The West Papua Project

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Reconciliation and Consolidation Among Papuans:

Report on Workshop III, 2-3 September 2002

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1. Introduction

Problem and Meaning of Reconciliation

Reconciliation and consolidation among Papuans has been problematic. The participants in the workshop agreed that this is caused by lack of capacity to recognise the problem of reconciliation and lack of political will to promote processes of reconciliation and peaceful dialogue on the part of many actors, both within Papuan civil society and in State authorities. Many actors have high expectations of an immediate outcome rather than seeing reconciliation as an ongoing process. Reconciliation has sometimes been seen as a traditional way of solving disputes without third party intervention. On the other hand, there is general expectation that third party intervention in Papua’s conflicts would assist people to resolve their differences. This view prevailed in the workshop. Reconciliation among Papuans is a long process which could be much more fruitful if a neutral third party were given the chance to attempt, without seeking to impose his or her own terms, to enable the parties to resolve their differences.

Democratic process in Indonesia since 1998 has opened new opportunities, giving Papuan civil society a chance to express its political aspirations. Peaceful dialogue between the government of Indonesia and the people of West Papua has become a priority. To facilitate that objective, a Forum for Reconciliation of the People of Irian Jaya was established in Port Numbay (Jayapura) in July 1998. Its primary aim was to play a facilitating role in any reconciliation process. However, the Forum failed to perform its tasks. A lack of commitment to peace and confusion about the Forum’s role were major reasons for this failure. The prospect of reconciliation then became somewhat illusory.

A new forum has now been launched with the birth of a Peace Task Force in July 2002 established by the Institute for Human Rights Studies and Advocacy (ELSHAM), leading churches and the Papua Council Presidium (Presidium Dewan Papua) in Port Numbay. It is headed by Dr. Benny Giay, with its primary objective to pursue reconciliation among Papuans through peaceful dialogue. The task force will collaborate with partners abroad, including the West Papua Project in Sydney and the Papua Resource Centre in New York.

In a spirit of cooperation, the West Papua Project has tried to play a constructive role in the processes of reconciliation and peaceful dialogue over the last two years. We assume that without solving internal conflicts among Papuans, peaceful dialogue with Indonesia would be difficult. Against this background, the process of reconciliation and consolidation among Papuans has been a major priority. The West Papua Project seeks to develop theoretical knowledge and skills to promote reconciliation and peaceful dialogue: it also networks, lobbies and organises workshops, seminars and mass media campaigns.

Since there has been a lack of culture of dialogue among Papuans and Indonesian state authorities alike, achieving any form of peace talks will be difficult. However, when the government of Indonesia through its former Ambassador to Australia, Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat, gave a green light to the primary objective of the Project, a new step towards a constructive engagement in the peace process seemed possible.1

The West Papua Project’s third workshop on reconciliation, organised by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies over the period 2nd to 3rd September 2002, was widely considered to be a significant step forward in the peace process.2 In an opening speech, Senator Kerry Nettle, Green

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1 For a memo on the former ambassador’s discussions with project members in advance of Workshop III, see the Appendix below.
Party, compared reconciliation processes in other parts of the world and Australia’s own experience with Aborigines:

*History shows that reconciliation must be driven from the grass roots. It is only by individuals and community organisations healing the divisions of the past that we can build a vision for the future.*

Senator Nettle hoped that reconciliation amongst West Papuans would help to build that vision and strengthen the voice of the Papuans in the international community.

**Key Participants**

Representatives of diverse groups in civil society, both Papuans and non-Papuans, took part in the one and a half day workshop. Eleven Papuan representatives of various social, religious, political, and academic groups were invited. The names of the persons and their organisations who played key roles in reconciliation and peaceful dialogue in West Papuan can be found in the *Appendix*.

**Objectives**

The workshop aimed to foster reconciliation among West Papuans and to examine the means of building partnerships within Papuan civil society. A specific objective was to reduce tensions and to establish new mechanisms for peace by identifying a common stand on priorities for reconciliation.

**2. Topics of Discussion**

The workshop aimed to cover the following broad topics of discussion:

- The philosophy and practice of non-violence in a milieu of violent oppression.
- Difficulties in achieving reconciliation in Papuan civil society.
- The absence of human rights as central to the undermining of any peace process; the role of the Indonesian military, and the rise of pro-Indonesian Muslim militias.
- Questions of special autonomy, a referendum on independence, a review of the Act of Free Choice of 1969, reconciliation with Indonesians, good governance, Papuanisation and women’s place in Papuan society.
- Evaluation of the workshop and future Project directions.

The most pressing immediate need was to create an atmosphere of security for each member of the Papuan delegation to enable them to express themselves without fear of retribution. The workshop did not exist in isolation. Pending a successful outcome, it was hoped that the momentum gathered in Sydney would further propel the West Papuan issue onto the international stage. Success in Sydney would be a touchstone for subsequent workshops in Indonesia and the United States. In the spirit of international consolidation, it was the wish of all concerned that West Papua should not be any longer an isolated society; that, in the words of one of the speakers, “*West Papuans are not facing their obstacles alone*”.

**1). Philosophy and Practice of Non-violence**

*Polarised Views of Many Parties*

A divergence in perceptions and expectations in the workshop between the Australia participants and the Papuan delegation was quickly apparent. This contrast affected deliberations: the gospel according to liberal democratic Western values colliding with indigenous experience.
But the workshop enabled parties from different worlds to become familiar with each other’s concerns and ways of expressing them.

Combined forces of tribal diversity and pressures brought to bear on individuals by policies of divide and rule also made for substantial polarisation of views. Building a common vision of a future Papua needs to include respect for a cultural tradition rich in tribal custom and linguistic variety.

*Violence and Non-violence*

An opportunity to be heard meant a lot to people who struggle to have a voice. Diverse issues relating to the cause of Papuan self-determination emerged in the workshop. Key points by various contributors included the following:

(i). Papuans must forge vigorous alliances with the outside world.
(ii). Isolation and underdevelopment are major obstacles to progress in reconciliation.
(iii). Promoting peace is difficult in the face of ongoing military violence.
(iv). In the absence of democracy and its values, avenues for practising non-violence principles are minimal.

What is meant by non-violence? Stuart Rees and John Rumbiak, who presented at the first workshop session, interpreted the meaning of non-violence from theoretical and practical perspectives. According to Stuart, to embrace the Gandhian doctrine of non-violence would be to suppose that all parties are familiar with Gandhi’s philosophy, language and skills. Dr. Meredith Burgmann also emphasised the importance of familiarity with the philosophy and practice of non-violence. The need for sensitivity to different cultural perspectives and different interpretations of non-violence emerged from the session. The following prerequisites for pursuing a non-violence approach were noted:

(i). A group of people prepared to listen to each other and engage in conversation with others: not only partners and colleagues in civil society but representatives of the military, Laskar Jihad and corporations involved in Papua.
(ii). Creation of power within oneself and in one’s organisation—necessary for strengthening unity and solidarity.
(iii). Developing communication skills: how to convince government authorities, the military, corporations like BP and Freeport and one’s own colleagues and community of the need for non-violence.
(iv). Developing inner-personal qualities needed to fight against inequality, undemocratic systems and underdevelopment.
(v). Accumulating knowledge and skills for undertaking peaceful actions, showing a co-operative attitude and behaviour and respect for the culture of the Other.

According to John Rumbiak the path of non-violence for the Papuans should include:

- Recognition of the fundamental rights and cultural values of the people of West Papua.
- Tolerance of different ethnic groups including the ability to listen and say “sorry” when needed.
- Upholding the democratic values which must underpin the principles and practice of non-violence, and developing an ability to take part in non-violent activities such as peaceful demonstrations, boycotts and parliamentary motions.

*2). Difficulties in Achieving Reconciliation within Papuan Civil Society*

Horizontal conflict in West Papua occurs when the relationship between communities breaks down and mistrust develops. This mistrust contributes to national disunity. The participants from West Papua recognised the fact that power and leadership struggle, regional sentiment, lack of shared perceptions and strong local loyalties are major causes of national disunity.
Discussing these difficulties, Dr. Benny Giay, who chaired the workshop session on reconciliation said:

“We must be aware that conflict in West Papua among ourselves will continue even if West Papua become a free state one day. It is long-term conflict that requires a solution by ourselves. We must take actions now. I suggest we must map the root causes of conflict. Identification of the needs and concerns of the major actors is an important step in the peace process.

Dr. Greg Poulgrain, who has written on the history of West Papua, underlined the root causes of internal conflict in West Papua from the perspective of colonial history. He argued that the divide and rule policy that the Dutch administration implanted during its 134 years of colonisation has been the primary cause of disunity. This policy is also inherited by the new colonial power, Indonesia.

Needs and Concerns

In the workshop, the following needs and concerns for reconciliation were noted:

Needs:

- Map the root causes of the problems, find common ground, build a sense of partnership and lay out sets of options and remedies.
- Promote reconciliation as a stepping stone for further peaceful dialogue.
- Support the peace initiatives taken by both the OPM and Presidium.
- Support the call for “a peace zone” in West Papua.
- Build peace partnership between different peace advocates inside West Papua, in Indonesia and abroad.
- Restore Papuan dignity and promote cultural identity.
- Confront racism.
- Promote national unity and higher levels of tolerance among Papuans and non-Papuans by respecting diversity and building trust.
- Promote the principle of “inclusiveness”.
- Promote the participation of women in development and peace.
- Find general criteria to achieve consensus on a win-win basis; acknowledge past mistakes and urge moral accountability and apology.
- Establish credibility of leadership in order to enter dialogue effectively.
- Unify perceptions and terms of references to advance the peaceful dialogue.
- Review the functioning of the Special Autonomy laws.
- Fight against corruption, nepotism and collusion.
- Demilitarise West Papua.
- Promote education and training in conflict resolution.
- Demand independent investigation of the recent killings in the Freeport mining area.

Concerns:

- Weakness of the local churches.
- Negative effects on Papuan culture subsequent to Indonesian colonisation.
- The denial of Papuan rights during the Cold War period.
- The lack of mass media and international community attention to Papua.
- Ineffectiveness of the current educational system.
- The position of the West Papua Project in future debate in Australia.
- Inappropriate autonomy laws and their implications.
- The lack of good governance and the ongoing tradition of corruption, collusion and nepotism.
- Militarisation and Laskar Jihad activities and their implications.
- Blaming the OPM as a terrorist organisation and its political implications.
Some Important Reflections

Unity within Diversity

The participants viewed reconciliation as involving respect for and cooperation across the existing ethnic boundaries in Papuan society. Each ethnic group and other social and political groupings have their own unique styles and perceptions; they are proud to be different within the multicultural society of Papua.

Hidayat Alhamid said:

To belong to a Papuan Muslim minority, living with a Christian majority, is not easy. We need to maintain our own uniqueness. I must also underline that in the reconciliation processes, “uniformity” is not necessarily wrong. But we must respect diversities and we should develop capacity that enables us to have a better common understanding towards each another.

Adolfina Zonggonau Ondawame supported this claim and she called on all factions within the Papuan liberation movement to unify perceptions and national symbols. While each group carries around its own flag and promotes only the name of the group this confuses the international community, she said.

Autonomy Power?

Special autonomy was seen by the Papuan participants as paying only lip-service to Papuan rights and identity. It does not serve the interests of the people in West Papua, they said. However, Corinus Berotabui, Secretary General of the GKI (Gereja Kristen Injili) protestant church in Papua said the policy has many benefits. According to him, the policy of regionalisation of the administrative system gives more power to local people. He said: “what reconciliation means to us is to support a program that empowers our local people”.

Inclusiveness

Inclusiveness in reconciliation means the involvement of all the different groups of people in civil society in order to build a strong base of support, including academics, students, women, NGOs and other grass roots organizations. For intra-group reconciliation, working together with Papuan leaders and various religious and ethnic groups, governmental organizations and corporations is vital.

The Role of Religious Organisations

The Christian churches and the Islamic religion in West Papua have been trusted by the people. These religious groups already play important roles in the peace process. Representatives of both religious “streams” have made clear their commitment to peace and reconciliation. But the Indonesian military is now trying to divide the two streams by encouraging sectarian violence.

Following the establishment of the Peace Task Force under Dr Benny Giay in July 2002 ELSHAM reported that

The culmination of the first stage of the Zone of Peace process was a conference on peace for Papua, co-sponsored by the governor, police chief and the provincial parliament together with ELSHAM and other civil society groups and held in Jayapura, October 15-16, 2002.

Major General Mahidi Simbolon, regional commander of the Indonesian military in Papua, was the only official who refused to participate in the initiative. As part of the Zone of Peace initiative, the Task Force [had] separately met with Papua’s police chief, chairman of the provincial parliament, and governor as well as all TPN/OPM leaders, including Nico Hipohauw, Hans R Yoweni, Melkianus Awon, Tadius Yogi, and most importantly, on August 25, 2002, with Kelly Kwalik, all with very successful responses. As a result of these discussions, Kwalik called off attacks on Freeport and showed his commitment to creating and maintaining a peaceful Papua.3

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3 What’s Wrong with Freeport’s Security Policy? Results of Investigation into the Attack on Freeport Employees in Timika, ELSHAM (Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy), Jayapura, 21 October 2002
Failure to make real progress now, according to workshop participants, would be a result of the lack of unifying vision between the two major independence movements-- the OPM and the Presidium, precisely what the Peace Task force has been striving to overcome. The unhealthy relationship between these groups in the past has hindered trust and prevented the development of common strategies.

Agus Alua affirmed at the workshop that for its part “the Presidium have two major strategies: promotion of national peaceful dialogue with the government of Indonesia and internationalisation of the issue, calling for a review of the Act of Free Choice of 1969”.

The "Absence" of Women in Reconciliation

The role of women in the reconciliation process was widely seen as vital. But the constraints imposed upon them by traditional controls make this difficult. Their rights are not recognised. Women become victims at home and in public places. The lack of empowerment of women has also affected the peace process. Women should be given an opportunity to play a key role in any peace and reconciliation process.

The Indonesian military have used women as human shields and employed rape and other abuses for ulterior military purposes. Many women live today with trauma. At the workshop Paula Makabory presented the role of young Papuan women in defending their rights while Rode Wanimbo concentrated on the role of students. Each of them underlined that the condition of women in West Papua has not changed much. The cases of Timika and Wamena over the last eight years were briefly presented by both of them. Paula said:

_Papuan women are still suffering from oppressions perpetuated by men and the state. We do not have our rights._

Both speakers also underlined the important work of Mama Josepha Alomang, chairperson of the Foundation for Human Rights Anti Violence (HAMAK) in Timika and recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize. Paula Makabory said: “We should have more Mama Alomangs today in West Papua”.

Cultural Context and Isolation

Papuans have their own ways to solve problems. Reconciliation has often been manifest on the basis of traditional values, customs and ways of life. The importance of traditional values was underlined by Joseph Kilangin, representative of the Amungme Traditional Council in Timika (LEMASA) and Harry Worsoek, representative of the Peace and Justice Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Merauke.

They both argued that conflict between customary and state laws has been problematic in Papua. The case of the Kimam tribe in the Merauke region illustrates the legal complications that can arise in the reconciliation process. State law can not overrule customary law in practice. Consequently, the inter-tribal conflict in the region is unlikely to be resolved soon. Harry Worsoek said: “We faced tremendous difficulty in settling tribal disputes within Kimam society”. The local church leaders in Merauke approached the OPM leaders in the region and engaged in several rounds of peace talks, he said, but the attempts failed because there was little local capacity to conduct peace negotiations and raise group self-awareness.

Organisational Obstacles

Organisational obstacles remain severe. A robust administrative infrastructure is crucial for the promotion of peaceful dialogue. There is general expectation that autonomy will provide new opportunity for Papuans to demonstrate efficiency in running their own affairs, but this remains to be seen.

The workshop emphasised that the degree of fluency in the language of negotiation and mutually constructive dialogue will set the tone for future relations with Indonesia. Such capacity
could be developed in an effective organisation; however, under present political conditions, this will be difficult.

The Papuan delegation displayed a self-deprecatory side to their character in freely admitting that they had much to learn in combating disorganisation among their own ranks. It became apparent during the workshop that lack of organisation remains a serious impediment to the peace process, and raises questions about future Papuan leadership. In a polarised Papuan civil society where conflicting views on the reconciliation process persist, responsibilities for peaceful dialogue remain problematic. Questions of leadership and its social accountability must also be addressed in the reconciliation process.

3). Disrespect for Human Rights and Peace

The topics of disrespect for human rights and the undermining of the peace process by military and militia violence were the subject of the next workshop session. Participants agreed that an escalation of violence built on fear has become a major stumbling block for reconciliation and peace. John Rumbiak said:

*If either the OPM or the Indonesian military use violence in pursuing their own interests both parties must be held responsible for the escalation of human rights abuses in West Papua today.*

Dr. Anne Noonan, who chaired the session, said that the OPM has responded to the situation in Papua with acts of “aggressive” violence as well as acts of self-defence. In such circumstances, peace talk is unlikely. Nevertheless, reconciliation talks between the OPM and the Indonesian military and between Papuans and non-Papuans should be pursued, according to Ronald Tapilatu.

The participants recognised the fact that the cycle of violence has recently intensified in West Papua. The killing of innocent people at Mile 63 of the Freeport mining concession area on 31 August 2002, just before the opening of the workshop, and also previous killings in many parts of West Papua, indicate the incompetence of the Indonesian military in dealing with political and social issues in the territory.

There was fear that similar events will be repeated in many parts of West Papua, targeting primarily foreign companies, but also Papuan Christians and their churches. The Laskar Jihad militia remains active in Papua despite its theoretical dissolution throughout Indonesia after the Bali bombing of October 2002.

*Human Rights and Peace are Interrelated*

The relationship between human rights abuses and the call for peace has become apparent. Peace demands are a response to violence. The two can not be separated, according to Agus Alua:

*When we talk about reconciliation and peaceful dialogue, the issue of human rights must be addressed because they are intertwined: one becomes a reason to give significance to the other.*

The militarisation of West Papua has disrupted the possibility of a peace process. The Indonesian military, pro-Indonesian nationalist militias and Laskar Jihad promote violence. Maintaining the culture of militarism involves provocation and divide and rule policy and deliberate heightening of religious and social tension. Many Dani people have been converted to Islam. In Wamena alone, 80 young Dani men, mostly those newly converted to Islam, were trained by Laskar Jihad. Sofyan Yoman believes that new religious conflict may erupt in the region in the future:

*I fear that this type of conflict will invite more military into the region. The Indonesian military is not familiar with human rights. They kill children, women and elders, and destroy gardens and houses and steal property. In our traditional law of war, we are not allowed to kill vulnerable people or destroy their property.*

Illegal economic and criminal activities such as prostitution, drug dealing, extortion and orchestrated killings of civilians are other examples of the culture of Indonesian militarism in practice.
The Continued Denial of Papuan rights

The right of the West Papuans to exercise self-determination has been denied as a result of the Act of Free Choice of 1969. In the view of the Papuan participants, this is the main root cause of the current political problem in West Papua. To achieve a genuine reconciliation, the Act must be re-examined.

John Scott Murphy, Caritas Australia, and John Barr, Uniting Church of Australia in Sydney, who have monitored the situation in West Papua over the last four years emphasized the need for human development as a vital step in the reconciliation process. Local Papuans should be trained: the lack of educated manpower is a major obstacle which churches in particular should seek to overcome.

The Civilian Killings at Freeport

The escalation of human rights abuses has also impacted on the peace process. Dr. Chris Ballard, who monitors human rights abuses and environmental destruction in the Freeport mining area, said the killings on 31 August were a part of ongoing military campaigns. Similar human rights abuses in this area were also reported in the past by the Catholic Church and human rights organisations in West Papua. Such killings undermine the idea of developing common trust between the people of West Papua, the government of Indonesia and Freeport. The elite Indonesian military unit Kopassus has been strongly suspected of involvement in this type of crime. In a TV-video conference organised by CNN-Hongkong during the workshop and also in a press release, John Ondawame defended the OPM from the charge by the Papuan military commander that it was responsible for the August killings:

The OPM condemned the killing and made clear its position that the OPM was not responsible... The movement is not a terrorist organisation, but a nationalist liberation movement that seeks genuine peace, democracy, justice and freedom. The OPM has not had any policy to harm or kill civilians. We strongly suspect that the Indonesian military, particularly Kopassus, was involved in this killing. We call for an international independent investigation team to be sent to investigate these murders.

John Rumbiak and Agus Alua also gave press interviews during the workshop, analysing the role of the military at Freeport. In workshop discussion other participants called for an independent investigation into the murders, for demilitarisation of the region and for protection of human rights defenders in West Papua.

The role of Laskar Jihad and pro-Indonesia Militias

Laskar Jihad and pro-Indonesia militias have been responsible for the escalation of violence in West Papua. The Laskar Jihad is an extremist Islamic group blamed for ethnic and religious violence in the Moluccas in 2000-2001. The presence of 3,000 members of the Laskar Jihad in West Papua raises alarm among Papuan Christians. John Rumbiak said:

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4 ‘Papuan activists point finger at Indonesian military’, Reuters, Sydney, 2 September 2002. Agus Alua said: "All of the people in West Papua are committed, in the town, in the jungle, on the OPM side. We'd already decided to work hard for a peaceful area in West Papua, so this thing has come not from West Papua but from outside". According to Reuters he also said the incident provided the Indonesian military with an excuse to launch an operation against not just independence fighters in the OPM but also the Papuan political movement, and that, if Papuans were involved, then they had likely been recruited into military-sponsored militia similar to the officially sanctioned gangs that killed hundreds in East Timor after it voted for independence from Indonesia”.

John Rumbiak said: "This is the tradition of the military in Indonesia as a whole but specifically in Papua, to orchestrate this kind of attack and scapegoat the OPM". Reuters quoted him as saying he had met the rebel leader named as their chief suspect by security officials, OPM fighter Kelly Kwalik, on August 25, and Kwalik had told him he was renouncing violence because he and other guerrilla leaders had come to realise they were also responsible for keeping the cycle of conflict going in Papua.
Their activities are a real threat to stability and religious tolerance in West Papua. We, the ELSHAM, confiscated a few items belonging to Laskar Jihad in Sorong including a hand grenade, knives and a pistol. Recently, many Arabs have arrived in West Papua. We do not know for what purpose these unfamiliar people are there. This presence has already alarmed the Papuans. We fear that the history of the Moluccas in 2000 will be repeated in West Papua.

Reflecting on the first day of workshop discussion, Dr. Jim Elmslie said that the current events at Freeport may change the direction of the peace process and that it is crucial to firmly uphold principles of inclusiveness: even Laskar Jihad, as well as Muslim Papuans and non-Papuans, corporations and all levels of government should be included in the reconciliation process together with civil society.

4). Negotiation Strategies

The following strategic options were discussed:

(i). Reconciliation and peaceful dialogue

Promotion of reconciliation and peaceful dialogue is a vital step towards peace in West Papua. The Papuans can learn from other similar cases. Reconciliation is an ongoing process, which requires patience, trust, tolerance and solidarity. It is also a foundation for the building of a democratic West Papua.

Moses Havini, international spokesperson for the Bougainville People’s Congress, impressed the participants by telling the success story of “his” peace process, which led to an agreement with the PNG government for genuine provincial autonomy and a referendum on independence within 10-15 years. He underlined how the third party role of the government of New Zealand had limited hostilities among factions within the Bougainville liberation movement and thus contributed to a permanent peace. Moses pointed out six major ingredients of the Bougainville success:

- Inclusiveness: all conflicting parties must be involved in the peace process.
- Political will-power from within the liberation movement.
- Strong and largely unified leadership.
- A united views of reconciliation among various groups.
- Finding middle ground to achieve a compromise, win-win approach.
- Support for the reconciliation process from the whole civil society.

Reflecting on the East Timor experience of reconciliation, Julian King commented that the Papuans can learn from the past mistakes of the East Timorese, particularly in the 1999 post referendum period:

As a result of the lack of prior reconciliation among pro-independence and pro-Indonesia militias, considerable numbers of civilians lost their lives. The current relationship between President Xanana Gusmao’s government and Falintil is breaking down. This happened because of lack of respect for and recognition of the rights of those who took part in the liberation struggle.

Wilhelm Zonggonau, who sees the Presidium as the legitimate organisation in the West Papuan liberation movement, defended its position:

We are looking for a moral, political and social base in West Papua. The Presidium provides such a base. The will of the people is highest. The role of the Presidium in peace initiatives must be respected. I am afraid this task will be taken over by others. But we must surrender our selfish interests for the sake of national unity and cooperation.

The Fourteen Star group is another faction in the liberation movement in West Papua which does not recognize the Morning Star as the national flag. Their flag of 14 stars was designed by the late Dr. Thomas Wainggai who declared the independence of a West Melanesian State on 14 December 1988 in Jayapura. Jacob Rumbiak, who represents the group, defended its position and then emphasized the need to build solidarity networks, especially in Australia, Indonesia and the Asia and Pacific region.

The call for a review of the Act of Free Choice of 1969 has been one of the political priorities of both the OPM and Presidium. These groups believe that reviewing the Act would be a significant step towards peaceful dialogue. In this Act, only 1026 of a total population of 1.5 million Papuans were called on (forcibly) to confirm integration into the Republic of Indonesia by means of a purely Indonesian style of voting system: Musyawarah (consultation). This was a tragedy for the Papuans. Dr. Benny Giay said that in straightening the history of West Papua, we must look into the past mistakes as an important step towards reconciliation.

Politically, the issue of West Papua is very difficult to deal with. But legally, there is still a possibility. However, a legal challenge to the status quo would face many restrictions. Professor Sam Blay said:

*The UN has already recognised West Papua as an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia. Those regimes implicated in the case in the past would be unhappy to undermine their own interests and embrace a reconsideration by the UN. It is not easy for the UN to review the Act since the case also implicates the UN itself.”*

A legal option may be possible under the following conditions, he said:

- Documentation and information on the issues surrounding the Act, including the reasons behind the politics of denial of Papuan rights during the cold war.
- Regional support: a collective voice must come from a meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum.
- Sponsorship: a member of the UN, such as Vanuatu or Nauru, must sponsor the case in the General Assembly and elsewhere.
- Recognition of their past mistakes by those governments implicated in the issue.
- A new legal body to represents the interests of the Papuans and seeks financial resources to facilitate the legal processing of the case.

Rex Rumakiek commented:

*For Indonesia, West Papua is not an issue. We must promote the issue by lobbying governments within the Pacific Islands Forum and then internationalise the issue by lobbying sympathetic countries around the world.*

In 2002 support groups around the world submitted a petition to Dr. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the UN, and requested a review of the Act of Free Choice. Rex Rumakiek emphasised that the Act of Free Choice was a shameful act that must be corrected.

Referring to international campaigns, Joan Staples, Executive Director of the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) of the University of New South Wales, said that the Papuans need more training in diplomacy, human rights, lobbying techniques and mass media, and also more familiarity with the UN system. The DTP may provide such a possibility, but the Papuans must find their own ways to utilize this possibility.

(iii) Referendum

Most participants believed that a new referendum to decide the future status of West Papua should be held. It should be conducted under the direct supervision of the UN with a universal voting system, *one person, one vote*. The following issues must be considered, however:

- The special autonomy law does not provide a legal base for implementing a new referendum in West Papua: this issue must be addressed in the first place.
- There is fear of violence by the Indonesian military and pro-Indonesian militias during a referendum, repeating the history of East Timor.
- There is also fear of an unfavourable result for the Papuans.

(iv) Papuanisation

Maintaining, restoring and developing Papuan identity, culture and ways of life would protect indigenous values from foreign domination. Capacity building within Papuan civil society could be promoted within a culture of Papuan social development.
Workshop participants emphasised the need to develop cooperation between academic institutions in Indonesia, West Papua and abroad, and to introduce an educational system in Papua whose curriculum would include promotion of local culture. Such a curriculum does not exist in the current Indonesian educational system. Papuan speakers suggested that many Papuans have been “contaminated” by Indonesian ways of thinking and living. Corruption is one of them.

Benny Giay said:

*We must oppose such conduct. Papuanisation may work well if the regional government promotes local culture. In any case we must rewrite our history. In this way, we can lay down a groundwork for further effective peaceful dialogue.*

(v). Good governance

The term governance is generally used to encompass all aspects of the way a country is governed, including its economic policies and regulatory framework. Poor governance includes corruption and the abuse of public authority or trust for private benefit. In contrast, good governance involves transparency in government accounts, effective public resources management and stability and transparency for private sector activity.

The Papuan participants made it clear that the Indonesian culture of corruption has had serious negative impacts on Papuan culture. Corruption is widespread and Papuans have certainly been contaminated. How can we change this mentality? “Successful Papuanisation and education exchange programmes would challenge the culture of corruption”, according to Benny Giay.

(vi) Special Autonomy

“Special autonomy” is viewed with suspicion by many Papuans. However, the policy does potentially open new possibilities to encourage all aspects of development, including capacity building within Papuan civil society. Jakarta sees the political problem in West Papua as a social issue that should be addressed in a social-economic context and so does not necessarily disagree with this view.

In 2001 Jakarta offered special autonomy as a peace deal in conflict resolution. In the 27 paragraphs of the autonomy law, however, it becomes apparent that Jakarta portrays the Papuan society as a creature that can be pushed and pulled about in all directions without considering its real needs.

Behind this policy is the maintenance of control over the territory. For this reason, probably at least two-thirds of the Papuan population has rejected the prospect of autonomy.

Otto (John) Ondawame said:

*The special autonomy offer is a part of the government’s policy of development. The government does have an obligation to develop West Papua. However, this new paradigm of conflict resolution has had very little effect on social, political and economic development.*

Wilhelm Zonngonau said:

*The Papuans must find a new model of governance. The Indonesian model is completely different from autonomy arrangements that we know in many other parts of the world. An autonomy model like the Free Association which is today applied in Nieuw and Cook Islands may be appropriate in West Papua.*

5). Evaluation

1. Achievements and Shortcomings of the Workshop
Despite time pressures, difficulties with visa arrangements, immigration restrictions at the local level in Papua, uncooperative behaviour of Freeport and local immigration authorities, and, most importantly, political and financial restrictions, nevertheless eleven peace and human rights advocates from diverse social, political and religious backgrounds made their way to Sydney to share their experiences. The presence of these key players provided accurate information about what is going on in the country and gave us all not only new knowledge but new hope for the future and also a wider audience to achieve increased public awareness around Papuan issues in general and the killing of civilians on 31 August 2002 in the Tembagapura region in particular.

2. Progress and Constraints in the Development of the West Papua Project, 2000-2002

The West Papua Project was established in January 2000 and launched in April 2000 with its principal aim to promote peaceful dialogue between the people of West Papua and Indonesia. It was intended to be a collaboration between academics, support groups, NGOs, politicians and West Papuans in exile.

The Project has made significant progress:

(i). A conference and three workshops held over an eighteen month period have both demonstrated the importance of, and increased pressure for, peaceful dialogue to resolve the West Papua issue.

(ii). In the process the Project has been also able to develop networks and partnerships and raise public awareness about peace and reconciliation, with the convener utilising media and attending many seminars, conferences and workshops both in Australia and abroad. The West Papua Project website (at http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/cpacs) has become an important source of information on West Papuan issues.

(iii). During the course of 2001-2 considerable trust and understanding was developed between the Project and key representatives of the Indonesian government in Australia, namely the former Indonesian Ambassador in Canberra, Sudjadnan Parnohadinigrat, and Consul General Gunawan, in Sydney. The promise of this relationship for the future is that it will encourage active participation by Indonesian civil society in peace and reconciliation work for Papua.

(iv). The Project’s location within CPACS at the University of Sydney has many advantages. The Project has gained respect and recognition among not only academics, but NGOs and concerned people both in Australia and abroad, opening broader opportunities for cooperation on issues of Papuan concern.

(v). At the personal level, convener John Ondawame believes he has not only enriched his knowledge in peace and conflict resolution, but also his work experience and office skills.

Despite these achievements, there were undoubtedly shortcomings:

(i). Operating in an academic social environment has not been easy.

(ii). A lack of administrative skills and full English language competence on the part of the convener, and dependence on inexperienced voluntary (intern) helpers and slender financial resources, has caused the West Papua Project Steering Committee to lower expectations at times.

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5 Ex-ambassador Parnohadinigrat is now head of the foreign ministry in Jakarta.
6 It appears that anyone who works for the Project and appears regularly at Steering Committee meetings becomes a member.
6. Future Plans

(1). Convergence of Values and Inclusiveness

Peace is a collective responsibility and 'convergence of values' can arise from inclusiveness, defined as a willingness to invite to the negotiation table interest groups from outside West Papua. At the workshop closing session Dr. George Aditjondro said:

Developing cooperation among Papuans, non-Papuans and the academic community in particular may bring even closer understanding and trust. The involvement of Freeport, the Indonesian military and Laskar Jihad in the peace process, would be an important step towards peaceful dialogue.

(2). Third Party Intervention

Third party intervention in a conflict situation such as that in West Papua can be a crucial step towards peace. A “neutral” party or body can play an important mediation role, like the Geneva-based Henry Dunant Center in the Aceh conflict. Prior consultation with each of the conflicting parties and then bringing them together to the negotiation table are primary tasks of the mediator.

Who is eligible to play a mediator role? Principally; any organisation which has a good reputation in peace making and peace building. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), corporations, governments and even individuals who have a high reputation may play a mediator’s role. The request for a mediator must come from both conflicting parties, together with a clear peace agenda.

However, such an important step for Papua has been overlooked. The internal reconciliation process has produced divided views among Papuans. Most of the Papuan participants at the workshop saw third party intervention as direct interference by foreign forces in domestic affairs. They believe that reconciliation among the groups which make up Papuan civilian society can be overcome by themselves.

The following claim was heard: “There is no problem within West Papua among us. We are united. Disunity is a problem among the people in exile”. Wilhelm Zonggonau said that the Presidium did not need third party intervention for internal reconciliation, but for national peaceful dialogue between Jakarta and the Papuans it is welcome.

However, Otto (John) Ondawame, who upheld the potential importance of third party intervention at all levels of the conflict, said that in a multi-cultural civil society such as Papua today, the Papuans face complex issues arising from internal disputes which they are unable to settle by themselves. Their problems are deeply rooted; hence a need for third party intervention.

The Carter Center in the USA, the government of New Zealand and the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney have all expressed an interest in playing a mediator role in the Indonesia-West Papua conflict. They all may be possible peace brokers. The Papuans should provide information and consider cooperation with all of these actors.

(3). Building a Peace Zone

The militarisation of West Papua has caused an escalation of violence with devastating effects. In order to build or restore justice, peace, democracy, people’s welfare and social progress, demilitarisation of the territory is essential. But first, the region must be declared as a Zone of Peace. This initiative has been taken by West Papuan civil society in collaboration with the OPM and the regional police force. The participants of the workshop welcomed the initiative. International support for the implementation of this peace project was considered extremely important.

(4). Partnership Building

Coalition building and cooperation among peace and human rights advocates is a vital step towards peace and reconciliation. Workshop participants called for effective cooperation among major peace advocates, and there is in prospect a coalition of the Institute for Human
Rights Studies and Advocacy, the Peace Task Force and the Papua Council Presidium inside West Papua with two major peace advocacy centres abroad, the West Papua Project itself and the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in Sydney and the Papua Resource Centre in New York.

"The result of the September workshop will be used as guidance and input for a further conference on peace and reconciliation planned for New York and coordinated as a founding activity of the Papua Resource Center, the new US-based but broadly representative organization that aims to work in partnership with the West Papua Project and ELSHAM. The chairman of the board of advisors of the new Center is Professor Steven Feld of Columbia University who is a founding member the West Papua Project as well as its American representative. John Ondawame of the WPP and John Rumbiak of ELSHAM will serve as members of this board.

(5). Education and Training

Workshop participants expressed their desire to see the West Papua Project continue within CPACS and the University of Sydney. This Project is apparently the first of its kind in the world and its base in the university has already helped promote peace and reconciliation in Papua. A further concrete contribution from academic groups would be towards education and training for Papuan youth in conflict resolution and defence of human rights.

(6). Women in the Peace Process

Steps to improve women’s conditions and promote women’s role in the peace process include: providing equal opportunity and promoting the participation of women in key development areas—education, politics and government, the law, business and social welfare, and supporting women’s development agencies inside West Papua together with exchange programs between Papuan women and women in foreign countries.

(7). International Workshop IV: Promoting a Culture of Dialogue

Developing a common understanding between the two conflicting parties in West Papua, and between the people of West Papua and Indonesia is a key issue in the efforts of the West Papua Project to help resolve the conflict between them peacefully. Official Indonesian representatives with an interest in the Project are concerned about the "lack of a culture of dialogue" in their own history and experience. The West Papua Project has a commitment to addressing this issue and working together on a "peace plan" to improve not only the situation in Papua but also Australia's regional relationships. Against this background, there is an interest in organizing another workshop on the culture of peace dialogue. This workshop may be held either in Indonesia or in Australia later in the year 2003 in accordance with a suggestion made by the former Indonesian Ambassador to Australia.

Appendix A: Key Participants in the Workshop/West Papua Project Steering Committee

Papuan Panelists

Dr. Benny Giay
Lecturer at the Walter Post Theological College and chairperson of the Peace Task Force, Jayapura.

Mr. John Rumbiak
Supervisor of the Institute for Human Rights and Advocacy Studies (ELSHAM), Jayapura.

Mr. Agus Alua
Rector of the Catholic College of Philosophy and Theology (Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Teologi—STFT) and second secretary-general of the Presidium of the Papua Council, Jayapura.
Mr. Harry Woersok  
Secretary General of the Peace and Justice Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Merauke, Papua.

Rev. Corinus Berotabui, M.Th.  
Secretary General of the Papuan Evangelical Church/GKI, Jayapura

Ms. Rode Wanimbo  
Representative of Papuan women and students, University of Cenderawasih, Abepura.

Mr. Sofyan Yoman  
General Secretary of the Baptist Churches of Papua and Member of the Panel of the Papua Council, Jayapura.

Mr. Ronald Tapilatu  
Member of the Peace Task Force, ELSHAM office, Abepura.

Ms. Paula Makabory  
Representative of ELSHAM and Member of the Peace Task Force, Timika.

Mr. Joseph Kilangin  
Member of the Peace Task Force and of the Amungme Traditional Council (LEMASA), Timika.

Mr. Wilhelm M. Zonggonau  
Member of the Presidium of the Papua Council, Port Moresby.

Dr. John Otto Ondawame  
Coordinator of the West Papua Project, international representative of the OPM Presidium and member of the Australia West Papua Association (AWPA), Sydney.

Mr. Ronald Tapilatu  
Member of the Peace Task Force, ELSHAM office, Abepura.

Non-Papuan Participants and Panelists

Professor Emeritus Stuart Rees  
Director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney.

Senator Kerry Nettle  
Green Party, Canberra and Sydney

The Hon. Dr. Meredith Burgmann  
President of the Legislative Council of New South Wales and convener of the NSW Parliament's Friendship Group for West Papua; founding member and patron of the West Papua Project.

Dr. Anne Noonan  
Psychoanalyst; member of AWPA (Sydney) and founding member of the West Papua Project.

Dr. Jim Elsmie  
Founding member and Secretary of the West Papua Project.

Professor Sam Blay  
Director of Postgraduate Programs, Faculty of Law, University of Technology, Sydney.

Mr. John Scott Murphy  
CARITAS Australia, Sydney.

Mr. John Barr  
Uniting Church of Australia, Sydney.

Dr. George Aditjondro  
Lecturer in Anthropology, University of Newcastle.

Dr. Chris Ballard  
Department of Pacific and Asian History, Australian National University.

Ms. Joan Staples  
Executive Director, Diplomacy Training Program, Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales.

Dr. Greg Poulgrain  
Research Fellow, School of Humanities, Queensland University of Technology; Chairman of AWPA (Brisbane).

Mr. Moses Havini
International spokesperson for the Bougainville People’s Congress.

Other Papuan Participants

Mr. Hydayad Alhamid PhD Candidate, Australia National University.

Mr. Jacob Rumbiak
Senior Research Associate, Globalism Institute, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University; member of AWPA (Melbourne).

Ms. Adolfina M.S. Zonggonau Ondawame
Member of Papuan Women Abroad and AWPA (Canberra).

Mr Titus Kamabuaya
Cornerstone Church Community, Dubbo.

Appendix B: West Papua Project and September 2002 Workshop Steering Committee:

John Ondawame (coordinator), Stuart Rees, Lynda Blanchard, Peter King, Jim Elmslie, Paul Clark, Andrew Plunkett, Julian McKinlay King, Scott Shanley (administrative assistant).

Appendix C: Notes on a Talk at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS) and a Luncheon Discussion with the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, Mr Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat, 22 April 2002

The ambassador said he is committed to dialogue with Papua, but (as he has said before) Indonesia lacks a tradition of dialogue. For Papua, independence “is not possible” but Indonesia should be ready to explore the best way to dialogue with the Papuans—“the maximum possible for the Papuans is our agenda too”.

We cannot resolve issues without dialogue and we must be inclusive. He wants to involve NGOs and peace studies people in Indonesia in the process of dialogue with Papua. He has to convince government people himself, but he wants academics and others from civil society involved. He is willing to play the role of broker, and to help persuade parliament and relevant NGOs to carry through a peace process in Papua as is being attempted in Aceh.

In Aceh GAM’s modern weapons make dialogue difficult to sustain. Papua’s traditional weapons should be no great obstacle.

7 Notes by Peter King
Asked whether an Australian body equivalent to the Henry Dunant Center in Geneva which has played a mediation role in the Aceh conflict could play a role in dialogue over Papua, he said “Why not?” Perhaps CPACS itself could play such a role.

Another Indonesian official present with the ambassador suggested that Indonesia does offer Papua a chance to develop. Rex Rumakiek said: “We Papuans need peace of mind before we can develop.” The ambassador insisted that military and police impunity in Papua and elsewhere in Indonesia must go.

The Indonesian Consul-general (Sydney) said that West Papua and other conflicts posed great problems, but “we” are a multicultural society, so let us solve them all and build a good Indonesia.

The ambassador said dialogue requires an agenda, and deciding who would be involved. If CPACS and the West Papua Project nominate a team he would find appropriate dialogue partners in Jakarta.