

Oral Statement

For the 31st Session of the UN Human Rights Council

9th March 2016

Item 3: ID with the SR on Peaceful Assembly and the SR on Summary Executions

Record number West Papuan demonstrators arrested; arbitrary state violence remains unpunished

Thank you Mr. President,

We, the International Coalition for Papua would like to draw the Council's attention to the record high number of arbitrary arrests of West Papuan demonstrators in 2015 and the summary executions of four people accused of raising the Morning Star flag, a symbol of West Papuan independence, in December 2015.

In 2015, *Papuans Behind Bars*, an online monitoring collective, recorded a total of 1083 arbitrary arrests. All those arrested were indigenous Papuans. 80% of those detained in 2015 were arrested due to their participation in planning or taking part in peaceful demonstrations. Mass arrests that took place on 1 May and 1 December, significant dates in the Papuan calendar, account for 57% of the total number of arrests in 2015.

From 2012 to 2014, 11 people were arrested for commemorating 1 December. By contrast, in 2015 alone, a total of 355 people were arrested, while four people were killed due to shootings and torture and at least 145 people were injured due to excessive use of force by state security forces in reaction to activities commemorating 1 December. The heightened scale of violations represent an urgent decline for the respect of the human rights of indigenous Papuans seeking to exercise their right to free speech and assembly by Indonesian police and military authorities.

On 1 December 2015, four men who were accused of participating in the raising of the Morning Star flag and suspected of participating in armed pro-independence activity were summarily executed by military and police officers during a joint security patrol. Two men died on the spot after being shot, while two others were tortured to death after suffering initial gunshot wounds. Eight others villagers suffered serious injuries as a result of security forces opening fire.

Papuan civil society groups recorded at least four other cases of extrajudicial, arbitrary and summary executions in Papua. All of the victims were reported to be young indigenous Papuan men. On 6 March, Deni Pahabol, a 17-year-old high school student and West Papua National Committee (KNPB) activist was murdered and his body dumped in a river in Yahukimo regency. On 25 June, 19-year-old Yoteni Agapa was shot dead by Brimob officers after an argument broke out between them. On 28 August, two 23-year-old men were fatally shot in Timika by Indonesian soldiers who were under the influence of alcohol. On 28 September, 18-year-old Kalep Bagau was shot in the chest and died shortly after, reportedly because he was suspected of committing an act of vandalism.

Four soldiers involved in one of the cases has reportedly been tried and sentenced, while three police officers in another case are reportedly facing trial. While these are steps in the right direction, state accountability for human rights abuses in Papua remain the exception rather than the rule. The overwhelming majority of cases of state violence are not subject to thorough, impartial and independent investigations, with victims rarely receiving justice or obtaining reparations.

We recommend that the Indonesian government should:

1. **Support the National Human Rights Commission of Indonesia and other independent human rights bodies to conduct impartial, thorough and transparent investigations into the deaths, arrests and excessive use of force on Papuans commemorating 1 December.**
2. **Order the unconditional release of all Papuan political prisoners as part of a comprehensive policy to end the punishment of free expression and association, and expunge any associated criminal records.**
3. **Evaluate and review operational security management in Papua, including reviewing structures within the security forces to ensure greater accountability and protection of human rights.**
4. **Allow free and unrestricted access to all UN Special Rapporteurs wishing to visit and report on Papua.**

Thank you.