

## **JACOB RUMBIAK, WEST PAPUA OPEN DAY, SUNDAY 26 March 2023**

On behalf of the people of West Papua at home and abroad, the ULMWP Provisional Government thanks all of you for coming today. This includes our zoom friends in the Solomon Islands, and in the Congo and Uganda, Dr. Robert and Mrs Wolfgramm from Fiji, as well as Bishop Huggins, Dr. Toscano and the Rent Collective, Dr. Robert Stringer and the West Papua Women's Office. Greetings and Peace be with you all.

Lately, the media has been focussed on the conflict between the two superpowers China and America and their allies, and their cutting-edge weapons that could annihilate us. Media is also focussed on the Russia-Ukraine war, and the everlasting conflict in the Middle East.

But there is hardly any reporting or debate about the continuing heavy war in West Papua since Indonesia dropped bombs of white phosphorous in 2018. This war is taking a huge toll on civilians—both Indonesian-settlers and Indigenous Papuans—on property, on the environment, and on the Indonesian Defence Forces and our own Liberation Army.

To stop this carnage, the ULMWP Provisional Government asked for a UN Human Rights Fact Finding Mission. The response was amazing: from Intergovernmental Groups like the Melanesian Spearhead Group, the Pacific Islands Forum, the African Caribbean Pacific Group, the European Union, and countries including America, Canada, Slovakia, Poland, and the Netherlands. They have all publicly supported the intervention. But Indonesia as usual defies the authority of the UN and claims the war is a domestic problem against terrorists, not a matter of international concern and international law.

But for indigenous Papuans, the war since 2018, and the occupation since 1962, is a global problem. It was global policies during the Cold War in the 1960s that inserted a new state that was on the verge of economic and political combustion into the land that belongs, and always has belonged to, the Melanesian people of West Papua.

The only way to stop this war and prevent more human disaster, hostility, revenge, misunderstanding and the systematic rape of the natural environment is to liberate the entire territory and its people from Indonesian colonialism. We have to free West Papua from Indonesia's singular chain of command and its massive carnage and destruction.

In July the Melanesian Spearhead Group will recognise West Papua as a full member. When that happens, we will, as a declarative state sponsored by Vanuatu, be going to the United Nations, to force review of the terrible mistake made by the Member-states after the death of Mr Hammarhjöld, in transferring the administration of West Papua from the Netherlands to Indonesia.

**I know that you, as concerned Australians, and as West Papuans' closest neighbour, want to help our transition from colony to state. So, what to do?**

*1. First of all, be confident that you know the law. The law is:*

- i) West Papua under international law is an Indonesian colony, and West Papuans are under illegal alien rule.
- ii) Colonialism is illegal under international law. West Papua has a legal right to be free and a legal right to independence. This is not just a moral right, or a political right, it is a legal right.
- iii) The legal right to self-determination is guaranteed by the UN Charter, under customary international law, and in the New York Agreement that Indonesia signed with the Netherlands in 1962.

*2. Secondly, have meetings with (don't just write emails to) your federal politicians.*

Tell them—whether they are Liberals, Labour, Teals, Independents, or Greens—that for Australia to be in compliance with international law, there has to be a policy shift, from supporting Special Autonomy to supporting Self-Determination.

**It really is that simple. None of us in West Papua understand Australia trying to sit-up-straight outside the boundaries of international law.**

**And if I may warn you, none of the Pacific states appreciate Australia's logic either.**