

The West Papua Project

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West Papua:

Exploring the Prospects of Peace with Justice--

Report on a Workshop and Future Plans

by John Ondawame and Peter King

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1. The Need for Peace

Violence in West Papua between Indonesia and the “secessionist” OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka/ Free Papua Movement*) has brought serious social and political consequences. Considerable numbers of civilians have lost their lives, property and future. The violent conduct of both armed groups-- the state of Indonesia and the OPM fighters in West Papua-- raises issues for international and national organisations that are trying to protect human rights, working for peace and democracy or providing humanitarian relief.

The workshop, *West Papua: Exploring the Prospects of Peace with Justice*, organised by the West Papua Project at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Sydney University, on 1 June 2001 addressed two major questions: to what extent can Australians influence the conflicting parties, and what prospect is there for engaging in peaceful dialogue? The draft document for the workshop was *Peaceful Dialogues over West Papua: the Design of a Way Forward*, prepared by John Ondawame and Stuart Rees^[1]. The present paper digests the results of the discussion of that first paper and examines other issues raised at the June 2001 workshop. It proposes a broadening and extension of dialogue at a second workshop to be held in December 2001.

The 60 invited participants at the June workshop represented a broad cross section of human rights and humanitarian NGOs in Australia, bringing them together with scholars, journalists and representatives of West Papuan organisations. The participants analysed opportunities to effect dialogue and to address obstacles in the way of peace. The workshop also developed an analytical framework for organisations interested in peace. Participants were aware that the potential for escalation of conflicts within Indonesia could easily undermine peace initiatives over West Papua.

The workshop did not prescribe courses of actions. The West Papua Project believes that in the final analysis only the Indonesian and Papuan organisations directly concerned can decide whether and how to undertake peace initiatives. But the participants carefully examined the character of the conflict and the environment in which deliberations about peace would be taking place.

The following three major groups of parties to the conflict were identified at the workshop: pro-independence groups and civil society in Papua; the state, the military and civil society in Indonesia; and foreign governments and foreign and international NGO's and support groups.

Working with all parties directly concerned with peaceful dialogue is essential, especially assisting them to respect human rights, humanitarian norms and peaceful means of conflict resolution. Just as importantly, reconciliation *within* the Papuan community--overcoming historically deeply rooted inter-tribal and

^[1] West Papua Project Draft Position Paper No. 1, 27 March 2001.

inter-regional conflicts, and building effective and trusted networks amongst Papuans--will be highly beneficial for easing the peace process towards success.

2. Previous Peace Initiatives

In the absence of constructive peace initiatives, the persisting conflictual relationship between Jakarta and West Papua and within Papuan society are contributing to renewed violence. There are serious political implications in this for the peoples of the South Pacific region and Southeast Asia. Promotion of dialogue for peace over West Papua is, therefore, an urgent call to the whole immediate region. A priority is to understand the historical background of previous peace initiatives.

2.1. Peace Initiatives by the OPM

Deeply concerned at the obvious possibilities for escalation of conflict in West Papua, several peace initiatives were undertaken by the OPM in the period after the country was incorporated into the Republic of Indonesia on May 1, 1963. The OPM in its peace proposals has called on Jakarta to engage in peaceful dialogue under the direct supervision of the United Nations or another legitimate third party. These calls have never met with a response, but they are worthy of mention. In 1974 the leaders of the OPM requested the government of soon-to-be-independent Papua New Guinea under Michael Somare, with Maori Kiki as foreign minister, to play a mediator role in order to settle the conflict between the West Papuans and the government of Indonesia. While Port Moresby expressed ultimate willingness to mediate, Jakarta rejected the idea completely. Eleven years later, the OPM approached the government of Vanuatu with the same end in view. Like the PNG administration in 1974, Vanuatu welcomed the idea and informal contact was developed with Papuan leaders on the condition that internal conflicts within the OPM must be solved and that the organisation must be reformed. Some progress was achieved on this latter point but the initiative lapsed.

In 1989, the OPM commander in the MAMTA (border) region, Marthin Wenda, called for a cease-fire. But the ABRI (Armed Forces of Indonesia) regional command in Jayapura rejected the call, and instead an offensive operation against the OPM was launched in the border region. During the central highlands hostage crisis events in Mapnduma on 8 January 1996, the regional commander of the OPM, Kelly Kwalik, sought peaceful dialogue under the following conditions: Indonesian troops to withdraw from West Papua, particularly from the central highlands; peace talks to be held involving a third party and in a neutral country, and sponsored immigration (transmigration) into West Papua to stop. More recently another call for peace talks was initiated by Bernard Mawen of the southern command of the OPM. In a meeting with President Abdurrahman Wahid in Jakarta during May 2000, Mawen urged

Jakarta to engage in peace talks. The prospects of useful talks faded as Gus Dur's own political position steadily weakened throughout that year.

It seems that Jakarta is unresponsive because the Indonesian government sees the OPM as terrorists or "wild gangster" groups threatening the integrity of the country, and is therefore not keen to engage in talks for peace. On the other hand it was and still is difficult for the OPM to engage in direct peace talks: first, communication breaks down easily; second there is apparently little political will from Jakarta; third, there is lack of unity within the OPM itself and no clear leadership or political structure.

2.2. Civilian Peace Initiatives

Peace initiatives by civilians in West Papua have emerged only in the last three years, since *reformasi* began in Jakarta. First came the church-inspired creation of the Forum for Reconciliation of the People of Irian Jaya (FORERI) in the middle of 1998, which carefully prepared the way for "Team-100", a large group of Papuan regional representatives, to undertake "national dialogue" with the Habibie administration. This dialogue never really eventuated because Habibie himself was stunned to hear the team under Amungme tribal leader (and long time foe of the Freeport copper and gold mine) Tom Beanal demand immediate independence.

The call for dialogue was resumed both in the "*Mubes*" (*Musyawaharah Besar* -- Grand Consultation meeting) in Port Numbay (preferred Papuan name for the capital Jayapura) on 23-26 February 2000, and in the *Kongres Rakyat Papua II* ("Second Papuan People's Congress") which was held from 29 May-4 June 2000 at *Universitas Cenderawasih* in Jayapura, and which declared Papua's non-integration into Indonesia. This huge meeting of regional representatives and their supporters harked back to the "First Papuan People's Congress", usually referred to as the New Guinea Council, whose Papuan majority on December 1st 1961 adopted the symbols (including the Morning Star flag) of the statehood which had been promised to them by the Dutch colonial authorities. This was a key moment of an attempted "crash decolonisation" in the face of Indonesian military pressure and declining international support for the Dutch position. Independence was expected to come soon after 1970, but West Papua was under Indonesian control by May 1963 as the United States forced the Dutch into a virtual surrender to Indonesian demands.

From developments in 1998-9 and the two historic meetings in 2000 a new civilian Papuan leadership devoted to peaceful negotiation with Jakarta emerged in the Presidium of the Papua Council (*Derwan Papua*) which was first elected at the *Mubes*. The key leaders are Sentani^{2[2]} chief and Presidium chairman Theys Eluay and Presidium vice chairman Tom Beanal. Despite calls for peaceful resolution, and the willingness of Gus Dur as President to continue dialogue (he even supplied funding for the Papuan Congress), the military and other

^{2[2]} Sentani is a satellite township of Jayapura.

nationalist forces in Jakarta have blocked any serious peace process. Since the middle of 2000, a progressive crackdown in Papua has led to the arrest and charging with sedition of most of the Papua Presidium leaders.

Nevertheless from early in 2001 the governor of Papua, Jap Salossa, backed by the local provincial parliament, stepped into the limelight as a potentially significant figure in peacemaking. Under special legislation introduced by the Habibie government in 1999, Papua together with Aceh, was to be offered “special autonomy” in addition to the ordinary (“regional”) autonomy which is being implemented in all 32 provinces and 350 regencies of Indonesia from 1 January 2001. Regional autonomy already involves a significant redirection of powers and revenues away from the centre to the resource rich outer islands in particular. Paradoxically the two provinces being offered “extra” autonomy are the most rebellious and least trusted. Nevertheless their own proposals on special autonomy have been treated seriously at the centre. In the Papuan case the governor set up a team led by the *Universitas Cenderawasih* rector in Jayapura, and its proposals, which were developed over weeks of intensive discussion and wide consultation, were sent to the DPR (national parliament) in March 2001. These proposals reflected much of the program of the Papua Council Presidium. Even though the council have stood aside from the special autonomy exercise, they stand firm on their own demand for a referendum and independence. The governor’s draft for a special autonomy law included provisions for Papua to have:

- (a) its own state symbols and constitution,
- (b) a new upper house consisting of indigenous Papuans only, representing customary, religious and women’s interests (the governor also must be Papuan or have at least one Papuan parents),
- (c) its own police force and control of military numbers and placement,
- (d) control of 80 per cent of provincial taxation revenues, and
- (e) a right of self determination in case a special historical commission to be appointed finds that integration with Indonesia between 1963 and 1969 (the Year of the so called Act of Free Choice) was illegal under international law^{3[3]}.

Grass roots efforts to set processes of peace and conflict resolution in motion continue. The program undertaken by the Catholic Office for Justice and Peace (SKP) in Jayapura under the leadership of Brother Theo van den Broek. SKP aims to “maintain an open dialogue with the authorities” in Irian while holding workshops and courses on conflict resolution and human rights reporting. It is also attempting “the socialisation of insights” gained in the course of these activities with a view to dampening “sky-high” Papuan aspirations to (and expectations of) independence.^{4[4]}

^{3[3]} See ‘West Papua: Towards a New Papua’, Special issue of *Inside Indonesia*, No.67, July-September 2001 for a survey and discussion of the special autonomy debate as it affects West Papua. Several articles in this issue are available on the web.

^{4[4]} Catholic Office for Justice and Peace, *Annual Report 2000*. Jayapura, January 2001. The other principal human rights NGO in Papua is ELS-HAM, the Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy, under John Rumbiak as supervisor.

2.3. Regional Initiatives and the West Papua Project

Despite the crackdown on its leadership after August 2000 the Papua Council Presidium and the OPM has had some success in mobilising international support for its peace making endeavours. In October 2000, the Pacific Islands Forum for the first time expressed concern about the human rights situation in West Papua and called for a settlement of differences by dialogue and consultation. Indonesia has recently become a dialogue partner of the Forum. Although the Australian government has discouraged all dialogue with Papuan representatives the New Zealand foreign minister has been willing to meet them and has also offered NZ's services as mediator-services which were very valuable to the Australian government as it changed its stance to favouring a peaceful settlement of the Bougainville conflict after 1997.

Public concern in Australia over the social and political situation in West Papua has steadily grown in recent years. Concern comes from all parts of society, including academics, journalists and environmental and human rights NGO's as well as some politicians. The Australia West Papua Association, which is active in several states, has emerged as an important solidarity organisation, and the parliaments of both New South Wales and at the Federal level have set up groups dedicated to friendship with West Papua. In this context the establishment of the West Papua Project within CPACS at the University of Sydney indicates a further strengthening of the sentiment that Australians have a moral obligation to show practical concern for the fate of the peoples of West Papua.

The West Papua Project

Initial discussion about setting up the project in late 1999 involved Professor Peter King and Jim Elmslie of Sydney University then undertaking a PhD degree at University of Sydney, Professor Steven Feld of New York University and John Ondawame, then undertaking a PhD degree at the Australian National University. Following consultations with Professor Stuart Rees on behalf of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, the Project was inaugurated at a working dinner in Sydney on 10 January 2000 attended by 15 supporters, including Dr. Anne Noonan and Joe Collins of the Australia West Papua Association. At this meeting John Ondawame was designated as prospective coordinator, Peter King as convener, Jim Elmslie as secretary, Steven Feld as US representative and, as patrons, Dr. Meredith Burgmann, President of the Legislative Council of NSW, and Dr. Tim Flannery, Director of the Museum of South Australia.

The Project was formally launched by Tim Flannery at its inaugural conference on *West Papua at the Crossroads: an Uncertain Future* held in International House at the University of Sydney on 19 April 2000. More than 70 participants representing diverse interests and groups attended this conference, including Wim Zonggonau of the Papua Presidium Council, Theo van den Broek of the Catholic Office for Justice and Peace in Jayapura (mentioned above) and a fairly full roll call of West Papuans in Australia and leading Australian scholars and journalists concerned with and about Papua.

Within a few months of the conference, coordinator designate Ondawame was installed in CPACS premises at the Mackie Building, University of Sydney, with

generous support from the Director and staff, including help with Australian residence arrangements, office facilities, core funding and administrative backup.^{5[5]} Over the following months Project work came to a focus in the June 2001 workshop which is introduced above and discussed below.

3. 3. Workshop I--West Papua: Exploring the Prospects of Peace With Justice

The workshop was opened and its 70 participants welcomed to the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies on 1st June 2001 by Prof. Judith Kinnear, Pro Vice Chancellor (International) of the University of Sydney. In her opening remarks Professor Kinnear stressed that, in line with university traditions upholding the rights of all humanity to dignity and respect, the University welcomed the idea of promoting peaceful dialogue over West Papua.

Director of CPACS Professor Stuart Rees stressed the CPACS commitment not only to promoting dialogue for peace and conflict resolution in Papua but also to the development of education and training to advance that objective. He noted, however, the precarious state of funding for the Project and pointed out that its evolution depends on finding committed people and more resources.

3.1. Workshop Objectives

In the first working session Project Coordinator Dr. John Otto Ondawame spoke to the major objectives and aims of the workshop. The primary objective, he said, was to promote a peaceful dialogue between the people of West Papua and Indonesia, and to promote conflict resolution. In pursuing this goal, the Project aims to raise public awareness of human rights violations in West Papua, establish networks of concerned people and organisations as widely as possible and develop a peace/conflict resolution paradigm for the conflict, initially by exploring a potential Australian contribution to such a goal.

He identified several obstacles in the path of such an undertaking, including lack of a common understanding of what is meant by “peace” and conflict resolution; differing visions, philosophies and missions among potential collaborators, and misperceptions held by the people directly involved in the conflict. He also suggested that peace initiatives can fail because they become a partisan effort or become unduly idealistic rather than focussing on the pragmatic and achievable.

Another major objective of the workshop, he said, was to begin coalition building for West Papuan peace itself-not only to build networks but also to explore to what extent consensus exists about the merits peaceful dialogue over West Papua.

3.2. Perspectives on West Papua

The workshop then broke into small groups to discuss the position paper, attention being focused on exploring the stereotyped perceptions held by

^{5[5]} Other supporter/ donors of the Project in cash and kind have included Steven Feld (who supplied the coordinator’s laptop), Jim Elmslie (who has repeatedly plundered his large personal collection of Melanesian artefacts for auction at Project functions), Peter King and Frank Rickwood (formerly of Oil Search, PNG).

participants and bystanders in the West Papua conflict. These stereotypes include general assumptions about key players and their interests, including “official” Indonesian interests (those of the government, the military and politicians), Australian government interests; the interests of Australian and Indonesian NGO’s; “global” interests in West Papua, including the UN’s, and, finally, multinational corporate and financial interests.

The participants also looked closely at the political environment in which the conflict is taking place and sought to name the major stakeholders that have interests in West Papua. These were identified as firstly the people and civil society of West Papua (including the OPM and the Papua Council); the government and military of Indonesia; foreign governments, including Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands and the USA, and finally multinational corporations, especially Freeport McMoRan, Rio Tinto and British Petroleum.

Stereotyped attitudes were seen as a major hindrance to building trust, to breaking through social gaps, and moving to reconciliation through dialogue. Stereotypes (with accompanying potential scenarios) identified were these:

On West Papuans:

West Papuans cannot rule themselves and do not have a legitimate leadership. (West Papua lacks a Ramos Horta.) Papuans are primitive, lazy, alcoholic and lack skills. They do not understand other people’s rights or their own obligations, and lack capacity to manage a modern economy, while their scattered and fragmented society with its ethnic conflicts and social divisions needs a firm hand.

On Indonesia:

Indonesia wants to hold on to Papua and Aceh at any cost. Indonesian military officers and officials are corrupt, the army and police are brutal, Javanese in particular should not be trusted. Indonesians are determined to uphold their unitary constitution unchanged. The military is determined to preserve its “dual [military and political/social/administrative] function”. Indonesia will continue to exploit Papua’s resources.

On Australia, PNG and Australia/PNG Relations:

Merdeka (independence) for West Papua will resemble independence in PNG and other small island countries in Melanesia, i.e., it will involve more instability, violence, corruption and crime. Australians do not want Indonesia to disintegrate further. The “fall” of West Papua may seriously affect Papua New Guinea as well as sending boat people to Australia.

On Giant Resource Companies:

PT Freeport Indonesia recognises the language of exploitation. It does not respect human rights or the integrity of the West Papuan environment, which it says is not its responsibility. But Freeport may wash its hands, sell out and get out from the region. Freeport and the military of Indonesia can not be separated.

On Foreign Government and UN Perspectives:

In the best interests of Papuans themselves, regional stability and regional security, West Papua must stay within Indonesia. In *real politik* terms, West Papua is not a part of the South Pacific, but a part of Asia. West Papua is a purely Indonesian issue: the UN thinks the “issue” of West Papua is already dead as a result of the Act of Free Choice in 1969.

For emotional, economic, political and security reasons the Republic of Indonesia must hold together. Regional powers do not want any “domino” effects from Papua breaking away. Dissatisfaction with government policies can be dealt with by conceding autonomy status to West Papua.

Having thoroughly explored such stereotyping, the workshop turned to broad issues of policy and strategy for furthering West Papuan peace and self determination. The following suggestions emerged:

1. 1. Indonesia, as a member of the UN, should respect the universal values of human rights, including the rights of Papuans. Within this context, the government of Indonesia and the people of West Papua should be encouraged to find a win-win solution.
2. 2. Education and training in human rights, peace and conflict resolution for all stakeholders must be a high priority.
3. 3. Human resource development and capacity building for West Papuans and Indonesians is desirable. More “intellectual engagement” through seminars and conferences is also essential.
4. 4. Mass media must play a greater role to raise public awareness about issues of concern in West Papua.
5. 5. A review of the Act of Free Choice is still unlikely, but individual countries in the South Pacific, and NGO’s in the Netherlands and elsewhere can sponsor such an initiative.
6. 6. Regional networking and sharing of information should be encouraged.
7. 7.

3.3. Assessing Potential West Papuan and Australian Roles in Peacemaking

At this session, Peter King and Rex Rumakiek (West Papuan expatriate living in Sydney) argued the need for Australia as well as West Papuan leaders to play a significant role in any peace process.

Discussing the role of the OPM and the Papua Council Presidium, Rex Rumakiek stressed that peace and reconciliation initiatives have already been undertaken by the Papuan people (as outlined above). He noted OPM lobbying among South Pacific and European countries over the years. One of the results was the

governments of Vanuatu and Nauru took up the issue of West Papua in the South Pacific Forum's meeting in Kiribati in 2000. Frans Joku, international moderator for the Presidium of the Papua Council, cautioned against any attempt to usurp the role of the Presidium in peace dialogue. He also chastised the working paper for neglecting what Papuans are actually doing: 'For 150 years foreigners have been making decisions for us, [but] we are no longer objects; we are subjects', he said, and 'the Papua Council has decided we will be free'. Although this warning was valuable, for most participants, the start of serious peace dialogue, requires commitments from individual and external participants.

Peter King's analysis of Australia's potential role in any peace process, argues that linking West Papua to East Timor precedents could be useful. He urged the workshop to explore not only the long term problem of sustaining the existing Australian and international commitment to East Timor, but also to identify the implications of these developments for peaceful dialogue over West Papua. He made the following five recommendations (with explanations) for a new departure in Australian policy:

1) Remember History

The foreign minister (he said) seems to have forgotten that until the early 1960s Australia strongly supported the Dutch in their striving to bring West New Guinea (as it then was) to independence and possible union with PNG by the 1970s.

2) Raise the Priority of Human Rights in Relations with Indonesia

Insist on an end to military impunity for past and future crimes in Papua as in Timor. The Papuans are already in urgent need of protection against the resurgence of military and police (and judicial) brutality over the past year. The close association between repression and movement for secession in West Papua should be identified.

3) Begin Serious Dialogue with the West Papuan Leadership: Avoid Obstructing Initiatives for Peace

Although the political leadership in West Papua remains seriously divided, it is still essential for Australia to undertake dialogue on its own behalf with this leadership—and equally important not to obstruct initiatives for peaceful dialogue from other quarters. Internal conflict within Papuan society has been a major obstacle to reconciliation and peace dialogue in the past and reconciliation among Papuan leaders should be encouraged.

4) "Thicken" Relations with West Papua by All Possible Means

An Australian consulate in Jayapura is essential. Journalistic access to West Papua could be invaluable. An "institutionalised" media presence inside West Papua is an essential part of challenging military impunity, exposing repression (particularly in remote places) and generating momentum for peace. There must also be a serious attempt by the Australian government and AusAID to begin meaningful exchanges at the level of students, NGOs and people-to-people

contacts. There should be unqualified diplomatic and political support for human rights NGOs in West Papua.

5) Prepare for the Worst (Best?)

Although in terms of the objective of promoting peaceful dialogue the following proposal may not be considered necessary, nevertheless, it may be sensible: Australia should prepare to “relate to the archipelago” and not just the sovereign state of Indonesia. In addition Australia should be prepared for a situation of crisis in West Papua and an agenda of humanitarian intervention, peacekeeping and social-political reconstruction.

3.4. The Feasibility of Peaceful Dialogue

At this session four panellists--Justice Elizabeth Evatt of the International Commission of Jurists, Dr. John Pace of the University of NSW, Dr. Anne Noonan of Australia West Papua Association (Sydney) and Dr. George Aditjondro of Newcastle University presented their views.

Elisabeth Evatt advocated review of the Act of Free Choice of 1969 because the problems of West Papua are a product of violation of basic human rights in the handling of its self determination. The International Commission of Jurist (ICJ) Australia believe that without reviewing “the Act of No Choice” (as it is also called) we cannot find a legal basis for challenging the claims made on its behalf. Indonesia fears that engaging West Papua on the basis of democratic rights and a “correction of history” will lead to the loss of a resource rich region. Jakarta needs a chance for economic recovery and development. The presence of big resource companies in Indonesia and West Papua remains crucial to the prospect of any peace process.

In addressing human rights issues in West Papua there is a need for internal and external pressure on Jakarta. Putting West Papua on the international political agenda is difficult, since, in the UN’s perspective the country was recognised as an integral part of Indonesia as a result of the “Act Free of Choice”. The UN does not want to embarrass itself.

John Pace discussed the feasibility of peaceful dialogue based on his own long experience within the UN’s system. We must “plug in” to the existing the UN human rights and other machinery, he argued. The UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) is a particularly useful forum for raising the West Papua issue. It can act as a catalyst for action. Progress of course depends on the West Papuans themselves-- how they organise, make strategy and plan ahead. But foreigners, also, can do much to raise public awareness by getting involved in the West Papuan cause and raising issues with UNCHR in Geneva. Human rights also involves sovereignty over resources. Self-determination can be given a broader meaning than it has had hitherto. In brief, peaceful dialogue may be feasible if we use the UN’s existing machinery, define the meaning of human rights in a broad perspective and engage all key actors.

Anne Noonan underlined the importance of teaching ourselves about the subjects of immediate concern: peaceful dialogue, conflict resolution and the

suffering in Papua itself. Agreeing with Elizabeth Evatt about the need to revisit the Act of Free Choice of 1969, Anne urged that the West Papua issue should be put on the agenda of the UN Decolonisation Commission. She also urged concerned people to form a coalition in Australia together with AWPA and thus work to link up the people of West Papua and Indonesia with other support groups around the world.

The final panellist, George Aditjondro, gave an Indonesian perspective, emphasising that what happens in Indonesia will greatly affect developments in West Papua. Megawati Sukarnoputri will probably become President, he said, and any peace initiative could be affected by the probability of her alliance with three pillars, 3Ms: Mega herself, the military and Muslims. Megawati's nationalist supporters and the military believe in national unity and sovereignty. Being Sukarno's daughter, Megawati will strive to keep Indonesia intact. Dismantling the present "feudalistic" political structure is very hard, but if and when Megawati becomes President, a window of opportunity will open for the opposition democratic movement. Abdurrahman Wahid has been a friend of "our" friends-NGO's, the democratic movement, the supporters of East Timor, - but the clock may be turning back.

Dr. Aditjondro argued that the self determination movement in West Papua must be reorganised, and that solidarity with kindred movements inside Indonesia and outside the country is essential. Papuans should work closely with human rights networks, and strengthen their ideas. When a significant opposition to a new Megawati government in Indonesia emerges a peace dialogue for Papua will be much more feasible.

Summary of Panel Recommendations

1. The world community should address the human rights issue in West Papua.
2. Support the call for a review of the Act of Free Choice of 1969
3. Increase internal and external pressure on Indonesia over human rights and related issues
4. Use existing the UN machinery, particularly the Human Right Commission in Geneva and the Decolonisation Commission, to raise the profile of the West Papuan cause.
5. Human rights defenders should constantly strive to keep themselves "up to speed" on relevant issues and techniques
6. Working closely with democratic, progressive, human rights and environmental movements inside and outside Indonesia is crucial for West Papuans and their supporters.

3.5. Perspectives on Peaceful Dialogue: Opportunities and Obstacles

This session divided into three groups led by Dr. Jim Elmslie, Dr. Stella Cornelius of the Conflict Resolution Network and Dr. Ron May of the Australian National University respectively. Discussion in the groups concluded that the window of opportunity for dialogue is still small because there are many obstacles to overcome. However, if a "Big Bang" breakthrough event, like the

decision to grant a referendum on independence in East Timor, occurs in West Papua, then real change may come.

Opportunities

Analysing opportunities, the group rapporteurs concluded that any political change in the immediate future is unlikely. However, we should:

1. Promote conflict resolution: education and training programs for West Papuans.
2. Support a program of “Papuanisation” of civil service and other structures in West Papua through special autonomy status.
3. Support capacity building within West Papua which is crucial for defending Papuan identity and self awareness and strengthening Papuan civil society.
4. Lobby the UN, European Union, governments such as Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands and USA, financial agencies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Asian Development Bank, corporations such as Freeport and Rio Tinto, and also regional and regionally active bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum, the Commonwealth and ASEAN to emphasize the significance of human rights observance and dialogue for peace.

Obstacles

The rapporteurs reported that their groups were well aware that there are many obstacles to peace dialogue still to be overcome:

1. The presence of two major conflicting parties, TNI and OPM, could trigger more violence. The military has an enormous economic and political stake in West Papua and particularly in the Freeport mine, where it enjoys not only generous direct subsidy from PT Freeport Indonesia but many lucrative, legal and illegal business opportunities as well.
2. The “Megawati [nationalist] syndrome” can also be a major hindrance for peaceful dialogue.
3. The lack of an all-inclusive approach may prolong the failure to start genuine peace dialogue. The lack of gender balance in the discussion so far, and the factionalism within Papuan society, are serious problems.
4. Conflict and instability within the Indonesian government, parliament and military may also undermine the peace process.
5. Denial of Papuan rights and reluctant involvement by key stakeholders may also affect peace prospects.

Au Revoir

The workshop ended with music performed by two West Papuans--David Haluk from Dubbo and Jacob Rumbiak from Melbourne. An auction of Melanesian artefacts donated by Jim Elmslie wound up the workshop and generated some much needed supplementary Project revenue.

4. Lessons from Today, Steps for Tomorrow: Afterword by Stuart Rees

Acknowledgment of the efforts of colleagues who made the workshop possible is more than an expression of thanks. It is also a reminder of the significance of saying 'thank you' in any efforts to achieve just resolution of conflicts. That may sound trite but in a world which is aggressively competitive and in which even thoughtful individuals are in a hurry, such humanness is easily forgotten.

A second lesson to be learned from the workshop proceedings concerns our capacity to evaluate our own deliberations and the manner of conducting them. In reflecting on the insightful report written by my colleagues Peter King and John Ondawame, I want to comment on the language which cropped up in the workshop which is not conducive to problem solving. I am referring to phrases which appear to be closed rather than open, which can give an impression that right is on one side and wrong on another. For example, 'push Jakarta to the negotiating table' or 'persuade Indonesia to follow suit' are unlikely to engender trust and would be alien to building a just peace. Then there are phrases which oversimplify. Talk of a 'peace breakthrough' – a sort of conversion on the road to Jayapura or Jakarta – gives the impression that peace could be an outcome achieved at a point in time, whereas the reality is that just settlement of deep seated conflicts requires constant attention to principled and skilful negotiation. References to one side or another 'undermining a peace process' are also too simple. Exactly what is involved in a peace process – as in clarifying the values and attitudes which engender trust – need to be mulled over and made explicit.

A third lesson addresses issues which were touched on lightly but which need to characterise the culture of the West Papua Project and the thinking of all those who will participate in peaceful dialogue. There are three issues, which, if addressed, would show a practical concern for the fate of all the peoples of West Papua. (i) The philosophy and language of nonviolence (ii) The courage to depart from established points of view (iii) The need to clarify what is meant by 'human rights'.

- (i) Mahatma Gandhi observed that nonviolence is the greatest weapon for peace, yet when public outrage is generated by exposure to violence, the content of the alternative approach is easily taken for granted. Promoting a nonviolent philosophy and practice among men and women, governors and governed, military and civilians, officials and volunteers should characterise the conduct of this West Papua Project. Gandhi's approach needs to be learned, practiced and deployed with even more vigour and skill than men in uniform have used when relying on armed force.
- (ii) Willingness to engage in dialogue requires all parties to leave the safety which they may feel when talking only with those who have the

same views. For example, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade needs to be encouraged to address questions such as ‘what is meant by just society?’ and ‘how is it achieved?’ Answers to those questions are inherent in peaceful dialogue. Engaging with those whom you may not know, or about whom you have stereotyped ideas, requires a certain risk taking. Unless we find the moral courage to explore different views in the cause of peace, we shall only reinforce that perspective which says that security derives from fixed boundaries of nationality, religion or ethnicity. Moral courage gives access to another form of security: that feeling of freedom from fear which is experienced when a common cause makes friends of enemies and helps antagonists to reinterpret entrenched positions.

- (iii) Responding to the request to ‘define the meaning of human rights in broad perspective’ will require an appreciation of the value of dialogue about universal rights and their application in diverse contexts and countries. A ‘broad perspective on human rights’ involves a willingness to consider how respect for human rights fosters the quality of life of everyone. It is a view which sees environmental protection as inseparable from human well-being. That point has particular pertinence to the rich but fragile ecology of West Papua and the commercial interests which have adversely affected indigenous peoples’ health and access to their land. On the other hand, reference to ‘human rights’ should not be made only when abuses have occurred. Appreciation of the promise of universal human rights shows how different cultural traditions and political interests can benefit from humanitarian goals which unite people.

The West Papua Project is influenced by the values of community development which encourage consultation with grass roots interests as well as official positions. It is also a model for promotion of dialogue in which it is imperative to identify short term objectives as well as long term goals. In this case short term goals would involve addressing the health, education, welfare and security of all the peoples of West Papua. Earlier points made about nonviolence, moral courage and redefining human rights are relevant to these goals. Long term goals concern questions about West Papua being retained within a centrally governed Indonesian state, proposals about autonomy and aspirations for independence. An interdependent short and long term goal would involve the facilitation of democracy in Indonesia. Since the June workshop, that new democracy has passed a first major test by achieving a non-violent transition of power from President Abdurrahman Wahid to President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

Proposed next steps for the West Papua Project will focus on goals which affect the immediate interests of all parties to the conflict. Three short term goals are proposed:

- (i) To consult with political representatives and leaders from Indonesia and in Australia with a view to establishing consensus about the meaning of peaceful dialogue over West Papua. With that goal in mind, discussions should be held with those who were not able to participate in the June workshop. This will involve meetings with the Indonesian Consul General and the Indonesian Ambassador to

Australia, with representatives from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and with the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and his staff.

- (ii) To recognize that conflicts exist within the indigenous West Papuan leadership and that, without adoption of the values and skills of nonviolent conflict resolution, it will be almost inevitable that force is perceived as the way to make progress. On the basis of that assumption, a workshop is planned for December 2001. This will bring together in Sydney representatives of the principal leadership groups in West Papuan society. Such a workshop will acknowledge the initiatives for peace which have already been taken but it will concentrate on training for conflict resolution among West Papuans. In West Papua as in so many countries, commitment to and skills in non-violent conflict resolution will be needed not only today and tomorrow but also for generations.
- (iii) A third step emerging from the workshop's deliberations will involve three forms of consultation over the next few months: (a) with interested Non Government Organizations in Indonesia including West Papua; (b) with representatives of the United Nations in an attempt to identify appropriate UN machinery which might enhance the chances of peaceful dialogue; (c) with representatives from resource companies with interests in West Papua in order to encourage peaceful dialogue. In the case of the companies such dialogue would refer to respect for human rights in general and to ecological responsibility in particular.

Regarding these consultations, it would be encouraging if the role of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies as a skilled and influential but not well resourced Non Government Organization in Sydney was recognized and given assistance by major parties in this dispute, including the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, the Commonwealth Government of Australia and the companies with extensive commercial interests in West Papua. In this southern hemisphere an organization such as the Centre could foster a Sydney/Jakarta/Jayapura series of peace accords which could have far greater promise and achievement than those promoted in Oslo regarding the violence in the Middle East. Kofi Annan has asked organizations such as this Centre to promote such initiatives. We are already trying and will continue to do so.