



**Joint Oral statement at the 40th regular session of the Human Rights Council
Item 4: General debate
Delivered by: Veronica Koman**

Mr. President,

Geneva, March 14, 2019

VIVAT International, Franciscans International, ICP (International Coalition for Papua), Tapol and West Papua Netzwerk are deeply concerned about the human rights situation in West Papua.

We have received information from Timika, where three Papuan human rights defenders were arrested and accused of treason, while organizing a traditional feast and prayer event at the West Papua National Committee office. It is their indelible right to have the freedom to live their own culture and express their own belief.

We were profoundly concerned about the killing of 19 construction workers in Papua, in the Nduga region on 2nd December 2018. As a result, the Indonesian military and police conducted a joint operation in order to pursue the perpetrators. However, as a consequence of this operation 23 civilians have allegedly lost their lives; among them 7 were shot, 1 burnt alive in his home and others have died due to hunger and illness since fleeing from their homes. Security forces are blocking and threatening journalists and other human rights defenders seeking to monitor this operation.

Therefore, we request the members of the Human Rights Council to urge the Indonesian government to end the joint military and police operation, to allow and facilitate the return of thousands of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to their homes and to open access for an independent investigation, fully respecting the human rights and dignity of Papuans.

Thank you, Mr. President.