

14th Session of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples

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Item 7a: Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Joint statement: Dewan Adat Papua, Saniri Alifuru

Delivered by Mr. Leonard Imbiri, Dewan Adat Papua,

Madam Chair,

Distinguished Indigenous brothers and sisters, members, representatives,

We are very concerned with the trampling of Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination as reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We do not have to look far for this, looking at the desecration of the Mauna Kea mountain in Hawai'i, foreclosure 158 of 270 remote Aboriginal communities in the State of Western Australia, and the Human Rights violations occurring in West-Papua and South-Maluku.

The preamble acknowledges that Indigenous Peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of 'their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources'. This process can be understood as an historic denial of Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination.

Restoring the right to self-determination is a remedial vehicle, which affirms that Indigenous Peoples, individually and as groups, are equally entitled to autonomous control of their own destinies, and to live within governing institutional orders that are devised accordingly.

The Declaration also provides that Indigenous Peoples' self-determination involves participation, engagement and interaction with the larger societal structures in the countries where they live.

It affirms Indigenous Peoples' right to 'participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State' and be consulted in relation to decisions affecting them, with the objective of obtaining their prior, free and informed consent.

The duty to consult arises whenever a government decision affects Indigenous Peoples in ways not felt by the general community.

Self-determination is the freedom to live, evolve and exist with purpose and wellbeing free from external compulsion. To exercise self-government. The right to walk one's own path. Securing and exercising self-determination is important, necessary and fundamental to our existence as Indigenous Peoples.

All of these rights afforded to Indigenous Peoples is being continuously ignored by for example the Indonesian government. Since its invasion almost 50 years ago, the Indonesian government has

structured itself legally, socially and even psychologically to deny the West Papuans and the people of South-Maluku any form of self-determination.

The Indonesian Government has overthrown the traditional governments of the West Papuan and South-Maluku peoples and controls the resources, movements, public gatherings, schooling, lands and all aspects of the lives of these Melanesian peoples.

As stated by a participant under agenda item 3. Colonialism in the Pacific, has new and changing forms, it has intensified, and lead to the increase of transmigration, militarization and desecration of sacred sites, with the situation on the Maunu Kea mountain in Hawai'i as the most recent example.

Even though Indigenous peoples of the Pacific have addressed human rights violation at the proper mechanisms, we are more than often told to forget the historical harm, whereas, a number of Indigenous Peoples are entitled to the full extent of the right to the self-determination as reflected in Article 3 of the UN Declaration on the rights to self-determination.

A number of former colonies in the Pacific have gained independence, however the right to self-determination is still being advocated for by the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, and sought by the indigenous peoples in Guam, the Northern Marianas, the Marshall Islands, Hawaii, Rapanui, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, West Papua, and South-Maluku.

Therefore we recommend:

1. That the Forum establishes an Expert Group Meeting on Decolonization.
2. That the Forum recommend the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of the Peoples of the Non Self- Governing Territories to oversee and report to the United Nations on the status of human rights in the Non- Self-Governing Territories and the implementation of the Plan of Implementation.

Thank you Madam Chair,