

International Dimensions of the West Papua Complexities*

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May 2010

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Report of Research on Conflict in Papua

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132025 R/SB / FCSLP
16.1.12.

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Abstract:

The longstanding problems in Papua have led to contradictive views. Whereas the Government of Indonesia firmly holds the opinion that separatist conflict is no longer existed in its easternmost province, its military force continues to operate there with an ultimate justification: to protect Indonesian territorial integrity. In the mean time the government could not be able to deny all kinds of problems related to development issues, economic and marginalization of indigenous Papuans. On the other hand, small groups of Papuan remain to insist that the problems in Papua are of less significant of social and economic development. It is about occupation and liberation, they argue. The research contends that the problems in Papua are closely linked to international values and interests that collectively complicate efforts in seeking an effective solution. Relying on qualitative analysis, the research investigates and examines different factors, parties, and interests related international realm which make efforts to have peaceful, sustainable peace more difficult.

Keywords: *internal conflict – international linkages – complexity of conflict – Papua and Indonesia.*

Background

At the very beginning the problem of Papua has been entitling an international characteristic. It is the long history of colonialism and post-colonialism that determined its present political existence. Geographically integrated and known as Papua Island, one of the largest islands in the world, and culturally called as part of Melanesians, by the mid-19th century the territory was divided by the colonial powers. The eastern part was then ruled by the British Empire in collaboration with the Germany power, while the western part was under the Dutch imperial power. About a century later the eastern territory became an independent state internationally named Papua New Guinea and the western part was transferred to and integrated into Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI).

The process of integration of West Papua into Indonesia's sovereign territory in 1969, however, has been a continuously debated issue both by indigenous Papuans and international commentators.¹ Different groups of people, notably the West Papuan sides, constantly raised question and rejection about the way West Papua was integrated through the 1969 Act of Free Choice. Although it was

¹ Richard Chauvel for example argued that "the complexity of Papua as an international issue" ... is related to "cultural difference, human rights abuses and economic exploitation as well as the process by which Papua became part of Indonesia". See Richard Chauvel, "The Centrality of the Periphery: Australia, Indonesia and Papua" in John Monfries ed. *Different Societies, Shared Futures: Australia, Indonesia and the Region* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2006) pp. 108-111.

supervised by the UN the so-called act of free choice is widely conceived as undemocratic, full of manipulation since those casted their vote for being part of Indonesia were representatives fully picked-up by Indonesian leaders. The conduct of plebiscite itself was also believed carried out under oppression and intimidation by Indonesian military forces. In all kinds of judgment would have to say that such procedure was violating the basic rights of the West Papuans. Based on such historical fact, instead of voluntarily integrated, the Papuans saw themselves and their lands were annexed and occupied by another colonial state, Indonesia.²

Without underestimating the political background, the international dimension of the Papua problem is continuously heightening during the four decades of its integration within Indonesia. The emergence and persistence of Papua Liberation Organization (OPM) in fighting against Indonesian authority and efforts by a number of organizations continuously calling for free Papua are visible evidence. Security operations by Indonesian military forces (TNI) as part of counter-insurgency response are inevitably leading to practices of violence in the region and human rights abuses.

Social and economic development in the eastern province(s) as it is campaigned by the Indonesian government is regrettably to generate more problems than improvement. The non-Papuans who arrived and inhabited in the region through voluntary or official transmigration programs seem to get benefit more than local indigenous people from the government development projects. Instead of producing prosperity and welfare the West Papuans, the industrialization or modernization movements tend to leave them behind. Social and economic discrepancy is even getting wider. Marginalization and alienation of indigenous people become then popular terms frequently used to portray the social and economic condition in the region. In addition to security problem faced by local people, the neglect and denial of West Papuans' human rights have been at the peak of the issues. The kind of massive and systematic violation of human rights in the region is brought to the international attention and agenda.

Research problems

None of the aforementioned issues of political or legal status of Papua and of human rights violation of the Papuans is new to the international community concerned. For about four decades the main elements of world community, say for example the UN and major countries like Australia and USA, are mute or did too little to help the Papuans meet their basic rights. Therefore, it is the concern of this paper to raise the following questions:

1. Why such responses are less significant to assisting the West Papuans in restoring and promoting of their basic rights?
2. To what extent are the problems in Papua to have global linkages?

² Otto Ondawame, *'One People, One Soul', West Papuan Nationalism and the Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Adelaide: Crawford House Publishing, 2010), pp. 39-60. See also Robin Osborne, *Indonesia's Secret War: The Guerilla Struggle in Irian Jaya* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1985).

Research objectives

According to research questions outlined above, this research has objectives to firstly explore the problems in Papua which are analytically viewed to have international dimensions. It is, secondly, the intention of this research to investigate the international views about the problems in the region that theoretically determine the international policies and actions.

Research Methodology

The research is a qualitative research. All information and/or data are critically analysed based on a certain theoretical construction as discussed below. Primary information gathered through interviews and secondary information collected from various forms of published or unpublished sources are cautiously interpreted. The analytical framework will guide the data and information collection and direct the entire discussion up to the conclusion drawn at the end.

Analytical framework

Assuming parties or actors within the international community hold different perceptions about the problems in Papua, which have inevitably complicated the problems, there are needs for a new construction of the problems and for a theoretical analysis about how the international community perceive them.

The term of internal conflict is generally defined by confining the parties to the conflict to primarily, if not solely, elements within individual country whether they are the state institution against a group of its people or between different people groups. The area where the conflict takes place is also geographically limited to an internationally recognized, de jure or de facto, territory of a single state. The issues and/or contents of the conflict is rather more debatable, however domestic factors are widely believed to trigger the conflict.³ Violent struggle for political power, separatist movement and interethnic-religious conflicts are just some examples of internal conflict.

The dynamics of internal conflict which reflects the intensity, up and down, coverage, and duration of the conflict significantly characterizes the conflict beyond its initial "internal" characteristics.

³ Almost all references on conflict and conflict resolutions show an agreement to understand or explain conflict by identifying these elements. See for examples, David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2nd ed. (LA: Sage Publications, 2009), Ho-Won Jeong, *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis* (London: Sage, 2008), Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), and Michael Brown, *International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: the MIT Press, 1996).

Every conflict purportedly called internal conflict is basically (generally) having its international dimension in one way or another. This leads Miall, Ramsbotham and Housewood to suggest the term *contemporary international social conflict* since, they believe, conflict in contemporary world is not purely domestic affairs of particular country or without any link to outside party or interest. Development in information technology, mobilization of people is a number of factors making conflict initially locally become internationally.⁴

David Lake and Donald Rothchild,⁵ Ralph Premdas,⁶ and Raymond Taras and Rajat Ganguly⁷ are just a few scholars to mention of their contributions in investigating the internationalization and/or the international dimensions of internal conflict. In general, the international dimension of internal conflict covers three main aspects:

1. International dimension as referring to *causes* or part of the causes of internal conflict. This may consist of ideas, values, events and interests that the international community have shared or experienced. The ideas that human rights are universal and that human rights ought to be the foundation of all kinds of human interaction become widely accepted in the post Cold War system and era. The basic rights of individual as human being are increasingly perceived to be international norms that every actor within the international system, mainly state entity, has to respect and protect. Although this newly campaigned principle would be not replacing the old fashioned principles like sovereignty and non-intervention on which contemporary international system is basically remaining to rely on, human rights values and principle have gradually and widely inspired different groups to act accordingly. Globalization in the sense of internationalization of production, capital and market and the intensification of competition has also instigated groups to defend their interests based on sectoral, primordial or cultural identity (line) and not always on national interest as the classical realist asserted. The events of balkanization marked by the breakdown of Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and the emergence of new independent states have also motivated non-state communal groups in other part of the world to follow behind. It is very obvious that the interests of particular elements of the international community in the sense of territory, economy (such as natural resources or investment), political power and/or social and cultural similarity and ethnic sentiment could induce particular group within a state concerned to run political movement and rebellion. Analysis on the international role in igniting and triggering internal conflict points out to, as Michael Brown contends, the influence of bad-neighbours either at

⁴ See Hugh Miall et al, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*..... Michael Brown proposes the role of bad neighbor and neighborhood in triggering internal conflict that clearly shows the international dimension of internal conflict. See Michael Brown, *Ibid*.

⁵David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild eds., *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998).

⁶ Premdas, Ralph R., "The internationalization of ethnic conflict: Some theoretical explorations" in K.M. de Silva and R.J. May eds., *Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991)

⁷ Raymond C. Tarras and Rajat Ganguly, *Understanding Ethnic Conflict* 4th ed. (Boston: Longman, 2010).

mass or elite level.⁸ In international regime analysis, it is widely believed that the regime remains to open opportunity for non-state entities to have their own separate states based on nation, nationality or nationalism which are perceived, at least by the UN Charter, as the basic ground of statehood.

2. International dimension as pointing to *effects* caused by internal conflict. To a great extent the problems resulted from internal conflict has been the first and main concern of the international community, notably neighbouring countries and human rights NGOs. Based on others' studies on cases of internal or ethnic conflict in Balkan, South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, Middle East and Africa, Michael Brown constitutes five main problems: refugee, economic, military, instability and interstate war.⁹
3. International dimension of internal conflict also relates to *response and action* the international community can or should take. In this context assistance, intervention and invasion are alternatives for individual states or in group and international governmental or non-governmental organizations in order to firstly handle the problems caused by internal conflict and then resolve the conflict.¹⁰

The three international dimensions of internal conflict show clearly the distance between internal conflict and international realm. It appears as if the conflict takes place outside the international system; or, as if the international community is merely the outsider to the conflict. In fact, the conflict is really happening *within* the international system or in which the conflict is taking place; the conflict is undoubtedly affected by the international system and vice versa influences the system. Therefore, there should be no any kind of gap between the internal conflict and the entire international system. For only the interest of intellectual analysis is such differentiation having effects.¹¹

In order to have a more comprehensive conception of the international dimension of internal conflict, two things need to be added. The first one is related to the way parties to internal conflict use or exploit the international system for their own benefits. In the case of conflict where one of the parties to conflict is secessionist group and the other is the ruling government, they both are competing to have international support for their own benefit. The argument, strategy, and tactic might clearly differ to each other. It is obvious, however, that the conflicting parties are expecting the international community to respond and take actions in line with their own interests. In this context the international

⁸ Michael Brown, *Ibid.* pp 579-590. Taras and Ganguly contend that the universalisation of human rights has a crucial contribution to the increasing number of internal conflict and to the awareness of the international community. See Raymond Taras and Rajat Ganguly, *Ibid.*, pp.34-62.

⁹ Michael Brown, *Ibid.*, pp. 590-601. Taras and Ganguly largely discuss the effects of internal or ethnic conflict to international security. See Raymond Taras and Rajat Ganguly, *Ibid.*, pp. 63-84.

¹⁰ Michael Brown, *Ibid.*, pp. 603-627. Taras and Ganguly discuss the likely response by the international community in their book's chapter "Resolving Ethnic Conflict through International Intervention". See Raymond Taras and Rajat Ganguly, *Ibid.*, pp. 85-114.

¹¹ This view is strongly asserted by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) which proposes the R2P formula or Responsibility to Protect. See ICISS, *Responsibility to Protect*, Report (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001). The report was then elaborated published in book form by Gareth Evans, *Responsibility to Protect* (

dimension of internal conflict turns eyes to a kind of international system as an *object* on which conflicting parties fight for support. This is clearly shown in the study of international organization where members, either governments or non-governments, attempt to utilize the organization as their *instrument* to fulfil their interest.

The second one to be considered as international dimension of internal conflict is its structural sense. This is more complicated but conclusive as well. The international dimension of internal conflict is crucial to be perceived as subject in either the one causing or contributing to the break-up of internal conflict or the other one that gives response or re-act accordingly, as a passive object for the conflicting parties to struggle to have support, as place and space where the conflict occurs, and also as a *structure* that influences the conflict and being affected by the conflict. Further elaboration of this dimension will be provided in the following discussion.

Beyond Common View of the Problems in Papua

The problems in Papua have been involving different parties and demonstrating clearly the international dimensions of the issues. Each party has its own agenda, strategy, and interest which are not always in a clear-cut identification. All parties, agendas, strategies and interests interact in such a way which to be consistent with the international framework would not be sufficient to be approached through the traditionally domestic perspectives. The new framework is likely to make the problem more complicated. But, for the sake of comprehensive understanding and of the interest of seeking solution, such a complexity is inevitable, not least useful.

The Papuan groups, both domestic and international

As in almost all cases of conflict, differences within one party to the conflict are very obvious. There is no exception to conflict in Papua. Papuans are differently in dealing with the problems. Simply to say, there are three main groups with different perceptions.¹² The first group could be identified as those who see there is no problem at all in Papua or who are unable to see the real problem in that region. Included also in this group are those who pretend not to see any sort of problem. They argue that if there was any problem in Papua, it is the problem of Indonesia. "As many problems in other parts of the state, it is the government in Jakarta who hold the responsibility to deal with and to find solutions", one West Papuan contended before the audiences of a book launching in Jakarta.¹³

¹² Division within Papuan people, especially among pro-independence supporters, has been of a great concern of scholars and researchers on Papua. See for instance King, Peter, *West Papua & Indonesia since Suharto* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2004). See also Chauvel, Richard, *Constructing Papua Nationalism: History, Ethnicity and Adaptation* (Washington: East-West Center, 2005) and Esther Heidbuchel, *The West Papua Conflict in Indonesia* (Wettenberg: Johannes Herrman J&J-Verlag, 2007) pp. 90-107.

¹³ A statement by.... Before Amiruddin al Rahab's book launch, Heboh Papua, in Jakarta,

The second group perceive the real problems in their region as largely related to the government policies and associated to the increasing presence of non-Papuan people in Papua. Poverty among Papuan people, unemployment and the absence of good education and health services are seen as brought about by the government incompetence at both central and regional levels. It is also frequently perceived as caused by the lack of political will of the central government, while provincial and district government are seen as having no competence to run development programs properly. News of killing, arrest, and other kind of violent acts, which are frequently broadcasted by local television and newspaper, is very likely associated with the acts of military and police forces. As the military and police enjoy impunity nationwide, it remains a national issue that Papua has not to be seen as a special case. Considering the social and economic gaps between Papuans and non-Papuans and fear of emerging social tensions, this group share deep concern and used to ask the government to act more decisively and show high commitment to affirmative policies for accelerated development of local Papuans.

While acknowledging social and economic problems, the third group tend to contend them as resulted from occupation or colonization of Indonesian government and people over the land and people of Papua. By the term of colonization, the issue is no longer limited to development policies and social tensions. Instead, for this group it is occupation, exploitation, elimination and marginalization taking place in Papua since integration to Indonesia. They associate these practices of human rights violation with the 1960s history when Indonesian government forcefully and illegally took over the authority over the territory from the Dutch colonial power and even from the Papuan national authority which is claimed had been existed before the 1969 Act of Free Choice. Therefore, this group has been resisting since the outset of Indonesian rule on Papua. The only agenda they have is to restore the basic rights of the Papuans to self-determination. In political term, the independence of Papua from Indonesia is the ultimate interest which they fight for.

With regard to the first group and agenda as an absolutely local and domestic jurisdiction of Indonesia, and taking partly to account the issues addressed by the second group, the third group's agenda for a free and independent Papua is obviously the focus of analysis. Nonetheless, in fighting for such a political ambition, this Papuan group has not just to fight against Indonesia but also to deal with other international parties. Guerrilla attacks against Indonesian security forces and maintaining its existence in the jungles or highlands must be accompanied by other strategies with a hope of having foreign sympathy and support. However, as will be discussed below, economic, political, and diplomatic deals are not yet in such expected results.

The Indonesian government domestic and diplomatic policies

Although opinions referring to separation and independence of East Timor (Timor Leste) might be found among a very few Indonesians, it is the policies of the Indonesian government that pose valid and reliable account in dealing with the Papua issue. For particular vested interest, a politician might offer the need for reviewing the 1969 Act of Free Choice, or based on personal empathy, a senior bureaucrat might say it is better for the Papuans to be independent, Indonesian government's stance on Papua remains to maintain Papua as an integral part of Indonesia's territorial integration.

Reasons for Indonesia to hold Papua are huge. Self-claim on “nusantara” or “great Indonesia” is frequently presented. Apart from this historical and cultural claim, Indonesia asserts that the 1969 Act of Free Choice is legally transferring the Dutch ex-colonial territory to Indonesia. National constitution (UUD 1945) – on which every government has to obey, and political interest – on which political and party leaders have to cautiously consider, are other reasons. And within the likely remaining international real-politics, every country is compelled to protect its territorial integration from either internal disruption or external invasion.¹⁴

Papuan separatist or liberation movement (OPM) and Indonesian government are the principle and direct parties to the conflict in Papua. But it would be misleading to say that Indonesia is solely focusing on dealing with Papuan group in seeking for international support for separation ambition. Those who concern deeply on human rights and development issues in Papua have also to be accommodated in their criticisms and calling for international assistances.¹⁵

Apart from just keeping Papua to be not separated, Indonesian government is absolutely responsible in developing the region and the Papuan people and also authoritatively in using and exploiting natural resources of Papua lands.¹⁶ In this context, the government has been for example running the transmigration program through which hundreds of thousands Indonesian people settle and struggle for better lives in the eastern part of Indonesian territory. The government has also encouraged businessmen or investors from other part of the country to invest. Among others, logging, mining, and plantation are business sectors dominating economic activities in the region. All these policies bring about development and modernization, although it is unexpected but instantly understandable also resulted in social and economic problems as mentioned above and unquestionably environment degradation and disasters. It is then conceivable that impacts caused by such national political decisions, the call for Papuan independence is crystallizing and getting stronger.

Neighbouring, international major countries and multinational corporations' interests

As to the national economic interest of Indonesia, for western and international major countries Papua also brings about economic benefits. But, interests in security, geopolitics and geo-strategy are seemingly more dominant. It was the Cold War constellation frequently mentioned as factor determinant to the handing over of Papua from the Netherlands to Indonesia. With the interest to obstruct the expansion of communism to South East Asia and the South Pacific, the USA urged the

¹⁴ Indonesia's political stance on the question of Papua in international forum is clearly formulated in *Questioning the Unquestionable: An Overview of The Restoration of Papua into the Republic of Indonesia* (New York: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, 2004).

¹⁵ See Drs. Wisber Loeis, “Suka Duka dalam Tugas Memenangkan PEPERA di Irian Barat” dalam *Dinamika Diplomasi Indonesia dalam Praktik*, ed. By Herman Sudrajat (Bekasi: Kesaint Blanc, 2003) pp. 116-123.

¹⁶ About Indonesian government's new policies on Papua see discussions in Muridan Widjojo ed., *Papua Road Map: Negotiating the Past, Improving the Present, and Securing the Future* (Jakarta: LIPI, 2009); Amiruddin al Rahab, *Heboh Papua: Perang Rahasia, Trauma dan Separatisme* (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2010); and Velix V. Wanggai, *New Deal for Papua: Menata Kembali Papua dengan Hati* (Jakarta: The Irian Institute and Indonesia Press, 2009).

Netherlands to accept the UN trusteeship over the territory and to be followed by a referendum under the UN supervision. During the Second World War Papua had been a front line for the Ally countries, including Australia and New Zealand, to fight against Japan with its expansion intention to the Pacific.

The collapse of Cold War regime in early 1990s does not necessarily make Papua less significant in the term of geo-politics and geo-strategy. Although the old ideological rivalry might be not relevant any more, Papua remains important in dealing with different kinds of contemporary conflicts or, borrowing Marry Kaldour and Vashee's, post Cold War conflicts.¹⁷ Within these conflicts, the warfare is characterized by, among others, fragmented fronts, involvement paramilitary forces and child soldiers, ethnic homogeneity and tribalist identity grounds, diasporas support and illegal financing. The presence of Islamic groups with their extremist and radical ideology in Papua might complicate understanding of the likely existing inter-ethnic conflict. Perception of the likely spreading out of international terrorism, which is frequently associated with particular religious motivations, and encouragement for the "coalition of the willing" on "war on terror" make Australia, PNG and Melanesian states anxious but more alert. As Roy May has made a warning that "there is not a local constituency for terrorism" but "the arrival and presence of outsiders in small, personalized Pacific societies".¹⁸ David Hegarty and Anna Powles added that although "many island states expressed reluctance to bandwagon with the 'coalition of the willing'... a number of Pacific states, for example Fiji and Samoa,...explore the 'soldier of fortune' opportunities that consequently arose".¹⁹ Further examination is absolutely needed, but neighbouring countries like PNG, other Melanesian countries, Australia and New Zealand might have to pay attention.

PNG is undoubtedly very much interested in political, social and economic dynamics in Papua. A very few people in PNG have the fear of Indonesian expansion after the western part of the island, even though there is no evidence to support such fear.²⁰ Movement of people from Papua to PNG for different reasons bring about difficulties: security, economic resources, and social tensions.

Australia has been in a constant condition with difficulty in dealing with the problems in Papua. This is not limited to the likely arrival of political asylum seekers in a larger number in near future, but also in facing domestic political pressure by groups of Australian citizens due to other human rights issues in the region. As will be further discussed below, the Australian society has been the target on which Papuans rely for having sympathy and supports. The case of 43 Papuans harbouring in Melbourne in 2006 was a clear evidence of Australian hardness in responding appropriately between the interests in protecting people in need and in respecting good bilateral relationship with Indonesia. Above all, Australia and New Zealand, and other countries, have been in a constant political stance, at least officially, of recognizing Indonesian sovereignty on Papua. Moving further from this political stance is expecting, if not actively encouraging, Indonesia of being effectively and democratically in handling the problems in Papua. Needless to say that Australia and New Zealand have more interest in seeing Indonesia united and stable than envisaging an independent Papua. As to the case of East Timor, the

¹⁷ See in Miall, *ibid.*, p. 69

¹⁸ As quoted in David Hegarty and Anna Powles, "South Pacific Security" in Robert Ayson and Desmond Ball eds., *Strategy and Security in the Asia-Pacific* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2006) p. 263.

¹⁹ David Hegarty and Anna Powles, *ibid.*

²⁰ See also Peter King, *ibid.*

Australian government and people are opened to the option of being involved in supporting separation of Papua if, and only if, factors conducive to such a success were available. This is neither realist nor idealist paradigmatic principle but exactly a rational calculation. Or in the words of Richard Chauvel, it is a strategic policy where Australia prefers to have a "friendly and cooperative relations with a strong and united Indonesia".²¹

Multinational corporations' interest

The presence and operation of multinational corporations in Papua has been of the international attention, although they rarely become the main concern or not least as enemy to pro-Papuan independence movement. The environmental damage and social impacts brought about by their massive extraction of natural resources are severely condemned by the green and social activists. The deployment of Indonesian security forces paid by companies to secure their operations is another issue on which human rights advocates accused them of having involved in violating the indigenous Papuan human rights through coerced removal of people and even extra-judicial killings, arrests and torture. Calls for further investigation, responsibility, and justice related to such crimes, however, have never been properly conducted.

Freeport-McMoRan in Timika and BP-Tangguh in Bintuni Bay are just two giant companies frequently reported of having caused such human and ecological problems. Many more corporations with their home-bases in USA, UK, Canada, and Australia altogether share the Papuan rich mineral and energy resources even though with little publication of their negative effects to local indigenous people and land.²²

Freeport-Rio Tinto is the largest foreign investor in Indonesia and as the largest gold and the third largest copper mine company in the world. By 2002, the company made a profit of US\$1.9 billion which was 47 percent of Papua's GDP.²³ "Since 1967 Freeport-McMoRan extracted more than US\$100 billion from West Papuan soil, value."²⁴ By 2007 it was reported to record profit of US\$7.4 billion from its

²¹ Richard Chauvel, "The Centrality of the Periphery: Australia, Indonesia and Papua" in John Monfries ed. *Different Societies, Shared Futures: Australia, Indonesia and the Region* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2006) pp. 114.

²² Other multinational corporations operating in Papua include Union Oil, Amoco, Agip, Conoco, Phillips, ESSO, Texaco, Mobil, Shell, Petromer Trend Exploration, Atlantic Richfield, Sun Oil, and Freeport-McMoran (USA); Oppenheimer (South Africa); Total (France); Ingold (Canada); Marathon Oil, Kepala Burung (UK); Dominion Mining, BHP, Cudgen RZ, and CRA (Australia). See Ghali Hassan, "West Papua's Cry for Freedom" in *Global Research*, 20 April 2010, as accessed from <http://globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=HAS20060420&articled=2295>. Construction companies are also operating in the region, such as Kellogg, Brown and Root (US), JGC Corporation (Japan) and PT. Pertafenikki Engineering (Indonesian-Japanese joint venture). See *Down to Earth* No.57, May 2003 at <http://dte.gn.apc.org/57thg.htm#box>, accessed on 14 June 2010. In logging, Marubeni and Sagindo from Japan, Mamberamo (Australia) and Lavalin are also operating in Papua especially in survey work. A number of national companies operate there with logging concession from the government.

²³ According to John Rumbiak as cited from "West Papuans oppressed by U.S. Multinational: An interview with John Rumbiak" at <http://www.asadismi.ws/westpapua.html>, on 15 June 2010.

²⁴ Ghali Hassan, *ibid*.

mining operations around the world.²⁵ In 2009 the company paid Indonesia US\$1.4 billion in taxes, royalties and dividends and became the largest taxpayer to the state.²⁶ There is no doubt that Freeport-Rio Tinto and other multinational corporations are going to continuously make vast profits for their shareholders in the UK, USA, and Australia. It is done through the extension and expansion of their operations and in the mean time new foreign investors are still welcomed and may have planned to run new business in that remaining promising land.

With more than 18,000 employees, Freeport-Rio Tinto constitutes its figure as the largest company in Papua. BP-Tanggah is expected to employ another thousands workers. In addition to those working under other companies, hundreds of thousand Indonesians and foreigners plunge to Papua to have their job and make their lives better. They work in mining, logging, construction, and other related businesses. This means Papua not only give profit to multinational corporations and their shareholders, but also provides income sources to Indonesian and international workers and their families.

The significance of multinational corporations in the Papuan cause is not limited to their interest in securing profit from the region's natural resources and their service of providing jobs to international market. In the context of Papua complexities, two other issues have been critical to national and international attention: one is of their complicity in human rights violations and the other is of the environmental damage they caused.

The alleged involvement of national and multinational corporations in perpetrating human rights in Papua takes place through different but inter-related ways. First, in many occasions multinational corporations are accused of taking hold of lands culturally and traditionally belong to Papuan local communities without consulting them and without providing considerable compensation. For the interest of extracting precious minerals such as gold and copper, oil and gas, and forestry products, indigenous tribal groups are forced to move. They even are confined from entering the production areas. This practice makes people not only lose their soil but also lose access to food, water, and shelter provided by nature which their lives robustly depend on for centuries.

Second, the most notorious way in which multinational corporations are involving in depriving the lives of Papuan indigenous people is through their collusion with Indonesian security forces, both the military and police. The armed forces are deployed to protect the mining and logging areas. For this service multinational corporations have to provide payment. Freeport for example was reportedly to give around US\$3 – 5 million per year to Indonesian military and police for security protection. The money, it was said, was for "infrastructure, catered food and dining hall costs, housing, fuel, travel, vehicle repairs, allowances to cover incidental and administrative costs and community assistance programme

²⁵ See "Multinational corporations lining up to profit from West Papua's resources" in *Down to Earth* No. 76-77, May 2008, <http://dte.gn.apc.org/76lwp.htm>, accessed on 16 June 2010.

²⁶ See Carmel Budiardjo, "Resource-rich West Papua, but who benefits?" *The Jakarta Post*, 14 May 2010; Jane Perlez and Raymond Boner, "Freeport-Rio Tinto: Gold's other price", *New York Times*, 28 December 2005.

conducted by the military and police."²⁷ In addition, cash allowances are also given to individual commanders and personnel.²⁸

The reasons for Indonesian military and police to provide multinational corporations security protection are both legal and illegal. It is legal since Indonesian government perceives foreign investments brought in by corporations such as Freeport and BP as vital to Indonesian economic and social development. As such, it is seen reasonable that Indonesian security forces have the responsibility to protect them from any kind of action that could disrupt their operations. But, it is also illegal since the payment for security forces is made without transparency and legal-based procedures. It has been widely criticized that Indonesian military and police, either institutionally or individually, have benefits from security protection they provide.

Apart from seeking fee for protection services, Indonesian military and police are also believed to run their own businesses in Papua which has been under public scrutiny in post-Suharto era. The running of such businesses is partly pushed by the fact that the security forces get only one-third of their operation expenses from the state budget. But, it is most likely that more benefits go to individual generals and commanders.

With such mutual-interest, there is no doubt that national and multinational corporations are complicit in practices of human rights violations. For example, in 1977 when the Freeport pipeline was attacked by OPM, Indonesian military ran military operation and reinstated security in the mining area. This event was also used as justification for the presence of a larger number of military in the region. In 2002 security forces were also accused of involving human rights violation following its military actions in dealing with another allegedly ambush attack by OPM near the Freeport headquarters which cause the death of two US school teachers. Many more accident took place in the following years. In June 2008 hundreds of local people rallied to protest Freeport of having taken their land and the security service of having dispersed local people scavenging on the corporation's tips for waste gold. On this case, Benny Wenda, the Papuan tribal leader in London, said, "The Freeport Mining Company already has the blood of my people on its hands. The company must take responsibility for all the deaths and pain it has caused since 1967, and it must withdraw from our land".²⁹ The killing of Kelly Kwalik in 2009 is another case in which Indonesian military perpetrate human rights for the benefit of multinational corporations like Freeport.

The global Islamic movement

Islam has been to such a crucial aspect but sensitive issue in every analysis of the problem in Papua. In connection to Indonesian policy on transmigration program, the Islamic issue was often considered as part of Islamization process in Papua. Since the official statistics showing ninety percent of Indonesian

²⁷ See "Military protection funds exposed", *Down to Earth* No.57, May 2003 at <http://dte.gn.apc.org/57Frp.htm>, accessed on 14 June 2010.

²⁸ *Ibid.* See also Jane Perlez and Raymond Boner, "Freeport-Rio Tinto: Gold's other price", *Ibid.* and Carmel Budiardjo, *Ibid.*

²⁹ As cited from "World's biggest goldmine shut down as soldiers go on the rampage" in <http://www.fpcn-global.org/node/159>.

people are Islam, it is hardly to deny the massive presence of Muslim people to the region. Voluntarily migration to the region makes the number of Muslim migrants steadily increase. Apart from the changing demographic composition in the sense of ethnicity, the influx of Muslim community is substantially contributing to changes in configuration of religious denomination. Anxiety is constantly growing as the arrival of huge number of Muslim people is perceived as a serious threat to the longstanding claim of the Christian domination and majority in that region.

Another political implication of the arrival of Indonesian Muslim society to Papua is to weaken the claim of West Papuan for independence. It is often argued that Muslim groups from Java, Madura, southern part of Sulawesi (with ethnic identities of Makasar, Bugis, and Buton) and North Maluku would be very likely to undermine the independence aspiration among the Papuans. Without denying the ideals of building a pluralistic and tolerant Indonesian nation, or of the government legitimate authority to help all people across the nation from Sabang to Merauke to get welfare and prosperity, the growing number of Muslim people settling in Papua would have a great worth in maintaining Indonesian territorial integration. As such, Islamic people movement to Papua is seen to have gradually eliminated the call for West Papuan separation and independence from NKRI.

However, in contrary to the seemingly tactically national policy, the presence of Muslim community in Papua is also seen as in separate agenda and interest. With the presence of Muslim groups which are seen as more radical, fundamental, and extremist, it is suggested that their interest is not in compliance with Indonesian political interest in maintaining Papua integration within Indonesia. Rather, "it is to expand the idea of global Islamic movement and to create an international Muslim state", one West Papuan leader in Australia argued.³⁰ It is also suggested that such a movement will extend to PNG and Melanesian countries in the South Pacific.³¹

Although hard to provide convincing evidence to support the idea of Muslim expansion to the Pacific Islands, radicalization in Papua has to be considered cautiously. In a report of such tendency, ICG maintained that youth and student groups joining in National Committee for West Papuan Liberation (KNKPB) have been involved in a number of violent acts. They did not only organize rallies and demonstrations before government offices, but also in taking attacks against Indonesian security forces and destructions of private properties and public facilities. International companies operating in the province such as Freeport is also on their target of attacks³² The arrival of Muslim youths and students far away in remote and highland areas is assumed of heaving preached fundamental Islamic teaching, including syariah law and jihad spirit. "it is no longer surprising to see many mosques built in Wamena and Waropen hills and even to see West Papuan recruits joining the sort of military trainings". It is also added that a number of students and youngsters from the hills were mobilized to ask the closure of the giant gold and copper mining company, Freeport-McMoRan.

The call for the closure of Papuan Freeport company is probably good to mention briefly. Some Muslim politicians in Jakarta, including the former chairman of MPR, Amien Rais, have frequently called on the

³⁰ Interview with one Papuan leading figure in Canberra, 12 May 2010,

³¹ *Ibid*

³² See ICG's report on this issue

government of Indonesia to end the gold and copper mine operation of Freeport. It was widely admitted and appreciated the social, cultural, and environmental costs caused by the mining activities behind the calls. To have a larger portion of profit and shares for Indonesia from such extractive operation is another reason. Nonetheless, it has also been a suspicion that the ending of Freeport operation meant to open a chance for company or investor from the Middle East to take over, control, and run the business.³³ It is baseless to say that those urging the closure of Freeport operation are sharing or having the ideology of international Islamic movement. It suffices to say that a stronger and larger presence of Islamic group in Papua, which are not only in the point of religious, social and cultural associations and demographic number, is likely to undermine the secure feeling of most Papuans and the Melanesian community at large.

As many researchers have revealed, the Islamic movement in Papua with its fundamentalist and extremist tendencies is probably linked to radical Islamic groups in Indonesia and other countries across South East Asia. *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) has been internationally identified as a radical group promoting hatred and hostility against the Western and Christian values and the Jews. Furthermore, JI is also believed to have involved and supported rebellion groups such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines, the Islamic group struggle in Pattani, South Thailand, and bloody interreligious conflicts in Poso and Ambon, both in Indonesia. In Indonesia, JI is also stated to have initiated and masterminded boom-blasts in Bali (2002 and 2005), in Jakarta (2000, 2004, and 2009). JI is commonly perceived to have connection with their parent organization Al Qaeda which is globally declared as the master-mind of promoting anti-Western values, anti-Jews, anti-Christian and of launching terrorist attacks around the world. JI is believed to have expanded throughout the region with a chance of crossing to Australia and the South Pacific countries. Zachary Abuza's investigative book maintained that JI have established four *mantiqi* or cells where the fourth cell was in Australia and Papua, while the first three spread across southern Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, and Indonesia.³⁴

And since the aftermath of the deadly inter-religious conflict in Ambon (Maluku), the idea of militancy and radicalism and individual persons were believed to have been moving to the bird-head areas of Papua and managed to build bases in different part of the region. Such a kind of network needs further exploration in order to have a more comprehensive understanding and more specifically its apparently expansion to the South Pacific.

Pro-human rights international civil societies

For international individuals and associations the core issue within the problems in Papua is human rights violations. The issue ranges from the right to self-determination on which many Papuan groups struggle for its restoration. The transfer of authority over Papua land from the Dutch colonial power to Indonesian rule through the 1969 Act of Free Choice was thoroughly seen as neglecting the basic rights of Papuans to decide their political rights and destination. Reasons for the perception of neglecting or even of against the principle of democratic process and human rights assessment are related to the

³³ Interview with a staff for Government and Public Relation of PT. Freeport in Jayapura, ...January 2010.

³⁴ Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia; Crucible of Terror* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2003) p. 132-3.

whole process of the act. It is frequently said as Act of No Choice instead of Act of Free Choice. As different Papuan groups cited, many international organizations argued that the process was not based on principle of "one man one vote" as previously recommended by the UN and New York Agreement. People casted their votes for integration into Indonesia were hand-picked by Indonesian authority with a claim that Papuan people were primitive, uneducated, and living in remote highlands or valleys. It is also said that the 1026 Papuans of which 1018 chose in favour of integration were tribe leaders but were forced to choose integration by Indonesian security forces.

Although the plebiscite was under the UN auspices, by almost all account the whole process, human rights associations argued, was overwhelmingly undemocratic. National and state level coordinators of Australian Association on West Papua asserted that the process of Papua integration into Indonesia was illegal and illegitimate. As a consequence, they in many occasions call on a renewal referendum or plebiscite in Papua.

Deep concern from international organizations about human rights violations in Papua is also related to events in Papua under Indonesian authority since 1963. Continuous practices of violation such as killings, arrests, tortures and rapes take place in the region. It has been ever since to the attention of international community that about 100.000 Papuans have been killed or disappeared by Indonesian military forces (TNI).

As mentioned before, pro-human rights international NGOs share deep concern about the issues of marginalization and elimination of Papuan people. Transmigration program and development policies carried out by Indonesian government have engendered a sort of systematic violation of human rights. Corresponding to problems in education, health, and social and economic deprivation caused by development and modernization campaign, it is said that the kind of genocide is rightly taking place in the region.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have to be mentioned as two central international organizations campaigning for human rights protection in Papua. They document and regularly publish practices of human rights violations and ask the governments of western countries and international organizations to pay attention to such human tragedies. Without taking side to political and/or economic interests and objectives of other parties to the issue of Papua, international human rights organizations are definitely interested in restoring, respecting, and promoting Papuans of their basic human rights.

To a great extent, the Churches worldwide have also concern about human rights condition in Papua. They are concern on poverty, the low level of education and health suffered by indigenous Papuans. Their concern is growing and becomes bias due to the issue of marginalization of Papuan people as caused by the arrival of non-Papuans and more specifically in regard to the issue of minoritisation of Papuan Christians as most non-Papuans arriving in the region are Muslim.

Papuan struggle for global support

Given the existence of multi-actors with their various interests in the Papuan cause, the Papuan people struggling for independence would find themselves squeezed from multi directions: by Indonesia who fiercely strive to maintain its territorial sovereignty undisrupted³⁵ and whoever in power has constitutional obligations to do so; by international Muslim movement which seeks place strategic enough for Islam caliphate towards Melanesia and the Pacific; by major and neighbouring countries who prefer Indonesia stable and united in order to serve their security and strategic interests; and by multinational corporations with their greed on natural resources and hunger in accumulating profit. Each of these forces and interests are obviously not isolated or separate to each other. The interests are in many occasions overlapped or interrelated. For example, apart from observing its political and legal commitment, Indonesia has its fully legal right to exploit Papua's rich natural resources for its economic and social purposes. As it has been in effect since the incorporation of the region, Indonesian government continues to welcome and severely in need of foreign investment in the region for opening employment, having rent, taxes and small proportion of profit sharing in return. For companies to be able to operate and produce profit, the Indonesian government have to provide security protection. This shows a kind of mutual collaboration which more frequently for the sakes of indigenous Papuan community. It is then clear that instead of merely fighting against Indonesian rule, Free Papua Movement (OPM) has also inevitably to deal with foreign countries and international corporations (MNCs) in one ways or another.

What the likely result the pro-Papuan independence group expect is, it is totally determined by many factors. Simply to say, these factors are manly related to the power (strength) the group have or could acquire from the dynamics of interactions with global players and international interests. In other words, its success is highly dependent upon its own strength and its ability to gather support from international community. Internal strength and external support are both the key in its future success or adversely failure. The internal power of the pro-independence movement is firstly discussed and will be followed by discussion about the likelihood of external support.

The strength of pro-Papua independence movement relies on many factors that could be simply divided into three: (1) unity and organization of the movement, (2) the movement's ideology, objective and strategy, and (3) the movement's sources of finance and human capacities. Without being stuck on theoretical premises, all these conditions are basically practical in nature.

Instead of unity, however, disunity among Papuans has been a remarkable feature of the organization of pro-Papuan independence movement. The problem can be traced following the Indonesian independence proclaimed in 1945 and it persisted during the hard years of 1960s when Papuan destiny would have to be determined. Affected by Indonesian proclamation of independence several Papuan leaders, like Lukas Rumkorem, Silas Papare and Marthen Indey, showed enthusiasm to be part of the newly independent state of Indonesia. This instantly undermined the Voice of the People (*Suara Rakyat*), the first modern political organization in West New Guinea with an objective of Papuan independence from the Dutch and separate from Indonesia as well. Expecting independence as the

³⁵ See *Questioning the Unquestionable: An Overview of The Restoration of Papua into the Republic of Indonesia* (New York: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, 2004).

Dutch administration had set up some sorts of preparation in public administration, police and security institutions, some Papuan nationalist leaders, such as Markus Kaisiepo, Abdullah Arfan, Johan Ariks and Nicholas Jouwe, formed New Guinea Unity Movement (*Gerakan Persatuan Nieuw Guinea*).³⁶

As political development in the end of 1960s deteriorated and showed disfavour on the Dutch and pro-independence Papuans' side, exodus of Dutch citizens and Eurasians from Papua took place. This was particularly caused by the increasing presence of Indonesian rule and escalating violence committed by Indonesian military forces. A number of Papuan nationalist figures including Markus Kaisiepo and Nicholas Jouwe were forced to flee their homeland and took up refuge in the Netherlands. Ordinary Papuans fleeing their homeland increased and sought refuge in Papua New Guinea and in the Netherland.

Papuan people and nationalist leaders overseas managed to establish a government-in-exile. Unfortunately, the government was not well organized in running its campaigns against Papua incorporation to Indonesia. Unlike Aceh Free Movement (GAM) with Hasan di Tiro and Zaini Abdullah as the president and foreign minister respectively and unlike in East Timor where Xanana Gusmao was known to lead East Timor resistance inside East Timor against Indonesia and Ramos Horta was to represent the resistance group to international community, the Papuan government in exile was lack of cohesiveness. The widespread of Papuan nationalist figures from PNG to Pacific and to Europe was apparently to have difficulties in building regular contact and establishing solid organization. The self-claim of government-in-exile in the Netherland seemingly failed to create and sustain one single front to keep the idea of independence alive and to set up clear policies and strategies. Nationalist leaders in PNG such as Jacob Prai, Rex Rumakiek, Seth Rumkorem and Otto Ondowame (before they were expelled to Vanuatu and given asylum in Sweden) and in Senegal (Ben Tanggahma) were likely to work very loosely, though they shared the same spirit seeking for Papua independence.

The lack of unity within those in exile is much similar a reflection of those who left and struggled in the homeland. Leaders and people groups in Sentani, Puncak Jaya, Biak, Bouven Digoel, Sorong, Timika, and Jayapura do not always have a same agenda and strategy. In general there is severe lack of unity between those who struggle inside Papua and Indonesia and those who fight internationally and lack of coordination between those fighting militarily and those running political fighting.

Problem is also prevailing in the sense of sustainability of the independence struggle. This is particularly shown by disruption between Papuan nationalist first generation and current generation. The passage of time and distance from events in Papua had depleted the strength of the movement in the Netherlands.³⁷ The centre of movement is no longer in the Netherlands but becomes diasporic and Australia has apparently been the most influential centre. It is quite surprising since the new generation failed to draw any lesson important to fix the movement organization.

³⁶ See R.J. May, "External support for the West Papua movement" in K.M. de Silva and R.J. May eds., *Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict* (London: Pinter, 1991) p. 160.

³⁷ R.J. May, *ibid.* p. 164

Although it is hard to conclude that Jacob Rumbiak and Herman Wanggai in Australia, Otto Ondowame in Vanuatu, Rex Rumakiek in PNG, Benny Wenda in UK, and John Rumbiak and Mote in USA appear to be detached to each other, it is much difficult to say they stand for one single and well-coordinated organization under a strong leadership. The pro-Papuan independence movement is fragile and fractured.³⁸ These Papuan prominent figure exiles are more likely to act independently. Wenda's success to approach the newly elected prime minister of the UK, David Cameron,³⁹ is not properly appreciated by other figures as a collective progress of the OPM. While the establishment of International Parliamentary Union on West Papua and International Lawyers on Papua, both were the endeavours of Wenda, are frequently cited by other leaders in other countries as giving boost to the Papuan struggle, the newly founded fronts are unsuccessfully utilized by leaders in their respective host countries to have similar support. Political statements that clearly reflect the organization's responses towards political changes and particularly violent acts in Papua are rarely, if any, delivered and publicized as a joint statement that all elements within the movement have to refer to.

Division within the movement's organization is resulted from many factors. One of them to be easily pointed to is that its leadership is heavily influenced by different tribal background. As in their homeland of Papua where there is hard to find one leader overwhelmingly accepted and recognized by all tribal groups or any single and well organized front with a clear hierarchical structure,⁴⁰ it is equally difficult to find figure exiles who are collectively approved and supported. The West Papua National Authority (WPNA), which is supposedly an umbrella for all pro-Papua independence movement groups, is not equipped with a clear and official leadership with home the international solidarity elements should make any deal. As an umbrella and authorized organization, the WPNA should have firstly to unify the whole scattered units of struggle. This is also the case where the Papua Customary Council (*Dewan Adat Papua*) and Papuan People Assembly (*Majelis Rakyat Papua*) have to be able as unifying organizations that effectively and legitimately represent the some 250 tribe groups in making any negotiation with Jakarta-central government.

The return of Nicholas Jouwe from the Netherlands and become a legal citizen of Indonesia in May 2010 is likely to be seen as a big blow to the Papuan struggle particularly in connection to the need for continuity and sustainability of pro-independence struggle. This event is not only disruptive to the sustainability of current movement as discussed above but also a kind of betrayal to the whole idea or "ideology" of independence. After almost four decades dreaming an independent Papua, Jouwe, the co-founder of OPM and designer of the Papuan morning star flag, made it publicly of his reason to return that "there is no world that supports the dreams of independence".⁴¹ Asked whether he has the plan to

³⁸ Jim Elmslie, *Irian Jaya Under the Gun: Indonesian Economic Development versus West Papuan Nationalism* (Adelaide: Crawford House, 2002) p.206

³⁹ According to Telegraph journalist Alastair Jamieson, "Mr Cameron has been feted by many of the one million indigenous inhabitants of West Papua after a meeting last year with their exiled leader Benny Wenda, who was granted asylum by Britain in 2003". See "David Cameron becomes hero of Papuan tribes", *Telegraph*, 17 May 2010

⁴⁰ A good description about the OPM organization and leadership, see Jim Elmslie, *Irian Ibid.*, pp. 180-191 and 199-206.

⁴¹ As cited from "Founder of the Free Papua Organization Nicholas Jouwe confirmed become a citizen of Indonesia", *Media Online West Papua*, <http://www.papuabarat.org/en/cetak.php?id=23>, 14 June 2010.

meet the OPM in the jungle, Jouwe surprisingly replied to media reporters that those in the jungle who have to come and meet him, not he himself to do so. And his opinion about the armed resistance, the media reported Jouwe as saying that they are perpetrators consisting of Papuan young people who know nothing. "It is all nonsense. They just emulated what other did in Indonesia and elsewhere".⁴²

Nick Messet, who was known as responsible for the OPM's international affairs under Jouwe leadership, also said that Papuan independence from Indonesia and the Papuan people's rights for self-determination are very unlikely to happen. "It will be very difficult, even impossible, for the UN to discuss the matter of Papuan independence".⁴³ Together with Franzalbert Yoku, they asserted, the special autonomy in Papua is the best solution and for the Papuan land and people as part of Indonesia. Franzalbert Yoku added that the success in implementation of the special autonomy will encourage thousands of Papuan overseas to come back to their homeland, Papua.⁴⁴

Between 2003 and 2005 a total of 350 Papuans are reported to return to Papua from PNG. Some 700 others are expected to be repatriated in 2009-2010, of which 320 have arrived in Papua in November 2009.⁴⁵ Four out of 43 Papuans who arrived in Australia in January 2006 and were granted asylum were also reported to have returned to Papua.⁴⁶ In the case of their return as truly voluntarily, as Indonesian sources said,⁴⁷ it helps show evidence of the level of militancy and commitment of ordinary Papuans to political goal and ideology of Papuan independence their leaders resolutely propagated. This does not necessarily mean they do not support or have no sympathy with the independence struggle. Rather, their daily life and sensible demands of being together with family and relatives, having job and living in security are much more realistic and reasonable than living apart in PNG or Australia. This is an area where pro-Papua independence leaders and Indonesian government could compete to win "the heart and mind" of Papuan people and also to some degree the international communities may pay much attention. Generally, ordinary people like native Papuans are prone to intimidation and terror or persuasion and promise by either state government or rebellion leaders in order to have their support. And there is no guarantee such promises were rightly fulfilled.⁴⁸

The second characteristic that limits the strength of the movement is ambiguity in its political goal. As already mentioned at the beginning the goal of Papua independence has been initially undermined by Papuan fellows who preferred the integration within Indonesia. Those leaving in the western part of

⁴² "Pendiri OPM Nicholas Jouwe Kembali ke Indonesia", *Antaranews*, 12/01/10, <http://www.antaranews.com/1263284479>, as accessed on 14 June 2010.

⁴³ See "Independence for Papua still hotly debated", *The Jakarta Post*, 27 May 2010 and "Mantan Petinggi OPM Temui Menhan", *AntaraNews*, 06/04/2010, <http://www.antaranews.com/print/1270542231>, 14 June 2010.

⁴⁴ "IGSSARPRI: Otsus Perlanar Repatriasi Ribuan Warga Papua", *Antaranews*, 19/12/08 <http://www.antaranews.com/print/1229642156>, 14 June 2010.

⁴⁵ See "Indonesia to help Papuans return home", *The Jakarta Globe*, 22 September 2009.

⁴⁶ See "2 Papuan asylum seekers return from Australia", *The Jakarta Globe*, 30 November 2008.

⁴⁷ "Government denies Papuan refugees coerced to return", *The Jakarta Globe*, 29 November 2008. According to an intelligent staff, interviewed in Canberra, the return of Yunus Wanggai and his daughter Anike Wanggai, Hana Gobay and Yubel Kareni was on their own initiative. They also reportedly said that "they felt manipulated by the leader of the group of asylum seekers, Herman Wanggai, who promised them a better life in Australia". See *The Jakarta Globe*, 30 November 2008.

⁴⁸ "Repatriation dari PNG Pertanyakan Nasib", *Kompas*, 25 March 2010.

West Papua and along the coastal areas were showing little enthusiasm for a separate state of West Papua. Beside pro-integration view, the large majority may have no idea about such a new and modern political preference and institution. Tribal groups living traditionally in the highlands and valleys do not know what the independent or incorporated Papua really means to them. For most people in Geselema, Jim Elmslie wrote, independence was a very abstract concept. “[T]heir own concept of independence [is] that they had a right to live on their land without the government soldiers attacking them, without being forcibly moved”. This view is different to those at the OPM upper strata, Elmslie continued, who “saw independence as a vehicle by which they could control their destiny and protect themselves as a tribe, or as a village, and have control over their land”.⁴⁹ The third and more ambitious goal is put forward by Daniel Kafiari a hard-line advocate of total independence. He said, “[S]eparation from Indonesia is a first step. The next would be to unite the entire island – a union of the Western half with Papua New Guinea”.⁵⁰ Bertil Lintner writes that Kafiari and another hard-liner Ruben Maury, both live in Sweden, rejected a negotiated Aceh-style autonomy. “We’re different from Aceh.... Historically, our ties have been with Oceania, not Asia. Our connections have always been eastwards, not westwards”.⁵¹

Institutional political consequences of these differently perceived political goals are very obvious. The Papuan ordinary people are more likely to see their own land are not robbed by the government or business companies and their tradition, culture and lives are not deprived by the state forces. Their traditional ways of life have to be respected and protected. This is rightly reflected by a traditional view that the Papuans are the traditional owners of the lands and those who come to their land, including Indonesian government, are just “guest”. The political consequence of this aspiration that the government of Indonesia has apparently been well to accommodate is the introduction of special autonomy bill. Issued in 2001, the special autonomy, at least normatively, delivers more opportunity to Papuan people and local government to rule the region by taking seriously into account their rich natural resources and traditional culture.

Pro-Papuan independence leaders are expecting more than special autonomy. Simply to say, their expectation is an independent Papua with all essential criteria of a state as referring to international principle and the Westphalia system. These include a specified territory and group of people controlled by an effective and internationally recognized government. A free and independent state of Papua ruled by Papuan people is an ultimate political goal.

The much ambitious political institution of having a “Great Papua” by uniting the Indonesian West Papua and Papua New Guinea is not without justification. As Kafiari argued, the separation is only the creation of colonial powers. “That border [between West Papua and PNG] was drawn up in Europe in the late 19th century, with a pen and a ruler. It’s a straight line. People have relatives on both sides of the border”. The ambition is also without precedence. Nonetheless, the kind of Germany unification in 1989 and Vietnam two decades earlier would be hard to see in the island of Papua since the internal condition and the global political constellation are very unlikely to be conducive to such an idea.

⁴⁹ Jim Elmslie, *Ibid.*, p.186

⁵⁰ As cited in Bertil Lintner, “‘Autonomy is not a lasting solution. The people want independence, not autonomy’, Ruen Maury, OPM member”, *The Jakarta Globe*, 22 January 2009.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

By saying an independent Papua as a more sensible option to special autonomy, the claim and struggle for it is justified. The international legal regime containing the principle of the right to self-determination and of the rights of minority and indigenous people has been so far the chief legal argument proposed. Allegation of manipulation and intimidation in the conduct of the 1969 Act of Free Choice is also suggested to restore the legal right of Papuans to decide their own future. To the claim on the right to self-determination, Papuan identity which is largely seen different to Indonesia is argued. Papuan people, culture and values are widely known as Melanesians, while the rest of Indonesian people are Asians. A rather vague argument is also put forward that Papua is dominated by Christian and the majority of Indonesian are Muslim. All these arguments are rightly to constitute a kind of Papuan nationalism.

Nevertheless, the make-up of Papuan nationalism is highly contested, and thus the call for an independent Papua. In regard to race and religion that used to be the primary ingredients of "ethnic nationalism", it does not apply in the case of Indonesia. Indonesia is seen as a country not emerged on the basis of particular racial or religious groups. Indonesia is a multicultural nation where a vast diversity of race, ethnicity, culture and language gather to make the nation. Indonesia is also not an Islamic country, at least in accordance to national ideology and constitution, though ninety per cent of the population are Muslim. With around eight per cent of Indonesian people are Christian, the number is ten times of the whole Papuan people. As a state, Indonesia has to be called as a political creation, attributed mostly to colonial history and Indonesian nationalist leaders. It is a state where the diverse communities are forced both by coercive measures and idealistic persuasion to be united. The introduction of non-religious ideology of Pancasila, the use of national language and other nationalist symbols like national flag, anthem, etc and the creation of state instruments such as armed force, bureaucracy, legal system and centralized administration the very plural societies eventually become united and altogether construe Indonesian nation-state, clearly described by "the imagined community" introduced by Clifford Girtz. Calls and rebellions from Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Maluku for separation were historically failed as the Jakarta central government repressed them and kept the nation united. East Timor's independence in 1999 is probably seen as mostly caused by the failure of central government under Habibie. As the Jakarta government was nearly collapsed as Suharto was forced to step down, Habibie made a blunder by offering the East Timorese a referendum without the Indonesian military (who were under severe pressures) and nationalist politicians (who were in euphoria in wrestling for power left by Suharto) able to resist or to revoke.

Papuan people and culture appears to not be an exception to the ingredients and making of Indonesia. And it has been widely quoted that Indonesia would not be complete without Papua – a political propaganda similarly implied to East Timor during 25 years as Indonesian 27th province. But, it would be hard to imagine that Papua would follow suit the East Timor's independence. Rather, as long as the Jakarta central government is stable and the military is able to secure its credence, Papuan nationalism is likely to decline. In a positive way, if the development processes could deliver the needs of Papuan people, Papuan identity and nationalism is eventually transforming and taking on Indonesian national identity.

Another question about Papuan identity and nationalism is related to the extent of such identity and feeling the entire Papuan people share. Around 250 tribal groups are living in Papua with different culture, tradition, and language. This difference is then complicated by “modern and industrial” standards as Papuan people could not be seen entirely living in their traditional social and economic system or remaining confined by their own tribal identity. Apart from those living in remote areas with their social and economic traditions, many Papuans are inhabiting in more dispersed areas such as those in the province of West Papua (*Papua Barat*) who have more contact with Indonesian people from the eastern part (Kei islands, Maluku, Makassar and Nusa Tenggara Timur). People living along the coastal lines and urban regions have also diverse social interaction much than those in the highland jungles and valleys. Many Papuan people also work in formal and informal sectors as public servants and business employers, different to villagers with their traditional social and economic system. These groups of Papuan people might share the Papuan identity but would be hard to see them have the feeling of being Melanesians and Christians and the Papuan nationalism with the idea of secessionism.

Rather than race and culture, Papuan nationalism and the call for independence are heavily inspired by the sense of injustice. Jim Elmslie argues, “These feelings are exacerbated by the history of Indonesian rule, where an abstract injustice – the failure of West Papua to materialise as an independent state – has been compounded by the daily, ongoing injustices which one race, in dominating another, must perpetuate: dispossession of land and resources; the arrest, torture and killing of dissidents; an implicit apartheid system in employment and education; the absence of human rights, especially of free speech and associations; and the maintenance of a society which is pervaded by fear of arbitrary and omnipotent authorities”.⁵²

This leads to a notion that Papuan nationalism is rather instrumental and conditional (or intransigent) as well. It is instrumental as the pro-independence leaders attempt to exploit Papuan social and traditional sentiments to call for separation. It is intransigent because if the deprivation is halted and the Papuan have their rights respected and protected, the call for independence is consequently declining and disappeared. It is then the Papuans to make their own choice whether to fight against atrocities committed by Indonesian government, security forces, and business corporations or to provocatively promote the Papuan identity which is clearly controversial *vis a vis* the construction of Indonesian nation-state. Papuan nationalism is dilemmatic, as Jim Elmslie suggests. “On the one hand, there is a strong sense of Papuan identity – as Melanesians who deserve their own nation on racial, geographic, historical, and cultural grounds. On the other hand, there is the knowledge that the overwhelmingly powerful state is totally opposed to this concept, that the Indonesian military will never be beaten by the OPM alone, and that no external backer has ever opposed the Indonesians on the side of the Irianese”.⁵³

The third aspect showing the strength of pro-Papua independence is its insufficiency in human and financial resources. In order to have a united front in dealing with Indonesian government and other

⁵² Jim Elmslie, *ibid.* p. 24.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

domestic political forces and with international elements, unlimited resources in finance and human are absolutely needed. In international forums, pro-Papua independence leaders are overall ill equipped with skill acquired to run their cause campaigns. Jacob Rumbiak, he himself once worked closely with Ramos Horta and worked as the UN monitoring mission in East Timor and live in Australia following the subsequent independence of the formerly 27th province of Indonesia, and Herman Wanggai he himself is one of the 43 granted Australian protection visas in 2006, would be hard to be seen as having succeeded in campaigning the Papuan cause in Australia. With the complexity of international relations over the Papua problem, they frequently find themselves lack of capacity in formulating clear idea and running effective persuasion, lobbying, and negotiations with the Australian citizens, organizations, media, not least politicians and the government officials. One Papuan source in Canberra blatantly said, "They do not have the capacity to represent Papuan cause in international forums".⁵⁴

Deficiency in financial support is another major hindrance to the international performance of pro-Papuan independence movement.⁵⁵ Jacob Rumbiak admits that their intention to establish Papuan desk at the UN Office for Minority and Indigenous People is severely constrained by the lack of financial support. Social and diplomatic efforts in several countries in order to have sympathy and support could not run well. For the interest of disseminating information about Papua across the globe is heavily limited to virtual/electronic media, thanks to revolutionary development of media technology and information, which does not need a lot of money. But, for making printed media such as newsletter, brochures, leaflets and other campaigning materials the money is not available.

Neither Papuans in homeland nor Papuan diasporas and sympathizers are able to undertake the role in financing their global diplomacies. Although Papua is well known rich in natural resources, the Papuan people do not have the capacity to capitalize them for financing their international endeavours. The Papuan social and economic traditions are far left behind the complex industrialized standards to make the most of their natural resources to support lobbying abroad. Not even voluntary tax or contributions from Papuans or illegal logging or mining and other illegal businesses are the indigenous Papuans able to run, as many insurgence groups in different countries used to carry out to support their military and political resistance. The wishes to have some amount of money poured to the region due to the implementation of special autonomy bill and/or to collect shares from the giant copper and gold mining Freeport and other mining and logging companies operating in Papua are hardly brought into effect. Although the traditional or cultural claims of having rights to have some parts of their local natural resources as part of the so-called corporate social responsibility (CSR) scheme might make such deals possible, the absence of extremely high quality of capability and ideological commitment in negotiating and reaching such risky deals with relevant parties, whether they are district officials and politicians, security officers, and companies' executives is definitely a major factor to failure in having sufficient financial support.

It would not be to the surprise of theories of politics and international diplomacy and not least of conflict resolutions that ideological and political stances are very likely to change. Consciousness and

⁵⁴ Interview with one leading figure of Papuans living in Canberra via telephone on 19 May 2010.

⁵⁵ Interview with one of Papuan leaders in Canberra, 12 May 2010.

self-assessment of the situation contribute to individual political changes. But, it is also clear that the drop off or abortion of independence claim and the return to domestic solution and recognition of Indonesian political stance is very likely to be rewarded by Indonesia whether it is made politically tangible or intangible.⁵⁶ Time is needed to foresee whether other figures in exile would make choice to admit the special autonomy mechanism whatsoever the level of their criticisms might be.

Political commitment of Papuan leaders in exile to the Papuan independence is of a great contention. As mentioned before, the pro-independence groups are greatly leaning on the legal arguments that the incorporation of Papua into Indonesia was not based on the internationally recognized principle of and the UN resolution on one man one vote and the Act of Free Choice was conducted under severe intimidation and terror, far from condition required for people to be able to make choice freely and securely. Such a practice has been proposed for the call for the right to self-determination to be restored. Political, historical, and cultural arguments are also put forward to reinforce claims of the Papuans for their basic rights. Above all, continuous practices of human rights violations committed by Indonesian security forces are maintained to ask for a free and independent Papua. Nevertheless, with the exception of human rights violations, those, who are against or not supporting the idea of free and independent Papua, also use the similar logics of legal, historical, political and cultural perceptions.

An illustration could be provided briefly as follows. The pro and contra independence sides are greatly recognizing that the global cold war system was determinant factor in finalizing the status of Papua. While both condemned such a global structural force, they also recognize the limits to change it. The argument of Papuans are Christians as contended by the pro-independence side was strongly countered by the historical fact that long before the Christian came into Papua in late nineteenth century, Islam has arrived and been adopted five centuries before. Cultural argument saying that Papua is part of the Melanesian society and culture is also challenged by the fact that the eastern part of Indonesia such as Maluku, Ternate, Tidore, Key Islands, and Nusa Tenggara has been inhabited by different ethnic, racial, and cultural entities for many centuries. And by looking at Indonesian demographic picture it is undoubtedly one of the largest multiethnic and cultural states.



In cases where both sides have successfully provided convincing arguments and counterarguments accompanied by huge reliable evidence the window of conflict resolution becomes opened. But, what is interesting to emphasize here is that none of the parties to the conflict would have had such militancy or fundamentalism in their viewing of the Papua cause. In other words, there is no such ideological dispute in Papua that force both side to take militancy in their violent conflict. As it was in the case of the government side where not a few of officials and politicians see the real problems in the region and admit the consequences of the Papuans to struggle for their basic rights, the Papuan groups and leaders are also understand and covertly admit the incorporation as understandable even though not wholly legal and legitimate. With such configuration of “non-ideological” disputes, it would be hard to see the

⁵⁶ Nicholas Jouwe is known as the creator of the Papuan Morning Star flag. Their return to Indonesia and proposed visit to President SBY and government officials were widely exposed by Indonesian media. See for example *Kompas*, 20 March 2009; ...

emergence of leader and the increase of Papuan groups with strong commitment and ideological militancy.

International solidarity for Papuan cause

The strength of pro-independence Papua movement is to some degree mirroring the international support for Papua. The latter could be equally identified as scattered, unwell-organized and lack of real political influence in particular in regard to aspiration of Papuan independence.

At the very beginning it is fair to say that support for the Papuan cause spread across the globe from Pacific, Melanesia, Asia, and Africa, to Europe and North America. No one is sure that it will stop spreading, though support from some parts of the world is likely to decline and even disappeared. For example, Libya was once known the home base of support from African countries. Guyana is then reported to host the launching of International Lawyers for West Papua (ILWP). The Netherlands and Sweden are countries where first generation of Papuan leaders in exile initially campaigned for the West Papua liberation. Vanuatu and Australia remain the important countries for West Papuan leaders to call for international support.

International support varies in both the forms of organization and their aims. State government and inter-government organizations overwhelmingly show no support to the Papuan cause, at least in official policies that favour the independence of Papua. While individual politicians and government officials might have different stances, expressions of sympathy and support mostly come from non-governmental or civil society organizations (NGOs/CSOs) and sympathetic community members. This kind of organizations of support for Papua are rarely, if any, equipped with permanent office, hierarchical structure and clear job description. Nearly all supports are organized with names of association, network, action, friendship or alike, which are characterized as more flexible, non-formal, and temporary. Whether they are formal or informal, long or short term organizations, it might be fair to call them all as international network or international solidarity for the Papuan cause.

In regard to their aims, they are also diverse. As just rightly the Papuans see differently the problems they all face and experience, the international community have different views. As a consequence, their aims are ranging from mainly providing assistances to resolve social and economic problems, to specifically campaigning for human rights promotion, and to explicitly supporting for an independent Papua. While it is hard to identify precisely organizations which politically support the independence of Papua, almost all of them show sympathy and concern on socio-economic and human rights problems in the region.

In Australia, where most of the Papuan diasporas settle, the Australian West Papua Association (AWPA) has been the leading association in encouraging support for the Papuan cause. Began to operate in 1995 and had a boost by the East Timor precedence (1999), the association becomes home to Australian, and also some non-Australian sympathizers, in all state capital cities who have or share deep concern with the Papuan problems. With two or three activists running state-level association, several tens or

hundreds of Australian citizens join the association and actively take part in its activities.⁵⁷ Peace Movement Aotearoa in New Zealand is also serving to disseminate the Papuan suffering and gather sympathy for their grievance. As a solidarity and campaigning association West Papua Action was initiated in Dublin, Ireland, in 1996. In UK, Tapol has been at the front line in addressing human rights abuses in Papua (and in Indonesia nationwide) and facilitating forum questioning Indonesian rule on the region. A similar Action was also founded in London by Papuan leader in exile, Benny Wenda. Germany, Czech Republic, Belgium and Canada also host that kind of posts for the Papuan advocacy network. In USA, the East Timor & Indonesia Action Network (ETAN) still exists and serves as active campaigner for the Papuan fate. In addition, the International Parliamentarians for West Papua (IPWP) in December 2008 (launched in London) and International Lawyers for West Papua (ILWP) in April 2009 (launched in Guyana) are likely viewed as a big progress to bring the problems in West Papua to international specified communities. By November 2009 IPWP's new chapter was established in Port Moresby, PNG, bringing the 'parliamentarian caucus' closer to the problem site.

International figures are also reported to have deep concern about the problems in Papua. The African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu was cited to say the deny of Papuan basic rights including the right to self-determination and "their cry for justice has largely fallen on deaf ears". Professor Noam Chomsky was also reported to condemn the crimes against the people of Papua. He was also said to ask Western powers to push Indonesia to withdraw its army and to stop exploitation of resources that has destroyed the environment and the lives of Papuan people.⁵⁸

Apart from Australian senior citizens who associate mainly with AWPA, politicians in Australia, as everywhere in the world, are naturally "responsive" towards public buzzes and opinions, including the issue of Papua. This particularly applies to politicians from Australia's small parties, the Green and Democrats. Compared to those of major parties, Labour and the Liberal, they are much more welcomed to the Papuans' appeals. Bob Brown and Kerry Nettle from the Greens and Andrew Bartlett from the Democrat for examples "have been active in relation to Papua."⁵⁹ Along with his party's members Sarah Hanson-Young and Greg Barber, Bob Brown jointly signed the declaration of IPWP formation.⁶⁰ In the time of out of power, politicians from Labour or the Liberal tend to be more opened in listening and responding to the Papuan issues based on either political interest or personal sympathy. This rarely however transforms to party's official policy let alone government policy once they come to power.⁶¹

Intellectuals, both on and off campus bases, are another element within the international community that show great concern at social and political dynamics in Papua. They may have interest in narrowly

⁵⁷ I had the opportunity to witness and talk to participants in bringing banners with a message of free West Papua before the Indonesian Consulate in Perth in 2006. I also attended a meeting run by AWPA-Sydney with an agenda of fundraising on 13 May 2010.

⁵⁸ The statements are cited Free West Papua's website <http://www.freewestpapua.org/index.php?option> as accessed on 14 June 2010.

⁵⁹ Rodd McGibbon, *Pitfalls of Papua: Understanding the conflict and its place in Australia-Indonesia relations* (NSW: Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2006) p.91-2.

⁶⁰ As cited from "The West Papua Declaration", <http://www.ipwp.org>.

⁶¹ "PM rejects Australian support for the Papuan independence", *ABC Online, The World Today*, <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2006/s1619021.htm>, accessed on 19 April 2010.

specific issues such as mangrove and reef preservation, or deforestation and other environmental issues. Works on social fields in its broadest sense are no doubt to have great impact to current debates. Anthropological, cultural, or religious studies are accepted but almost always with sharp censures. Social and political analyses are to be the most controversial and conclusions drawn and policy recommendations proposed are opened to criticisms.

In Australia, several scholars or researchers have been known as experts, though hard to explicitly define them all as specialists, on Papua based on their works. Peter King,⁶² John Wing,⁶³ Jim Elmslie,⁶⁴ Richard Chauvell,⁶⁵ and Clinton Fernandez⁶⁶ are just a few to mention for not only having academic interest in the conflict in Papua but also apparently favouring the Papuans' side. Other scholars are R.J. May,⁶⁷ Rodd McGibbon,⁶⁸ and Edward Aspinall who are known to have more accommodative to policies taken by Australian and Indonesian governments for in particular the interest of good relationship between the two countries.⁶⁹

Scholars from other countries whose works have supposedly made impact on the increasing global awareness on Papua are not many. Timo Kivimaki from the NIAS writes about the possible peace solution in Papua with a close reference to the conflict resolution in Aceh.⁷⁰ John Saltford and Peter Drooglever have their works on the 1960s events, where the Free Act of Choice and the transfer of power over Papua remain disputed, published.⁷¹

Research centre such as the University of Sydney-based West Papua Project, human rights NGOs such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, and international conflict monitoring and/or peace promoting groups such as the International Crisis Group, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialog (HDC), and the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) have involved in one ways or another to raise international

⁶² See Peter King, *West Papua and Indonesia since Suharto: Independence, Autonomy or Chaos?* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2004).

⁶³ See John Wing and Peter King, *Genocide in West Papua? The role of the Indonesian state apparatus and a current needs assessment of the Papuan people*, Report: CPACS, The University of Sydney, August 2005.

⁶⁴ See Jim Elmslie, *Irian Jaya Ibid*. See also Jim Elmslie, Peter King and Jake Lynch, *Blundering In? The Australia-Indonesia security treaty and the humanitarian crisis in West Papua*, Report: CPACS, The University of Sydney, 2007.

⁶⁵ See Richard Chauvell, *Constructing Papuan Nationalism: History, Ethnicity, and Adaptation*, Policy Studies 14, (Washington D.C.: East-West Center, 2005). See also Richard Chauvell, *The Land of Papua and the Indonesian State: Essays on West Papua* (Clayton, Vic.: Monash Asia Institute, 2003).

⁶⁶ See Clinton Fernandez, *Reluctant Indonesians: Australia, Indonesia and the Future of West Papua* (Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2006).

⁶⁷ See R.J. May, "External support for the West Papua movement" in K.M. de Silva and R.J. May eds., *Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict* (London: Pinter, 1991).

⁶⁸ See Rodd McGibbon, *Ibid*.

⁶⁹ A good discussion about academic stances and orientations of Australian scholars on the debates on Papua can be seen in Freddy K. Kalidjernih, "Australian Indonesia-specialists and debates on West Papua: Implications for Australia-Indonesia relations", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.62 No1., March 2008.

⁷⁰ See Timo Kivimaki, *Initiating a Peace Process in Papua*, Policy Studies 25 (Washington D.C.: East-West Center, 2006).

⁷¹ See John Slatford, *The United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua, 1962-1969: The Anatomy of Betrayal* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003) and Peter Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice: Decolonization and the Right to Self-Determination in West Papua* (.....)

awareness. Formed in 2000 the West Papua Project organized several events in discussing and debating condition in Papua and other related issues such as the Indonesian or Australian governments' policies and the international community's responses. Although the centre is likely to be focusing on analytical discourses, they practically have social implications. It is clearly stated as its objectives: to "establish relevant links with concerned NGOs, academics and parliamentarians in Australia, West Papua and Indonesia" and "raise public awareness of the conflict between West Papua and Indonesia with particular reference to the human rights implications and the threat to the stability of the South Pacific region".⁷² While the monitoring group like ICG is tempting to influence national and international policy makers through their reports and briefings, human rights advocates such as HRW and AI are widely seen to have intention to raise public awareness and if possible to mobilize pressure on the government.

Media and media workers in Australia are also playing a sizeable role in internationalizing the Papuan cause. Journalists such as John Pilger and Scott Burchill and the international newspapers like *The Age*, *The Telegraph* and *Guardian* have been frequently to bring the problems in Papua to international audience.⁷³

The churches and religious leaders are also frequently expressing their concern about difficulties in Papua. In Australia the Uniting Church and Baptist Church have been in the front line to call for improvement.

Human rights and environment activists are critical international entities in addressing the problems in Papua. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International are also regularly reporting practices of human rights abuses in the region.

If any element within this international solidarity with the view of supporting Papuan separation or independence from Indonesia as the ultimate solution to the Papuan problem, it could be said as individual. Any official or organizational view is mostly stated in implicit expression. For example, when asked personally Joe Collins and Neil Sullivan, the coordinator of Sydney and Perth-AWPA respectively, said that Papuan incorporation to Indonesia was illegal and thus Papua has the right to secede and be independent. But, they also asserted that AWPA is mostly interested in seeing social and economic development in the region and for indigenous Papuans to have their human rights protected and respected.⁷⁴ Similarly, as has been revealed above, West Papua Project has not made Papuan independence as its official institutional objective, although individual persons leading and joining the Project have such an ambition in mind.

Ambiguity in preferring Papuan independence among Australian solidarity elements is very obvious. But it is also very obvious that such a preference is real, strong, and substantial. Although written declaration and unambiguous expression might be hard to provide, no one could effectively deny the guts, nuance, or the hope of seeing Papua freed and independent.

⁷² As cited in http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/peace_conflict/research/west_papua_project.shtml

⁷³ See Rodd McGibbob, *ibid.* p.91.

⁷⁴ My personal conversation with Joe Collins in Sydney, 13 May 2010 and with Neil Sullivan in Perth, 21 April 2010.

The preference to seeing an independent Papua is cautiously examined by Rodd McGibbon. He apparently argued that such sentiment and fantasy are broadly based on weak premises, what he himself called as "myths". He then identified seven myths among Australian elements in regard to the Papuan cause that (1) genocide has taken place in Papua, (2) Australian policy is dominated by Jakarta, (3) Papua parallels the East Timor situation, (4) Indonesia is a Javanese empire, (5) Indonesia has expansionist tendencies, (6) Indonesia has manipulated the Act of Free Choice, and (7) Papuans are essentially Melanesian Christians.⁷⁵ All the myths are very likely leading to the preference to seeing Papuan independence. But, since all are seen as myths, McGibbon contended that the preference is consequently misleading, dangerous and utopian.

The risk of having the myths, according to McGibbon, is its dangerous implications to Australian policy makers and Indonesian government and people at large. Considering the importance of keeping and nurturing a good bilateral relationship between the two countries, those myths, he asserted, have to be framed by a more realistic and pragmatic perspective.⁷⁶

McGibbon was not successful in denying the whole premises, and he would not be successful to wipe out the Papuan independence fantasy. This is Empirical facts are prevailing. For examples, reports and documentations of human rights abuses in the provinces are continuing to supply the "genocidal-like" practice and claim; and the implementation of Act of Free Choice was not free of terror and intimidation as the international principle requires so.⁷⁷ Furthermore, although he emphasized the importance of looking at the problems in Papua systematically and comprehensively, the public tend to see them in general view and come to a simple conclusion.

Ambiguity (or difference if more appropriate) among Australian intellectuals and public concerned about the Papuan cause is likely to broaden the constituency of support and sympathy. Individuals with intellectual competencies, groups with moral appeals, and general people with empathy on one particular case or another are all included. But it needs to be noted immediately that the expectation of having radical support is rightly not in place. Because, without a unified view among the Australian solidarity elements about the Papuan cause, it would be hard to see their moral concern would transform to real political influence.

Transferring intellectual dedication, moral solidarity and humanitarian concern to real political influence has been the very central question to the international community. Since the pro-Papuan - independence movement may have seen all kinds of justification for them to separate and be independent from Indonesia, there are many things that have to be in place to make it happen. One of them is a significantly real support from the international community with high expectation from the Australian constituency.

⁷⁵ See Rodd McGibbon, *Ibid.*, pp. 98-108.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p.115.

⁷⁷ Reports and documents on human rights abuses are regularly produced by HRW and SKP. See for example, *Memoria Passione*

The Papuan expectation for a real political support for an independent Papua might be unrealistic. Arguments and analyses proposed by Rodd McGibbon above maintained that Australian government and people have to be realistic and pragmatic. This is in accordance to Emma Leslie that for Australia to be involved in peace initiatives it has to be in balance of promoting human rights aspects and protecting its interests in economy and security.⁷⁸

Being realistic and pragmatic in the interests of dealing with the Papuan cause, there has been a tendency for the Australian government to shift attention from the fantasy of Papuan independence to the concern of protection and promotion of Papuan basic rights. For the latter interest, it is suggested that having Indonesia in a stable and democratic condition is the first and the most requirement. International community, including Australian government and society, should show support to Indonesian government and people to be able and have political will to do so instead of support for a separate and independent Papua.

Support and assistance for Indonesia to have good government and accountable bureaucracy, to build a consolidated democratic polity, and enforce the rule of law become central themes of international support.

What the Papua Australian solidarity elements could do is to see all those things take form required. Nevertheless, they would not come in instant or without any real actions. So, the more relevant questions is whether the Australian elements were able to stand for all costs caused by such actions.

If the myths are similar to opinions that some Australian communities have in mind, none of them could be read as an explicit and clear call on Papuan independence. But, reading them all at glance the direction might be towards "Papua has the justification for free and independence from NKRI". And, this direction is obviously only one extreme of other interpretations and directions.

International solidarity is likely diverse in their concern about Papua cause. As the Papuans themselves are divided into three main issues: separation or independence, the possibility of restoration of the Papuan rights to self-determination and demand for the respect and protection of the Papuan basic human rights, the international community are also divided along. As a consequence, support for the Papuan cause is also spread with limited political influence to both free Papua movement and Indonesia.

Being consistent with the international dimension of internal conflict, the international community are more interested in the effect of conflict in Papua (the flow of refugees and asylum seekers) and in the severity of suffering the Papuans bore caused by different kinds of atrocities committed by Indonesian security forces (=killings, tortures, arrests, rapes, IDPs) or caused by wrong policies (marginalization, alienation, exploitation, and even the threat of extinction).

⁷⁸ As said before a seminar One Just World in WA State Library Perth, 9 June 2010.

Concluding notes: Challenges and opportunities

Expectation of pro-Papuan independence movement to have support from the international community, in particular the Australian constituency, remains alive, although it seems slim. And within the broader international community the chance to bring solution to the problems in Papua is both challenging and promising. On the other hand, the Indonesian government has equally challenges and opportunities to bring the problems in Papua in a peaceful end while keeping the region united within the unitary state of Indonesia (NKRI).

It is challenging since the problems in Papua are definitely complicated. One single solution, say Papuan independence, is highly unlikely. Separation and independence of Papua from the existing ruling state of Indonesia might be effective to fulfil political ambition of a few Papuan leaders and a number of disadvantaged Papuans. However, there are equally a number of Papuan leaders and people have in mind other than separation. While the Papuan people are divided, the Indonesian government seems to be in tough stance and shows a cohesive and effective power that could take certain actions needed to handle secessionist aspiration and international network. In addition, foreign countries and multinational corporations have seen the inclusion of Papua in Indonesia bring much benefits in managing security threats, including in containing the alleged globalization of Islamic radical movement, and securing economic profits.

But, the international sympathy, if not tangible support, is still existed. The historical arguments and human rights claims make the secessionist aspiration alive. To energize them, there is a need for more resources that both Papuans in homeland and overseas and the international solidarity remain to strive in order to meet up to its sufficient level.

Finally, for the international community to translate their solidarity and human right concern to financing political and military struggle for an independent Papua is out of context as it is inherently a paradox and so far there is no evidence. Firmly bound by peaceful principles and negotiation norms in resolving conflicts, financial and military support for an independent Papua only made possible through illegal ways, uncivilized mechanisms and by self-seeking interest spoilers. But, again, neighbouring countries such as PNG and Australia or other remote states show no any piece of evidence of having spoilers or mercenaries within their territories supplied pro-Papua independence movement with money and/or weapon.

It is very obvious that calls for right to self-determination of Papuan people and land have ground in the international legal regime. The right has also cultural ground by considering genuinely the uniqueness of their culture and all invaluable matters it has. It then gains moral ground since a large number of Papuan people with their exclusive identity are facing severe deprivation. Nevertheless, converting legal, cultural, and moral arguments of the right to self-determination to political policies and actions is a costly business. In Javanese traditional perception of politic and power, there is no consideration of what is wrong or immoral. The only one in power politics is victory or loss. Indonesian politics and government are deeply rooted in such a power conception. It is stipulated in constitution and national legal system, and it is socialized through daily political practices. The contemporary international regime

does basically have no difference. Remaining relying on state-system as precondition to have international peace and order, the intention and struggle to have new and separate state of Papua has faced much restriction or discouragement as it is seen to bring about big cost in all accounts.

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