

STATEMENT

BY MR. J U W A N A

OBSERVER OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA TO THE
FOURTH SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS
POPULATIONS OF THE SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF
DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

(in the exercise of the right of reply)

GENEVA, 1 AUGUST 1985.

Item 4 : Review of Developments pertaining to the Promotion and
Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of
Indigenous Populations.

WGIP 85 GOV/SEA. IDN/M

Madame Chairperson,

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your unanimous election as Chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. I am convinced that under your wise and impartial leadership the deliberations of our meeting will produce constructive and positive results for the betterment of indigenous populations around the world.

Madame Chairperson,

It is with great reluctance that my delegation, as an observer to this Working Group intervenes in this forum. Our intervention is precipitated only by the statement concerning the development of human rights in Irian Jaya made by certain delegates and a group claiming to represent the West Papuan people, a term used by the former colonial power. The delegation of this group has again and again made an attempt to mislead the Working Group by projecting an image of the Indonesian Government as ruthless and repressive regime determined to destroy the cultural identity of the indigenous population of Irian Jaya. As in the past, these attempts must fall on deaf ears as not a single allegation or accusation can find any base in reality or be substantiated in any way. Permit me therefore, Madame Chairperson, to make a brief clarification of the issues referred to. As we are aware, these charges have been refuted in various forums and in many times in the past. Nonetheless, it is very important that all of us check the repetition of accusations or allegations which damage the reputation and honour of a country as the spread of even the most unconfirmed statements, if not rebuffed, has the effect of being perceived as fact, especially by those who originally fabricated them.

Madame Chairperson,

As a country which is composed of many different ethnic groups, indigenous to our various regions, Indonesia is one of the first countries, since its independence in 1945, to pledge solemnly in its Constitution and its State Philosophy, the Pancasila, the support of the principles of a just and civilized humanity governed under democracy with social justice for all people. Based on these principles, Indonesia, does not, and will not, tolerate any discrimination of rights or treatment of its people. On the contrary, it encourages the development of pluralistic communities led by the deliberations among representatives and conforming to the national motto "Unity in Diversity". There should be no doubt that efforts have been made and progress have been achieved by the Government of Indonesia in this regard, as testified by anybody visiting Indonesia, including the province of Irian Jaya.

Madame Chairperson,

We are all aware of the historical development of the province of Irian Jaya. The people of this former Dutch territory exercised their rights of self-determination by re-integrating with Indonesia through elections under the auspices of the United Nations. This was based on the agreement of 15 August 1962 between Indonesia and the Netherlands and thereafter it was approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September of the same year. Since then the province has sufficiently progressed and developed, in particular under the National Five Year Development Plan. As a result, efforts to revive the idea of creating an independent state as promised by the former colonial administration was illusory. This caused the frustration on the part of an insignificant group, most of them in exile, to establish a separatist movement called "The Organization of Free Papua", which is still roaming around trying to get support for their lost cause conducting malevolent activities against Indonesia.

Madame Chairperson,

The promotion and protection of the cultural identity of all ethnic groups in Indonesia are guaranteed in article 32 of the Constitution, which states that the government shall advance the national cultural heritage of Indonesia. National culture expresses the personality and vitality of the entire people of Indonesia. The ancient and indigenous cultures which form cultural peaks in all the regions throughout Indonesia are part of the national culture.

In Irian Jaya the people's culture is fully respected. The ethnic, linguistic and cultural heritage and their expression in artistic forms including music, dance, art, folklore, handicrafts, traditions and customs as well as religious ceremonies and practices are exercised without restriction and are freely handed down through structured as well as informal instruction by the older generation to the younger one, not to mention government sponsored and/or supported programs and activities.

The accusation that the objective of transmigration is either to overwhelm the unique identity which exists in Irian Jaya or to "smother local resistance" is preposterous. The objective of Indonesia's transmigration

programme, which is a national endeavour already in existence for many years, is to expand development efforts and to evenly spread its benefits to the regions outside of the already overpopulated areas in order to achieve nationally balanced economic progress. The purpose is to utilize the surplus agricultural manpower available to develop land resources in the outer islands. It is aimed at improving the standard of living of the community in general, by increasing regional development and by assisting the people on the outer islands that demonstrate a relative lag in development.

The transmigration programme also has the objective of utilizing the resources available in the country by food production. In sum, it is an appropriate method for inducing economic growth and integrated development at the central, regional and local level.

It is expected that the transmigration programme will significantly contribute to the achievement of the main national goals of providing employment opportunities, raising per capita income, increasing food production, promoting national integration and achieving a better balanced and sustained use of natural resources in the country as a whole.

The worthy aims of the transmigration policy are recognized, both nationally and internationally. Assistance for this programme is not only received from friendly countries but also from such international institutions as the World Bank, which recently approved a substantial loan. The implementation of the transmigration programme is not yet perfect. There are many problems left to iron out and many unforeseen difficulties to attend to. But these are almost entirely concerning the agricultural aspects of the project and obstacles to cultural understanding have never been the main hurdles to overcome. As in any country, we have experienced difficulties in harmoniously fusing peoples with different backgrounds and different languages, yet we have resorted to consultation, not arms. Any study of our population figures and development progress would quickly reveal the wisdom of the transmigration programme. There is no need to invent ulterior motives.

I must add that allegations of more than 200,000 Irianese deaths during military occupation, bombings, indiscriminate shooting, imprisonment, torture etc are completely absurd and untrue. These standards of accusations are well known to all as clichés which are irrelevant to the reality. There is no need for me to entertain such sweeping allegations and slander against the integrity of my country and people.

Finally, Madame Chairperson, we would like to express our hope that with this clarification the Working Group has a better understanding of the situation referred to and thereby a balanced and impartial report of the Group can be established.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.

Geneva, 1 August 1985