

To

Dear

### **Urgent response needed to current crisis in West Papua**

Since the announcement of the Provisional Government of West Papua, Indonesia has stepped up its human rights abuses in West Papua. I am therefore writing to ask you to: (1) pressure the Australian government to push for a Fact-Finding Mission to West Papua by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; and (2) support West Papua's inclusion on the agenda of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization in September.

**Why should Australia continue supporting Special Autonomy 2001 when there has been no reduction in violence in West Papua?** In fact, the conflict is getting worse. Over 21,000 extra soldiers have been stationed in the Central Highlands since 2018. Military operations have left thousands displaced, malnourished, and injured, and more than 200 Papuan civilians have been killed in 2019-2020. On 25 April 2021, Indonesia's head of intelligence in West Papua, Major General Gusti Nugraha, was killed, and the Speaker of the People's Consultative Assembly, Bambang Soesatyo, has called for the government to crush the West Papuan resistance: "Destroy them first. We will discuss human rights matters later." This has all the hallmarks of an undeclared war to our immediate north.

**An evidence-based report by an independent observer on the current situation in West Papua is imperative.** Indonesia agreed to a UN Fact-Finding Mission in 2017 but has refused to allow the visit. In 2019, the 79 nations of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and the 18 nations of the Pacific Island Forum passed resolutions supporting the UN Fact-Finding Mission to West Papua and urged members to address the root cause of the conflict. Since then, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK have also passed resolutions.

Australia's policy of supporting Special Autonomy is no longer tenable. To avoid ongoing bloodshed, Australia needs to support the aspirations of West Papuans. Last year the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) passed a constitution setting up a Provisional Government, and in May this year announced a full Cabinet. This means that West Papua now has the prerequisites for statehood: a territory, a people, and a centralised government that can be negotiated with. **Australia needs to shift its policy and vote for West Papua to be added to the agenda of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization.**

Australia prides itself on being a champion of peace, justice, and human rights, and has recently criticised the oppressive military government in Myanmar. It is in Australia's strategic interests to support a peaceful resolution to a worsening crisis. Australia therefore needs to call on Indonesia to grant United Nations access to West Papua without delay, and support the addition of West Papua to the UN agenda in September.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Name

Address