

West Papua Council (PDP)

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**REPORT: On 11 July 2001 The Joint Committee Unanimously
Endorsed Four Requests Submitted
Thanks very much indeed.**

To the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs

On behalf of my people and my country, I would like to thank for this Committee for allowing me to speak. I am honoured to be present in this place at this time to mediate the voice of my people and my country to the people and country of Ireland. I thank you for allowing me enter this count without any difficulties. Thank you for your sympathy and support to West Papua struggle. Thank you to individuals and Support Groups in Ireland that understand and support our struggle.

I am Sem Karoba, the mediator for the Papua Presidium Council in Europe. The Council is the legitimate representative of the Papuan people elected democratically at the Papua People's Congress II 2000. On 4th June 2000 the Congress passed resolutions ([Resolutions Attachmer A.](#)) with demands to re-examine the unlawful and undemocratic 1969 Act of Free Choice. I am here to follow up previous meetings you had with my colleagues, organised by West Papua Actio Ireland.

Mr. Kaisiepo (PDP Spokesperson for Europe) gave brief background on the history and the work o

Papua Presidium Council (PDP), Mr. John Rumbiak (Human Rights Activist in West Papua) met Mrs. Mary Robinson and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Ireland and gave details of human rights violations in West Papua. Oswald Iten, Swiss Journalist who witnessed torture and murders in West Papua prison also gave his accounts to this Committee.

I am thankful that Irish Government and Irish People are sympathetic to our struggle and that you are aware of why we are demanding for a re-examination of the 1969 Act of Free Choice.

I would like to begin with my personal experience of being under Indonesian colonial power in West Papua. I started thinking about the struggle when I was about seven years of age (because I do not know when I was born), some hours after one of my uncles was killed. In July 1977, most highlanders in West Papua refused to participate in the Indonesian General Election, and Indonesians reacted by bombing my village, farms, and people. I have seen my uncle being sliced into pieces by knife and razor blade. He was then beaten and sliced to death. Until today, I still know the names of people who died in my village and there are also people who disappeared and we do not know where they are until, including my primary school teachers.

At the time we surrendered in 1979, the Indonesian special forces (Kopassanda, now Kopassus) were standing on the way and with a few Papuans, watching everyone. When they saw young girls they asked them to stop and step aside, when they saw good traditional clothes, they asked to take them off and give to them. When they saw the tribal leaders, including my uncle I mentioned above they asked them to step aside and straight away their hands were tied with wires. They were kicked, and hit with weapons. They were dragged into the military tents and most of them were killed at night. I used to hear many shootings at night. We counted how many shootings and in the morning we went out searching who was killed the night before. After we surrendered, we were left in an open air, near a missionary airstrip, with no food nor shelters. Many people died due to starvation and diseases. I survived because I must tell these stories to you and to the world.

My last experience of Indonesian brutality was in December 2000. My other uncle was killed in Bloody Abepura 2000. In this particular occasion, we heard from our friends that Papuans had

attacked the office of local police. After a few minutes, we heard two police were killed. Later on I felt something bad in my blood-pressure, which meant something dangerous is going to happen. I asked all friends at the dormitory to run away and go to the Abepura Hill. Other students followed me, jumping out from the windows but a few of them, including my uncle said, "I am not convinced with your worries!" and he remained in the dormitory. Just a few minutes later, the police came and attacked the dormitory. First they kicked the door and the door was opened. Then they kicked other doors and started searching with anger, shouting and shooting. They saw my uncle inside the dormitory and they straight away shot him on the spot. Others were imprisoned and badly tortured. I am aware that a Swiss Journalist, Oswald Iten, came to this Committee in previous occasion and mentioned in details about how Indonesian police treat us in prisons. One of the students, Ori, died due to the torture in prison.

The murders and human rights violations still continue even today. Oswald Iten's eye witness account was already reported to Irish Times (22/02/01). Other reports a few days ago confirmed that 22 prisoners (7 members of the PDP and Papua Panel) were beaten up and they were imprisoned without proper trials and the charges put upon them were unlawful. Mr. Rumbiak reported to Irish Times (12/04/01) that: "there have been 80 summary executions as well as 500 arbitrary detentions and other violations in West Papua." Recent report by ELSHAM confirms the number of violations increased to "95 extra-judicial killings from July 1998 to May 2001, and the security forces have been responsible for 623 cases of arbitrary detention and torture."

([Attachment E](#).) Meanwhile, 5 member of the PDP, including the Chairperson of PDP, Theys H Eluway, are being put on trial with charge under subversive law ([Attachment C](#)). The Leader of the Free Papua Movement is also under threat of being extradited by the Papua New Guinea Government to Jakarta ([Attachment D](#).) He will face torture and even under threat of being killed as they did to other Papuan leaders (for examples: Arnold Ap, BA, 1984; and Dr. Thom Wainggai 1996) The extradition of Mr. Wenda is against UN resolution on Refugees.

Presidium Council of Papua (PDP) was established on February 2000 and approved at the Papua People's Congress II 2000 (May 29-June 4, 2000), with a major mandate to Internationalise the Struggle for Independence of West Papua and Demanded Indonesia to open Dialogue at national

and international levels to re-examine the political status and legal basis of West Papua being with Indonesia since 1963.

Since 1960s and particularly from 1998, Papuans have been demanding dialogue with Indonesian government. The peaceful and democratic expression of the Papuan people has been ignored. In response, Indonesian government banned the PDP and chose to carry out military approach to counter.

As many as 10,000 organic and non-organic troops have been deployed to West Papua, including more than 700 Jihad (Islam Fundamentalist) Troops. Besides, East Timor style militia activities are underway. A Task Force called White-and-Read Task Force (represents Indonesian Flag) has been established and this threatens the stability of the territory significantly.

The Indonesian army also chased villagers who were on the way to Papua New Guinea (taking refuge in PNG from Indonesian attack on December 1, 2000 when Indonesian army threatened to pull down West Papua Flag by force). At least 400 people fled to PNG this time, in addition to more than 2,000 refugees already in PNG. Their status as refugees was denied by both Australian and PNG governments. Only Catholic Bishops in PNG helping them. This was the fourth wave of refugees. The first one was in 1974, then in 1978, and third in 1981. The refugees are also chased and tortured by PNG police and army in collusion with the Indonesian government (Indonesian has no money for its economic recovery but there is more than enough money for buying politicians and military commanders from PNG)

Under the mandate of the Papua Congress II 2000 the PDP has launched its campaign for International Support and recognition. At the last UN Millennium Summit, the PDP gained official support from the [Prime Ministers of Vanuatu and Nauru Governments and PDP](#) members attended the Summit for the first time as representatives from West Papua Peoples. Also last year, the Pacific Islands Forum expressed deep concern about Indonesian repression against peaceful and democratic demand of the Papuans. Canberra and Washington also warned Indonesia to end violent approach to resolve political problems in West Papua. ([Attachment G.](#))

On 1 June 2001, PDP Information Office for Australia was officially opened by the PDP International Moderator, Mr. Franslaberth Joku. We are looking forward to having the same office for Europe, Asia, Africa and America. [New Zealand Government](#) also offered mediating role in resolving the problems.

In Europe, for the first time the Dutch Foreign Minister said in 1999 that West Papua case is an “unfinished business.” Last year, the Netherlands Government has launched a Historical Review of West Papua. Two times, Dutch Parliament visited West Papua (in 2000 and on May 2nd, 2001). Last year, the first International Conference on West Papua was held in Holland and the same congress for this year will be held in October this year in Germany.

I am aware that Irish Government and politicians have read a paper written by [Dr. John Saltford, the UN involvement in the 1969 Act of Self-Determination in West Papua](#). I thank that Irish Government has decided to learn this paper on the UN involvement in the Act of Free Choice. The documents I am submitting now give more reasons and backgrounds for the independence struggle. They explain some historical, legal, political, and human rights; accompanied by some traditional songs I just recorded for the first time in Ireland. (Papuan songs have been banned in West Papua.)

I am here now in Ireland to ask for support from Irish government to help Papuans in the following issues:

1. **Raise the question on the 1969 Act of Free Choice in West Papua at the UN Security Council Meeting in September this year.**
2. **In support to the demand of the Human Rights Watch, USA ([July 3, 2001 – Attachments F.](#)) the PDP urges Irish government and world leaders to press Jakarta to invite the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture to visit Papua, and in particular at the CAT Conference with Indonesia as one of the countries in examination which will submit its report to the UN due in November 2001. [Senate of the Congress of the USA](#) also pressures Indonesia to respect human rights in West Papua.**

3. **At the moment, I am seeking support to initiate possibility to establish an Information Desk of the PDP for Europe, to be based in Ireland. The West Papua Action Ireland and West Papua Support Group Ireland will be consulted on operational basis to help in this effort.**
4. **For this purpose, I personally need a semi-permanent status visa, which means I will be going back and forth from West Papua to Ireland, to run the office on periodic basis, without any hinderance and delay in the visa processing.**

In this special opportunity, I hereby also would like to officially acknowledge the submission of our papers ([Attachment B.](#)) produced by the West Papuan Community (WestPaC) in co-operation with the Alliance of Papuan Students. I will forward to you the following papers in CD ROMS:

- **Book 01:** [*WEST PAPUA: From Colonisation to Recolonisation*](#), WestPaC-AMP, Jakarta:1999.
- **Book 02:** [*WEST PAPUA: A Scandal in the UN Decolonisation History*](#), WestPaC-AMP, Jakarta: 2000.
- **Book 03:** [*WEST PAPUA: The Case We Knew \(A Handbook for Interest Diplomacy\)*](#), WestPaC-AMP, Jakarta:2000
- **Book 04:** [*IGNOMINIES: Appeals on International Violations in West Papua*](#), WestPaC-AMP, Jakarta:2001.
- **Paper 01.** [*Reinscription of West Papua as a Colonised State and People*](#), by Powes Parkop (Master of Law), Pacific Concern Resource Centre.
- Some Articles on the Scandals and Issues in Focus by Sem Karoba
 - West Papua: The Cases We Knew, Article
 - West Papua: Appeal to the UN WG on Minorities (Intervention on Agenda 3a)
 - West Papua: Human Rights Violations in West Papua (Intervention at the UNWG on Minorities, Agenda 3b)

The submission of the documents and this talk by me mark the beginning of our efforts in seeking possibilities for establishing the PDP Press Desk for Europe to be based in Ireland. I would like

ask for your kind assistance and support to me personally and for the PDP as our organisation.

We cannot and will not get away from the issue of security and peace in the Pacific Region in the coming years. Ignoring the democratic and peaceful expression of Papuan People's wish is not the best choice for the world's governments to take. New moves by the Indonesian military and police as well as turmoils and political crises in Indonesia clearly indicate that Indonesia as a nation is incapable of resolving its own problems. Indonesia has failed to respect democracy and human rights in West Papua. Expecting changes to come from Jakarta is the same as allowing human rights violations to continue.

In East Timor case, the world leaders almost failed to prevent massacres because the preventive action was not taken at the right time as possible. I, on behalf of my people and the PDP, once again, appeal Irish government to support our democratic and peaceful approach in resolving our political problems in West Papua. This can be done by offering a role as mediator, by encouraging Indonesia to come to dialogue table with Papuan representatives, and build confidence among the Indonesian political elites. Such support will help Indonesia to act in a more democratic manner with respect to human rights.

It is my hope on behalf of my people and my country, that our relationships and co-operations we are building right now will remain and will increase after West Papua becomes independent early this century.

Thanks very much for your support for the struggle against colonialism in the 21st century.

Yours sincerely,

Sem Karoba
