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United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Statement submitted by
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Madam Chair,

Since time immemorial the Alifurus have been the original inhabitants of our ancestral land Maluku and deep seas like the Banda and the Arafura Seas. Western colonialism came and coerced us into the artificial entity of their colonial empire and we were forced to give up our ancestral name of Alifuru. Alifuru was considered cannibalistic, savage and uncivilised. We were not only losing our identity but were placed and regulated according to their colonialist administrative convenience and military strategy. Nevertheless, there were numerous uprisings by our people against Dutch colonial rule. Pattimura, Martha Christina Tiahahu and Kapitan Jonker to name just a few.. The entire population of the island of Banda was wiped out and the spice plantations burnt to the ground when the indigenous Alifurus in Banda attempted to evade Dutch monopoly on the spices.

With the naked aggression by Indonesian forces in September 1950 against the sovereign Maluku people, Dutch colonialism was replaced by Indonesian neo colonialism.. When colonialism is wrong than neo-colonialism that is squarely based on it is also wrong.

Until today Maluku is suffering under Indonesian neo colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. The people is still striving to achieve their national aspirations: to regain their Identity as Alifurus in their own sovereign Nation..

Last year, on June 28, 2007 a group of young Moluccans (ages from 17 till 36) performed the traditional Alifuru dance in front of the Indonesian President Yudhoyono who came to Maluku to launch the Indonesian National Family Planning. The Alifuru dancers were captured., beaten and immediately detained. They received no adequate legal assistance whatsoever. In March 2008, the trials against the Alifuru dancers started. The Indonesian judge ruled TREASON and the verdict was 20 years to life Imprisonment. The others who were still awaiting trial would face at least 14 years imprisonment for having participated in performing the traditional Alifuru dances.

Last year, on December 12, 2007, the Commander in Chief General Rasyid Quernuen Aquery of the occupying Indonesian military forces in Maluku has declared that any Moluccan suspicious of possessing and or manifesting adherence to the RMS would be shot at place.

In comparison

- The commander of the Laskar Jihad forces, Jafar Umar Talib, responsible for instigating, provoking hatred and cold bloodedly killing from 2000-2004 of thousands of Moluccans including babies, children, women, enjoyed full impunity and no accountability until now.
- The Indonesian military and special forces guilty of crimes, war crimes and crimes against humanity in Maluku, enjoy impunity and no accountability,
- The suspected perpetrators held responsible for the violence in Timor Leste have been released after some three years of imprisonment
- The perpetrators of the Bali bombers did not even receive such high sentences for the international crimes that they committed without remorse.

Recommendations:

We ask the Permanent Forum to

- request the HRC to undertake again a UPR on Indonesia's systematic violations of the Human Rights Charter and this time by hearing our suppressed voices
- request the Economic and Social Council to recognize the true aspirations of the indigenous Alifuru people of Maluku against their colonization and neo colonization.
- request the Decolonization Committee to take the Maluku case on their agenda

In the case of the Alifuru detainees imprisoned for expressing their cultural heritage:

Indonesia has voted in favour of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Issues. Based on this Declaration the Indigenous Peoples have the right to the expression and safeguarding of their cultural heritage.(art. 8. 9, 11. 12. 13 etc.)

- We request the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues to take this matter up as an Urgent action for the speedy release of the Alifuru detainees who were imprisoned for the expressing of their cultural heritage.
- We request the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to ask the WHO and any other specialized agencies to help the parents, including mothers, sisters and pregnant wives with adequate psychological counselling in this traumatic experience they have to endure.

Thank you Madam Chair.