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TO THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM  
ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Item 6: Half-day discussion on the Pacific

~~Item 6~~

New York, 21 April – 2 May 2008

Distinguished Madam Chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to present some of the views of West Papua indigenous peoples.

Before I present some of the views in this very important event, allow me to express my feeling of pride and happiness in attending the Seventh Session of the UNPFII. I want also expressing my gratitude to the Secretariat of the UNPFII who work very hard to host this event.

On behalf of West Papua indigenous people, we express our deepest appreciation for the recent adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous peoples.

We are proud to be indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples are rich of traditions and contribute to cultural diversity. We hope that during the Second Decade and before the end of the Millennium Development Goals, we will be able to develop our aspirations and future, including welfare, and contribute to the development of the world's indigenous peoples and particular West Papua indigenous peoples who are denied their rights and demand attention.

We West Papua indigenous peoples continue to suffer discrimination, marginalization, extreme poverty, conflict and Human Rights Abuses; we face dispossession of our traditional lands and livelihoods, displacement, destruction of our belief systems, culture language, race and way of life if under threat of extinction.

Over 45 years since 1963, our human rights and fundamental freedoms in West Papua have never been fully guaranteed. This has been impeding the Economic and Social Development of the indigenous peoples in West Papua.

The Present of the Bill of Law of the Republic of Indonesia No.21 of the Year 2001 on the Special Autonomy to Papua, does not guarantee fully the freedom of expression of West Papuans, rights and fundamental freedoms that are protected by international instruments.

The International Cooperation in the Special Autonomy in Papua led by ILO, UNDP, UNICEF etc is ineffective in implementing the rules necessary to the needs of indigenous peoples who are living in precarious conditions and experiment undevelopment, unemployment, poverty, discrimination lack of education and health

services. Indigenous peoples from West Papua are far from having reached the Millennium Development Goals.

In the era of the Special Autonomy emerged various humanitarian problems, although the Special Autonomy was granted as a mean to provide as solution to improves the life of indigenous peoples in West Papua. The Human Rights violations have increased, health problems have not been take care of, education, infrastructure and welfare problems persist and increasingly deteriorate.

On 12 August 2005, indigenous peoples of West Papua did demonstrations in the Streets of Jayapura to show their opposition to the Special Autonomy that did bring an appropriate solution to resolve the problems faced by West Papua indigenous peoples.

Dividing the Papua Province by the Decree of President No.1 of the Year 2003 into three province in Development programme, ignored the Special Autonomy and turned the West Papuan indigenous people of 1,5 million into a minority ethnic negroid race. The West Papua indigenous people became lost into a majority of 210 million population of Indonesians. Many foreign Indonesian settlers came to occupy the land and heritage of West Papuans.

As the Special Autonomy failed, a new Presidential Decree No.5 was enacted in 2007. This Presidential Decree No.5 promoted the Acceleration of the Development in Papua and West Papua Province and ignored the autonomy and authority of the Central government. The province have send down 11 Ministers to implement the provisions related to Development contained in this new Decree. This was done against the spirit of the Special Autonomy for Papua.

The Regulation No.77 of the Year 2007 prohibited the Morning Star Flag symbol as the cultural emblem, although the symbol have been determined by Papua People Assembly (MRP) and Papua Peoples House Representatives (DPRP) according Article 2 of the Bill of Law of the Special Autonomy.

The Regulation No.78 of the Year 2007 divided the Provinces of Papua Barat Daya Province, Papua Tengah and Papua Selatan thus ignoring the Bill of Law of Special Autonomy for Papua. This will bring more Military that will occupy the territory and increase Human Rights violations.

Today, West Papua indigenous peoples demand peace and justice. West Papua indigenous peoples call upon the United Nations for the realisation of the provisions contained in article 3 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which states that indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination and the right to freely determine their political status. Self determination will enable Indigenous peoples in West Papua to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you.