

Dear,

I am writing to you as my M.P. about **WEST PAPUA** which has been illegally occupied by the Indonesian military since it was handed over, against the will of the indigenous population, by the Netherlands to Indonesia in 1963.

For the past 50 years, successive Indonesian regimes have used extreme violence against the people of West Papua as the only possible way of terrorising them into submitting to rule by Indonesia.

Since 1963, an estimated 500,000 West Papuans have died at the hands of the Indonesian occupying forces, representing approximately 15% of the population. Countless others have been tortured, raped, intimidated and imprisoned.]

The evidence has been indisputable that genocide has been committed against the native peoples of the region, a paper prepared by the Yale Law School for the Indonesian Human Rights Campaign in 2004 stated "[There is] *in the available evidence a strong indication that the Indonesian government has committed genocide against the West Papuans*". A further study carried out by the University of Sydney claims that the continuation of current practices in West Papua "*may pose serious threats to the survival of the indigenous people of the Indonesian province of Papua.*"

In 2008, Juan Mendez, the UN special advisor on the prevention on genocide and special rapporteur on torture, wrote to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, expressing his "*deep and growing concern regarding rising reports of human rights violations in West Papua*", and classified "West Papua as being among those countries whose populations were 'at risk of extinction' ".

The root cause of the conflict is the denial of the West Papuans' right to self-determination, a right which was recognised by the international community throughout the 1950's and '60's. This occupation was justified under the ironically named "Act of Free Choice", in which the Indonesian military hand-picked 1,026 Papuan elders to 'represent' the then population of 800,000. They forced them at gun point to vote for Indonesia, a referendum consisting of less than 0.2% of the population, illegal under international law. If this had been a legitimate referendum, allowing a 'one person-one vote', as required under international law, West Papuans would have voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence.

In a landmark breakthrough, after over 30 years of silence on the matter, the UK Government formally admitted in 2004 that in the 1969 'Act of Free Choice', "*1,000 handpicked representatives ... were largely coerced into declaring for inclusion in Indonesia*".

The West Papuans to this day are calling for:

SELF DETERMINATION: The West Papuans are calling for a new vote, which meets recognised international standards, in the form of a new UN-monitored independence referendum.

DIALOGUE: The West Papuans are calling on the Indonesian Government to enter into internationally-mediated dialogue, without pre-conditions, with genuinely representative West Papuan leaders. Indonesia has to date refused.

ACCESS: The Indonesian Government severely restricts access to West Papua for foreign journalists and international human rights observers, including Amnesty International.

DE-MILITARISATION: As a first step towards peace, West Papuans are calling on the Indonesian Government to halt all planned increases of its military (TNI) presence in West Papua and immediately withdraw the TNI, para-military Police (Brimob) and intelligence agents (BIN) to their barracks'. This would be a hugely important first step to reducing the currently highly charged and tense situation in West Papua. As Ms Hina Jilani, UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, stated on 28 January 2008 **"A climate of fear undeniably prevails in West Papua"**.

FREEDOM of EXPRESSION: The Indonesian Government currently severely restricts West Papuans from exercising their rights to Freedom of Expression, Association & Assembly, particularly in relation to peaceful demonstrations in favour of independence for West Papua. In this respect, Indonesia is currently in breach of its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights which it signed in 2006.

As my M.P., I am calling on you to urge the UK Government to put our core British values of justice, freedom, democracy and the rule of international law before narrow national self-interest.

The Rt. Hon Andrew Smith MP and other British Parliamentarians re-launched the dormant All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on West Papua in October 2013, and I would call upon you to do your utmost to support them in their efforts, namely by joining the APPG itself and attending its next meeting.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]