

The New Zealand Green Party's foreign spokesman Keith Locke urged his country to do more to help forge a resolution in Indonesia's Papua region.

Mr Locke was speaking at yesterday's West Papua flag-raising ceremony in front of parliament, marking the forty-eighth anniversary of the West Papuan Declaration of Independence from Dutch colonial rule.

Similar ceremonies have been taking place amid tight security by military and police forces in Papua where indigenous resistance to Indonesian rule is widespread.

Mr Locke says New Zealand has a duty to help foster dialogue to address the discontent of Papuans with Indonesian rule and the ongoing abuses by Indonesia's military in their region.

"We are a Pacific country. These are Melanesian people that New Zealand betrayed back in the 1960s in allowing West Papua to be colonised by Indonesia. We use this occasion to push for a true dialogue between Papuan people and Indonesia for a way forward. The special autonomy that Indonesia's granted to West Papua isn't meeting the needs of the people. New Zealand could be involved."

Keith Locke.