

## WEST PAPUA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

### Letter to the Leaders of the MSG in support of Full Membership for the ULMWP in the MSG

*Time after time, as Pastors we have had to bury our people who have been shot dead by Herod's troops. We cry for the merciless death of Christians in West Papua. Our tears have run dry. The dignity and self-worth of the people created at God's Hand have been trampled on for too long. We are likened to animals. Sometimes we ask God, Do you still hear our prayers and tears? Where can we take the Melanesian people who are left in West Papua so they can be saved?*

We would like to start this letter by wishing you a Happy Easter. May the Resurrection of Christ Give Us the Hope of Life in fighting for the Mission of the Kingdom of God on this Earth.

#### **To The Leaders We Respect,**

The opening of our letter is not poetry. It is testimony and facts describing the situation that the Melanesians in West Papua, who we pastor, continue to speak out and grieve about. These Christians, who are Melanesian, have inherited a long memoria passionis. We can honestly say that the conflict against the Papuan Nation is the longest conflict against colonialism in the Melanesian region. Christians repeatedly experience militaristic racial politics from the Indonesian Government and the infiltration of Indonesian Muslim groups which are causing the extermination of the Melanesian ethnicity in West Papua.

Since the failure of the implementation of the 2001 Special Autonomy in Papua, the Indonesian Government is imposing the implementation of Special Autonomy Volume 2. The focus of Special Autonomy Volume 2 is to expand civilian infrastructure (expansion of provinces and districts) and strengthen and expand the infrastructure of the Army and Police bases in West Papua. The granting of Special Autonomy, the expansion of civilian and military infrastructure is a camouflage for the occupation of Papua's land and for the exploitation of natural resources. **To date 750,000 Melanesians have signed the Petition Against Special Autonomy for Papua Volume 2 and demanded the right to self-determination.**

In order to save God's people, We, as leaders committed to fully support the decision of the MSG leaders in July 2014 in Port Moresby, which asked Papuans to unite and apply for membership in the MSG.

**To The Leaders We Respect,**

As a result of the decision of the MSG leaders, Papuans from various groups in West Papua and abroad, together with resistance groups (TPN / OPM) organized a High Level Conference facilitated by the Vanuatu government and The Pacific Conference of Churches, in December 2014. The conclusion reached in the form of the Saralana Declaration on December 6, 2014 was that the ULMWP (United Liberation Movement for West Papua) was declared as the forum of unity for Papuan groups.

On February 5, 2014, in line with the commemoration of the 157<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gospel arriving in Papua, the West Papua Council of Churches expressed its full support for ULMWP to be accepted as a full member of the MSG. In the past 6 years, we have sent open letters to President Joko Widodo, through official statements at various meetings, recommending that the Indonesian government carry out a Dialogue with the ULMWP, as the forum that represents the Papuan people.

We appreciate and express our gratitude to the Melanesian leaders who accepted the ULMWP as an MSG observer in Honiara in July 2015. We also express our gratitude for the consistency of Melanesian and Pacific leaders who continue to speak out about the human rights violations and the political rights of the Papuan people.

**To The Leaders that we respect,**

In response to a long historic humanitarian crisis and in order to save the Melanesians in West Papua, we ask the MSG leaders to accept the ULMWP as a full member of the MSG at the next meeting. The acceptance and Melanesian recognition of ULMWP as a full member of the MSG is the first step to save God's people in West Papua and give them hope of life.

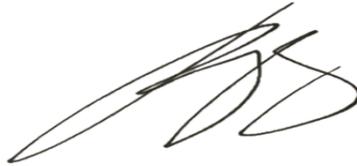
With this letter, we include the Pastoral Call for Easter on April 2, 2021 and a summary of the current crisis for the Melanesians in West Papua. We hope that the information provided will provide an insight into the situation we are experiencing in confronting the forces of Indonesian colonialism in West Papua.

The people of God in West Papua have been praying and longing for a long time to be in fellowship with Melanesian Christians in PNG, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kanaky. The following excerpt from Scriptural text has become our prayer in our long struggle, *"Surely if he finds it, greater will be his joy over that one than over the ninety-nine who have not strayed. Likewise your Father who is in heaven did not want any of these children to be lost."* (Matthew 18: 12-14).

Accordingly, we submit our request that ULMWP be accepted into membership of the MSG. May God unify us all.

***Jayapura, 12 April 2021***

**WEST PAPUA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**



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Pdt. Andrikus. Mofu



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