



30 7 93

P.O. Box 75916
1007 AX Amsterdam
the Netherlands

WGIP 93/SEA.10N/2

Statement of the West Papua Peoples' Front
to the eleventh session of the
UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations
Geneva, 19-29 July 1993

Agenda item 5: Review of Developments

Madame Chairperson,

Thank you for giving us the floor. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves: we are Papuans coming from West Papua, the indigenous people of the Melanesian island of New Guinea.

We very much welcome the statement on the use of the term "peoples", made by you, Madame Erica Daes, during the Human Right Conference in Vienna, last June, as quoted in a newspaper: "I share the pain and disappointment of the indigenous peoples at the use of the term "people". It is a relic of racial discrimination which simply must not be legitimised by this historical conference on human rights. I implore you not to speak with the dead voice of the nineteenth century on this issue, but to adopt the term "indigenous peoples". End of quote.

In our case, since 1963 we are ruled by Indonesia. Although we are a distinct people with a distinct culture and living in a distinct territory, the Indonesian authorities do not recognize us as such. It is even forbidden to relate to our people as Papuans; the 900,000 indigenous people of West Papua are to be called "Irianese" together with the 700,000 Indonesian immigrants.

In the Year of the Indigenous Peoples, the Indonesian authorities still do not recognize the existence of indigenous peoples. However, they do have a government-programme for 'suku terasing' or 'masyarakat terasing', in which they refer to 'isolated groups'. These groups are described as primitive and backward and their ideological and technical systems as very simple.

The policy for the 'masyarakat terasing' is the responsibility of the ministry of Social Affairs in cooperation with other ministries like the ministry of Transmigration and the Ministry of Forestry. It is a policy aimed at resettlement, 'civilising' and 'modernising' indigenous communities. This programme is a clear statement of contempt for indigenous peoples and their cultures.

According to this programme, the communities concerned have to be civilised and educated and they have to profess a so-called official religion. They have to wear so-called modern clothes. They have to engage in activities like other Indonesian civilians, which means they have to practice sedentary agriculture, preferably lowland rice cultivation. They have to shift from subsistence to market-oriented economy. The scattered settlements in remote areas are considered to hamper control by the authorities. Lastly, the indigenous houses are considered not to meet the national standards of hygiene.

← goes to
page 3 F

Since the de facto incorporation of West Papua into the Republic of Indonesia, the Indonesian government has exercised a structural and systematic denial of our inherent indigenous human rights through disowning land, logging, mining, resettlement and the transmigration-programme: the immigration of large numbers of Indonesians into our territories.

Landrights

One of the main problems with the 'masyarakat terasing' policy is the resettlement of indigenous communities. Firstly the people are dislocated from their ancestral lands and secondly they encounter conflicts with the indigenous communities on whose land they are resettled.

In West Papua, the Indonesian authorities have resettled 1,390 indigenous families in 1992, and in the present year of 1993 they want to resettle another 2,146 families. During the coming five years the Indonesian authorities have set targets of resettling 2,150 Papuan families each year.

Madame Chairperson,

An obvious reason behind the resettlement of indigenous communities is to get hold of the indigenous territories for the settlement of Indonesian immigrants and for large-scale economic activities like mining and logging.

The struggle of the Moi people is a clear example of the denial of any land rights of the indigenous people of West Papua.

The Moi people are resisting the encroachments of the logging company PT Intimpura which was awarded a 339,000 hectare logging concession in Moi territory. The Moi people, numbering about four thousand, firmly reject the plans to log their land on which they depend for their survival. However, the Indonesian authorities stated: "No land is owned by the Moi people, land is owned by the Irian Jaya - Maluku Military Command, Kodam 8".

In October 1992, representatives of the Moi people presented a report on the conflict in order to find a peaceful solution. In the report the Melanesian view on land is explained: land cannot be owned by individuals, land belongs to a tribe through their ancestors. Therefore land cannot be sold. However, although the Moi people cannot sell their land, they stress that they are willing to

participate in government programs. I quote:

"Donating land and forest is a sign of the willingness of the Moi people to participate in the government programs. However, this is often accompanied by intimidation, violence, manipulation and deceit by the authorities without any concern for compensation, justice and communal benefits".

The Indonesian authorities and military accuse the Moi people of being "security disturbers". In May 1993, a member of the Brigade Mobile Police troop died at Klasowo village in Moi territory. The Moi said the policeman entered a Moi sacred site and died. They tried to tell the authorities that they were not directly responsible for his death. However, three Moi men were charged with murder and are jailed awaiting trial. Their names are Isaac Mobilala, Atys Mobalus and Meky Klasuwat.

The team of negotiators selected by the Moi for negotiation with the logging company and the government are under a lot of pressure. They are followed every day. They cannot communicate with their own people and they've become afraid. The Moi representatives have requested an international appeal to protect the Moi and their forests. This request is in line with the international concern for the bio and cultural diversity of the world.

→ F
See page 2
Recommendations

Madame Chairperson,

To conclude:

We express our sincere hope that the Working Group continues to exist and continues to provide the indigenous peoples the opportunity to address the United Nations and its institutions.

We believe the UN Decade of Indigenous Peoples should be effectuated by inter-indigenous communications on national, regional and international levels.

We strongly recommend that the Decade is closed off by a World Conference on Indigenous Rights.

Papua Merdeka!

Thank you Madame chairperson

— We request that the draft declaration be brought back to the workinggroup in its 12th session for further consultation. The integrity of consultative process with Indigenous peoples must be maintained.