



(Uniting Church in Australia)



His Excellency
Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
The President of Indonesia
Jl. Veteran No. 16
Jakarta Pusat
INDONESIA

Wuppertal, 10 December 2011

Dear President Yudhoyono,

In light of the International Human Rights Day, we, the undersigned organizations from Europe, Asia and Australia with partnership relations to church and development organizations in Papua and West Papua, would like to express our concern about the human rights situation in the Indonesian Provinces of Papua and West Papua. A recent published report by the Faith-based Network on West Papua (FBN) "Human Rights in Papua 2010/2011" portrays the ongoing abuse of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, in Papua in 2010 and 2011. We are concerned that to date perpetrators of human rights violations enjoy impunity, while indigenous Papuans and human rights defenders making use of their civil and political rights are facing harassment, detention and conviction. In this regard we have been particularly alarmed by the severe human rights violations committed by the Indonesian security forces against peaceful participants of the "Third Papuan People's Congress" in Abepura, Jayapura City, on 19 October 2011.

This gathering of about 4,000 people was held peacefully from 17 to 19 October 2011, under the watch of the Indonesian security forces. One hour after the congress concluded peacefully, police and military forces dispersed the remaining participants with unnecessary and excessive use of violence.

Members of the security forces reportedly used firearms and live ammunition, tear gas, batons, rattan whips, rifles and pistols butts as well as other forms of physical violence against unarmed civilians. According to a preliminary report by the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), three participants of the congress were shot dead and 96 people were shot, kicked or beaten by the Indonesian security forces. The security forces also forcefully raided the nearby Catholic seminary and

Franciscan friary, destroying property and causing fear amongst the inhabitants. An estimated 300 people were arbitrarily arrested. While the majority was released on the following day, six have been charged, detained, and are currently awaiting trial.

We are deeply concerned that despite Indonesia's national and international human rights commitments, you publicly turned down the result of Komnas HAM's findings that human rights violations did occur in Abepura. We request you, Mr. President, to guarantee that the perpetrators and their commanders responsible for the human rights violations committed on 19 October 2011 will be held accountable at an Indonesian human rights court. We regret that so far 18 police officers have only been given written warnings, while five have been given seven-day detentions for violating the police Disciplinary Code instead of being prosecuted for alleged human rights violations. Such light sentences contradict Indonesia's national and international human rights obligations and do not protect the citizens of Papua and West Papua from future human rights violations. We also demand that the six civilian detainees will be treated fairly and according to national and international principles of justice and human rights.

We do welcome your statement on 9 November 2011 to engage in a dialogue with Papua in order to find a peaceful solution to the protracted problems in Indonesia's easternmost provinces. With regard to possible challenges and difficulties within such a dialogue process, we encourage you to consider a neutral third party to mediate the dialogue. The Government of Indonesia has already had positive experiences with the model of neutral mediation, either acting herself as a mediator in other countries (e.g. Cambodia, the Philippines, Myanmar) or being the beneficiary of a neutral mediation (e.g. Aceh). We therefore encourage you to invite a highly respected international mediation institution, which is trusted by both sides to act as a neutral mediator in the upcoming dialogue with Papua.

Mr. President, we are convinced that respect to human rights and dialogue are the pillars for a "Papua, land of peace". In light of the International Human Rights Day, we therefore appeal to you to live up to the commitments of the Indonesian government and make human rights and democracy a reality for the people of Papua and West Papua.

Yours sincerely,



Kristina Neubauer
Coordinator Faith-based Network on West Papua

On behalf of:

- Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)
- Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt/ BfdW)
- Faith-based Network on West Papua (FBN)
- Franciscan International (FI)
- Mensen met een Missie
- Misereor
- United Evangelical Mission (UEM)
- Uniting Church of Australia (UCA)
- Watch Indonesia!
- West Papua Netzwerk (West Papua Network/ WPN)