

Oral Statement

Human Rights Council 55th Session

Agenda Item 9

General Debate

Delivered by Mr. Joel Veldkamp

Christian Solidarity International wishes to highlight the ongoing dispossession of and violence against the indigenous peoples of West Papua in Indonesia. This dispossession is undergirded by a system of racial discrimination.

According to CSI's non-governmental sources in West Papua, indigenous people experience racial discrimination in five key areas: First, in the lack of basic services, especially healthcare and education. As one source told us, "There are more plantations, more military posts, and fewer clinics in areas where indigenous people live."

Second, in the appropriation of land and resources, which takes place without the free and informed consent of the indigenous people.

Third, in long-sustained military operations which tend to follow mining and plantation development in indigenous lands.

Fourth, in police violence against indigenous Papuans.

Finally, in political representation. In its dialogue with the Human Rights Committee on March 12, the Indonesian delegation claimed that, "Papua had its own legislature, with representatives from various local cultural groups." However, elected representatives from and in West Papua are predominantly non-indigenous.

We urge the government of Indonesia to implement immediate reforms to ensure autonomy, safety, and equal access to services for the indigenous people of West Papua, in the spirit of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action. We also urge the Human Rights Council to increase its engagement and monitoring of this situation. The West Papuans' sixty-year struggle for freedom calls for no less.

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