyed houses.

In addition, on January 9 Indonesian courts extended the sentence of 11 peaceful protesters from eight months to three years (see above). Survival international also reports "renewed activity, supported by the Indonesian army, of the notorious Islamic militia group, Merah Putih

(Red and White), in the highland town of Wamena."

The update concludes that "Papuan leaders fear that the shootings, killings and re-emergence of the militia suggests that the Indonesian authorities are trying to destabilize the already fragile situation in West Papua and generate even greater violence."

Other items in this issue of the West Papua Report, noting violence in Puncak Jaya, near Tembagapura and Timika supports Survival International's conclusion of increased repression. (See full report at <http://www.survival-international.org/tribes/papuan>)

WPAT Appeals To Secretary Hillary Clinton Regarding Human Rights in West Papua

The West Papua Advocacy Team on January 21 appealed to Senator Clinton to work to end repression of peaceful protest in West Papua and to restore conditionality to any US military cooperation with the Indonesian military and intelligence agency. Text of that appeal follows:

Dear Senator Clinton:

The West Papua Advocacy Team (WPAT) wishes to congratulate you on your assumption of the office of Secretary of State. Your record as a champion of human rights and the rule of law gives hope to those who struggle for their human rights against brutal repression. We strongly agree that those who exercise brutal repression of their peoples are, in the words of President Obama, "on the wrong side of history." We trust that his unequivocal assertion of America's commitment to human rights and your own leadership in development and implementation of US foreign policy will ensure a principled stand on behalf of those for whom justice is still only a dream.

The struggle for human rights is especially arduous in the Indonesian province of West Papua which has been under Indonesian control since 1969 when a purported "act of self-determination," widely regarded as fraudulent, secured Indonesian control of this area. For over four decades Indonesian security authorities, principally the Indonesian military, have employed extreme brutality to repress Papuans who have demanded political rights, and an end to destructive exploitation of their vast natural resources. Papuans have broadly rejected a six-year old Indonesian promise of "special autonomy" as an unfulfilled pledge and are urging an internationally mediated dialogue between the Indonesian government to address long-standing Papuan demands for fundamental political rights, demilitarization of the province and a Papuan role in immigration, development and other policies that fundamentally affect the Papuan people.

Among those in especially urgent need of US foreign policy founded on consistent promotion of human rights are Papuan prisoners of conscience incarcerated for exercise of their right to peaceful dissent. In the latter months of the 110th US Congressional session, 40 members of the US House of Representatives signed a letter to Indonesian President Yudhoyono calling for justice with regard to two Papuans, Filip Karma and Yusuf Pakage, jailed for peaceful assertion of their right to protest. Both are designated "prisoners of conscience" by Amnesty International.

The West Papua Advocacy Team also wishes to call to your attention the recent conviction by Indonesian courts of yet eleven more Papuans who were found guilty of subversion and sentenced on the 8 January 2009 to jail terms of three and three-and-a-half years. These individuals were arrested in March 2008 for involvement in peaceful, non-violent demonstrations. They now join prisoners of conscience Karma and Pakage and dozens of Papuans who similarly have been jailed for non-violent protest which is protected by Indonesian law and by international conventions to which Indonesia is a party. It is important to note that the Papuans who are incarcerated in the Indonesian penal system in which a recent UN report noted torture and maltreatment is widespread.

The Indonesian court's conviction of these Papuans stands in stark contrast of the chronic failure of the Indonesian judicial system to effectively prosecute senior Indonesian military and intelligence officials for their roles in violent acts against Papuans and other Indonesian and East Timorese civilians, including the massacre of thousands of East Timorese and the 2004 murder of the leading human rights advocate and military critic Munir Said Thalib.

We urge that the new administration develop a plan to encourage the democratizing Indonesian government to respect human rights, and especially to end its repression of peaceful dissent in West Papua and elsewhere in the Indonesian archipelago. Papuan prisoners of conscience should be released.

Finally, we also also urge you to demand fundamental reform of the Indonesian military which continues to abuse human rights, is unaccountable before Indonesia's flawed judicial system and which is not subordinate to civilian government control. The incoming administration should not provide assistance to an Indonesian military or an Indonesian intelligence agency which remain unreformed and unaccountable to the Indonesian people.

etanetanetanetanetanetanetanetanetanetanetan

ETAN welcomes your financial support. Go to <http://etan.org/etan/donate.htm> to donate.
Thanks.

John M. Miller fbp@igc.org
National Coordinator
East Timor & Indonesia Action Network (ETAN)
PO Box 21873, Brooklyn, NY 11202-1873 USA
Phone: (718)596-7668 Mobile phone: (917)690-4391
Skype: john.m.miller
Web site: <http://www.etan.org>