MORAL CALL FROM THE WEST PAPUAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Mathew 4:16

The text of this holy book awakens us all to reflect together on the situation in Papua. The other party feels superior, feels self-righteous, relies on their power to suppress, terrorize, and carry out political racism against Papuans. The Papuans are people who have accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ since February 5, 1895. They still incriminate God's people in this land by calling them thousand and one different names. They criticize us, accuse us of being infidels, separatists, traitors, and terrorists, as if we are not human beings created by God's hand in His image.

In the light of our faith, we convey that the conflict between the TNI/POLRI (Indonesian National Army and Police of the Republic of Indonesia) and the TPNPB (West Papua National Liberation Army) is still going on until as we issue this moral call. The TNI/Polri Vs TPNPB conflict has resulted in a humanitarian crisis in 6 regions, Yahukimo Regency, Kiwirok District, Star Mountains Regency, Intan Jaya Regency, Maybrat-Sorong Regency, Nduga Regency and Puncak Papua Regency. We have received reports from the congregations we pastor that at least 60,000 Papuan people from our congregations have currently evacuated to the surrounding districts, including some who have crossed into PNG (Papua New Guinea).
The death and injury toll is impacting the three parties, members of the TNI/Polri, members of the TPNPB and civilians in Papua. Joko Widodo's government in line with Military Law No. 34 is obliged to convey information regarding the status of Papua, whether it is an area of Military Operations, whether it is under a Law Enforcement approach or a Welfare Development approach. In accordance with national law and international conventions, the government is obliged to explain the status of conflict in Papua to the public.

Even though throughout Indonesia, there is still a moratorium on the division of regencies and provinces, the Government of President Joko Widodo through the Coordinating Minister for Law, Human Rights and Security, Mahfud MD, the Minister of Home Affairs, Police General Tito Karnavian together with Commission II of the National Parliament (DPRP RI) are planning the division of Papua Province and a number of urban regencies in Papua. They are doing this in an uncivilized manner, unconstitutionally, and for political purposes, without listening to the voice of the people, especially the voice of the Provincial Government and the Papuan People's Assembly. We view the expansion of the civil government infrastructure which includes the division of provinces and regencies and the development and expansion of security services Infrastructure in Papua, which is being pushed by the Government of President Joko Widodo, as an effort to accelerate the extermination of Melanesian people in Papua and as a means to accelerate the exploitation of natural resources in Papua.

The democratic space for freedom of expression in Papua is still being silenced and isolated by the government. The government has still not opened access for the UN Human Rights Council, International Journalists, Senators and Congress Members, or Academics to visit Papua. Papua has become a region of exception in Indonesia which is being intentionally isolated by the Indonesian government.

Responding to the current situation in the Land of Papua and in order to restore and create a new Papua, which upholds the dignity and respect of Papuans as human beings and God's creation, and based on our call of November 21, 2021, today we share this moral call for attention:

1. In line with President Joko Widodo's promise to the Chair of the UN Human Rights Council in February 2018 in Jakarta we call for the UN Human Rights Council to come to Papua to conduct independent investigations into the protracted conflict in Papua.

2. We continue to speak out and urge President Joko Widodo to hold a dialogue with the Pro-Referendum group, the United Liberation Movement for West
Papua (ULMWP) in accordance with his promise to the public on September 30, 2019 in Jakarta.

3. Military operations in Papua must stop. Troop deployment and the development of military infrastructure in Papua must also stop.

4. The government must stop all plans for the expansion of provinces and districts in Papua. We ask that the government seriously address the four root causes of the problems found by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences: 1. Distortion of Papuan Political History, 2. Human Rights Violations of Papuans, 3. Discrimination and marginalization of Papuans and 4. Failure of Development in the Land of Papua.

5. The practice of racial discrimination against Papuans must stop. We demand the release of Mr. Victor Yeimo and other Free Papua political activists. We also ask for the release of 8 Papuan students: 1. Malvin Yobe, 2. Fernando Waine, 3. Zode Hilapok, 4. Defio Tekege, 5. Maximus Simon Petrus You, 6. Lius Kitok Urumabin, 7. Yosep Ernesto Matuan, and 8. Ambros Francis Elopere. They were only expressing their democratic freedoms by raising the Morning Star Flag on December 1, 2021 in the Courtyard of the Cenderawasih Sports Building. We of the opinion that the Indonesian government has implemented a policy of racism against Papua on the Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of Independence Day on December 1, 2021. Because on December 4, 2021, on the anniversary of GAM (Free Aceh Movement), the government allowed the people and leaders of GAM to commemorate and fly the Crescent and Star Flags peacefully, with no problems under the guard of the security apparatus.

6. We request the support of the international community in resolving human rights violations and the protracted political conflict in Papua.

7. Based on the long experience of the Papuan nation with Indonesia for 58 years, we firmly reject the legal process for the perpetrators of human rights violations in the bloody Paniai incident on 8 December 2014 and request an independent investigation from the UN Human Rights Council.

8. Finally, we would like to express our appreciation, respect and gratitude to cultural leaders, church leaders, the media, government leaders, communities and academia in Melanesian Countries, the Pacific Region, and to all parties involved in international solidarity for Papuan people from Africa, Australia, the European Union, the United States and Indonesian Civil Society who took part in
the commemoration of December 1, 2021 and have long shown true solidarity in
the journey of suffering of God's People in the Land of Papua.

Thus, we issue this statement in truth. Lord Jesus bless us all wherever we are.

Jayapura, 08 December 2021
DEWAN GEREJA PAPUA

WEST PAPUA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Rev. Benny Giay
(Moderator)

Rev. Andrikus MofU

Rev. Dorman Wandikbo

Rev. Socrates S. Yoman