



UNITED LIBERATION MOVEMENT FOR WEST PAPUA

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The UN, global media, and Indonesian civilians condemn Jakarta's mephistophelian behaviour in West Papua

Every year since 1961 West Papuans recall the 19th December as the day President Sukarno megaphoned his precipitous plan to annex their homeland, which was then a UN Non-Self-Governing Territory that had just concluded a series of groundbreaking objectives in its decolonisation and self-determination process.

The 2018 commemorations were different, because Indonesian students, artists, and political activists were standing with the West Papuans in Jakarta, Malang (East Java), Bandung (West Java), Bali, Ternate (Maluku), as well as Jayapura, Timika and Merauke in West Papua. They too were viciously assaulted by the State Intelligence Agency's terrorist-militia, jettisoned from the streets with fractured skulls and battered bodies before police moved to protect them. Sixty-five were arrested in Malan; 66 in Bali; 42 in Ternate—but with 8 still 'missing'; dozens in Jakarta but released after interrogation; 130 in Timika; 26 in Merauke; and 174 in Jayapura. The unitary republic's militia, like their military and intelligence sponsors are immune to prosecution, but the 511 activists face court and long prison sentences.

Ten days before the commemorations, the UN High Commission for Human Rights had criticised Indonesia's arrest of 600 Papuan and Non-Papuan activists on 1 December, arguing for each and every civilian's right to free speech and peaceful assembly (<https://asiapacificreport.nz/2018/12/10/un-official-defends-west-papuan-rights-free-speech-peaceful-assembly/>). In response, like a childish game of tit-for-tat, the Indonesian parliament then **approved military operations in West Papua**, the National Speaker artfully recording the 13 December motion as "support for a military operation other than war" (Jakarta Post, 19 December 2018, *Peaceful resolution to Papua's war for liberation*).

Military operations by Red Beret Kopassus commandos including bombing with helicopter gunships and firing hundreds of the highlanders distinctive wooden homes was deemed appropriate retaliation for the death of nineteen Indonesians on 2 December, who the government claimed were civilians but who the West Papua National Liberation Army claimed were Kostrad Green Berets from the SIPUR special unit masquerading as road-and-bridge construction workers (<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/indonesia-rejects-west-papua-demands-as-troops-hunt-separatists>).

The United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) asserts the situation for Papuan and Indonesian civilians in the territory is now worse than it was for East Timorese during the referendum period in 1999. It wants the police to release December 1 and December 19 activists, and has called for UN Security Council attention before what is now 'war' (rather than 'escalating tension') between the Papuan and Indonesian armies causes more suffering and trauma.

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