

Beste mensen,

Bijgaand de originele brief van dec. 2018 aan de minister en het antwoord wat ik vandaag per email ontving ter informatie.

Met hartelijke groet,

Koen J. de Jager

Dear Mr. De Jager,

Thank you for your open letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Your letter was transferred to the Asia and Oceania Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for further handling. In your letter, you speak about arrests that took place in Papua and throughout Indonesia on December 1, 2018. You express your concern about the human rights situation in Papua. Finally, you urge the Netherlands government to raise this issue with the Indonesian government.

On January 10, 2019, Minister Blok of Foreign Affairs responded to the situation in Papua in an open correspondence with the Dutch parliament. The minister confirmed, as you mention in your letter, that 500 people were arrested (and later released) during demonstrations regarding the celebration of "West Papuan National Day". The minister also expressed that he finds recent messages about the situation in Papua worrisome. You can find the full document online (in Dutch).¹

We can assure you that the human rights situation in the Indonesian provinces Papua and West Papua is a regular agenda point in diplomatic contacts between the Netherlands and Indonesia. The situation is also continuously brought up during high-level meetings and visits. When Minister Blok visited Indonesia in July 2018, he discussed the human rights situation in Papua both with human rights defenders as well as with the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi. Also within the EU, the Netherlands pleads to keep the situation in Papua on the agenda in contacts with Indonesia.

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including our colleagues at the Netherlands Embassy in Jakarta, continue to monitor the situation closely. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for sending us your informative quarterly Papua Human Rights Updates.

Yours sincerely

Southeast Asia and Oceania Division

Asia and Oceania Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1 <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/kamervragen/detail?id=2018Z23982&did=2019D00194>

Dear Mr. Blok,

Saturday 1 December marked the 57th anniversary of the first raising of the Morning Star flag of West Papua in that country's capital, then known as Hollandia. The date has deep significance for supporters of West Papua's freedom both in the country and around the world.

Tragically, the Indonesian security forces cracked down on all attempts to commemorate this day both in West Papua and throughout Indonesia. We understand that more than 500 were arrested at peaceful commemorations in Jayapura, Jakarta, Surabaya, Palu, Kupang, Ternate, Makassar, Ambon, Poso, Sula, Timika, Merauke, Waropen and Tobelo. In Surabaya an anti-independence militia group staged a counter demonstration threatening the pro-freedom demonstrators with sharpened bamboo spears.

The widespread protests across Indonesia represent a new era of activism in support of West Papua by Indonesian communities and it is outrageous that they should be attacked by security forces for expressing their views.

Around 90 people are reported to have been arrested in West Papua's capital Jayapura, where the headquarters of one of the main pro-independence organizations, the West Papua National Committee, or KNPB, was raided and vandalized. KNPB offices in other Papuan towns were also targeted by security forces as well a number of student dormitories. Several people were injured and we understand one was hospitalized.

The Indonesian Security forces are continuing to adopt a draconian response to peaceful dissent. This a blatant breach of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Indonesia is a state party.

Rights groups have blasted authorities for the mass detentions, saying it was an assault on Papuans right to freedom of expression and assembly. Responding to the arrests of Papuan students and other peaceful pro-independence activists across the country, Amnesty International Indonesia's Executive Director Usman Hamid said: "This is a clear and shocking violation of Papuans' human rights to freedom of expression and assembly. These people did nothing but peacefully attend public events".

It is imperative that the Netherlands speak out publicly to condemn this shocking affront to the rights and freedoms of the West Papuan people and their supporters in Indonesia. We urge you to raise our concerns again about the grave human rights situation with the Indonesian Government and the crackdown on peaceful civil society groups.

We look forward to your response to this situation.

On behalf of Foundation Pro Papua and Papua Support Foundation HAPIN
Yours sincerely,

Koen J. de Jager

c.c.: Members of the International Coalition for Papua ICP

Stichting Pro Papua, Rembrandthage 326, 3437 PA Nieuwegein – t. 030-6041300 – e. kjdejager@casema.nl

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