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Theme: "Utilization of indigenous peoples' lands by non-indigenous authorities, groups or individuals for military purposes".

Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Commission
Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

JulySI-August 4, 2006

Geneva.

by John Wing

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"The West Papua Project, the Baptist Church of Papua, and ELSHAM Papua urge the United Nations to send a Special Rapporteur to monitor and investigate the human rights situation in Papua as a matter of urgency".

The West Papua Project's report, "Genocide in West Papua? - The role of the Indonesian state apparatus and a current needs assessment of the Papuan People" can be found at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies website,

www.arts.usyd.edu.au/cpacs

and at

<http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/centres/WestPapuaGenocideRpt.05.pdf>

The theme of this meeting is of great relevance to West Papua, scene of one of the world's longest-running conflicts. Papuans and observers of their history describe a possible genocide by the Indonesian state apparatus. Military brutality in West Papua, where a "culture of impunity" exists, has led to tens of thousands of deaths and continues to take lives. The security forces act as a law unto themselves with no accountability for crimes against the indigenous population.

Yet the conflict in West Papua is not only a four decade-long independence struggle. Perpetuating the conflict is good for military business. Indonesian security forces are engaged in a range of business activities such as construction projects, logging, mining, protection rackets and prostitution. Brothels linked to the security forces account for the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in Indonesia, the virus evidently spread deliberately through the indigenous community.

Our research at the West Papua Project has revealed that the security forces are involved in the manipulation of local politics, the orchestration of attacks blamed on Papuan independence groups, arms trading and militia recruitment. The businesses which exploit Papua's riches regard the indigenous people as disloyal separatists, an obstacle to the exploitation of the territory's abundant natural resources. Foreign funding to the military, such as the US "IMET" program, permits the beneficiaries to continue both extorting from and colluding with mining multinationals while intimidating the local population, who remain in near-absolute poverty, unable to access quality health care and with Indonesia's highest rates of infant and maternal mortality.

The UN has a moral and historic responsibility to West Papua to investigate the report's findings and allegations by church groups of ethnic cleansing and misappropriation of indigenous development funds. In light of the current troop build up there are increasing calls that Papua be declared a "Zone of Peace", requiring the province's demilitarization and an end to military operations, extrajudicial killings, rape, torture and destruction of property. Promised autonomy has done nothing to stem the flow of non-indigenous migrants into Papua. A new road linking the capital with the interior will soon flood the highlands with new settlers from other areas of Indonesia and support a massive increase in the existing security force presence, further entrenching the role of the military. Traditional lands are being split into new

provinces, not only to dilute widespread independence aspirations, but also for better access to and control over resources.