



Civil Society Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review

**41st Session of the UPR Working Group
November 2022**

Submission by the Pacific Conference of Churches

Report on Indonesia

The Human Rights situation in West Papua

The PCC is the peak Regional Ecumenical Organisation in the Pacific that is comprised of 33 member churches of different Pacific Christian denominations and 10 national councils of churches across 18 Pacific Islands states and territories. It is formally recognised by the World Council of Churches. Established in 1961, aside from its focus on strengthening ecumenism in the region, PCC has, through its 53 years, also addressed itself to other key aspects of work that fall within the sphere of what is commonly referred to as 'development' work and with special emphasis on the field of social justice in its broad sense.

Introduction

The Pacific Conference of Churches expresses its deep concern for the ongoing human rights situation in Papua. During the last UPR of Indonesia in 2017, little attention was given to the situation in the region, with just four States - Mexico, Australia, Germany and New Zealand – making recommendations about human rights in West Papua. Since that time, the human rights situation has further deteriorated, and the Indonesian Government made no progress in implementing the recommendations which were made. UN special procedures mandate holders have been unable to visit West Papua, and a visit by High Commissioner for Human Rights to West Papua has not yet taken place.

Human Rights Violations and the Special Autonomy status

West Papua was given a Special Autonomy status in 2001 under the law no. 21, 2001, which was expected to protect the indigenous peoples of West Papua and address their demands for self-determination whilst maintaining the territorial integrity of the Indonesian government.

However, the autonomy system has not been implemented to ensure that indigenous peoples – particularly in Papua Province and Papua Barat Province – have the authority to govern, and since 2015, there have been repeated protests rejecting the Special Autonomy law. However, their rights to freedom of assembly and expression, and hence their possibility to challenge the implementation of the Special Autonomy Law have been severely repressed by the security forces who have carried out arrests and have criminalized protest activities.

Indigenous Papuans have experienced an increase in human rights violations as a result of violent military and police operations, and racial discrimination in many aspects of their lives.

Violence started to escalate in December 2018 in the Nduga Regency, and has extended to other parts of West Papua, with at least 60,000 people now internally displaced.

According to the West Papua Council of Churches' records, more than 10,000 army and police troops from other provinces in Indonesia have been additionally deployed to West Papua since 2019, and many reports of torture, extra-judicial executions, and enforced disappearances have been received, including of pastors and church members. Territory which was customarily held by indigenous West Papuans has been appropriated by non-indigenous residents, and Government development programs have increased control over natural resources of land, forest, and minerals, to grant permits for resource exploitation.

Recommendations

We call upon the Indonesian Government:

- 1) to allow the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other Special Procedures to visit West Papua to examine the human rights situation in Papua.
- 2) to allow humanitarian organisations, particularly the International Red Cross, to enter the areas of the ongoing conflict in West Papua to access the 60,000 internally displaced people, and to allow them to return to their homes.
- 3) to immediately cease military activities in West Papua, and to investigate allegations of violations of human rights in the province.
- 4) to take serious measures to ensure a peaceful process of dialogue regarding the right of self-determination of the indigenous population.