

## **The Papuans of Indonesia.**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to speak in front of you and the honorable assembly.

Let me in this occasion introduce myself, my name is Yulianus Daosi Gebze, native Papuan of the Marind-anim tribe, the tribe living in the southeast corner in the boarder area between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. I am speaking on behalf of The Office of Justice and Peace Archdiocese of Merauke and the Papuan Minorities we work for.

We face very complicated problems in Papua, but I will try to explain these in an understandable way.

The Papuans are economically marginalized by the economic system developed by the Indonesian government since 1969 in Papua, felt particularly in Merauke, the southern part of Papua where my organization is active. This economic system is based on three aspects of economy: Marketing, Hinterland production and Transportation, and is actually a market oriented system or cash economic system.

To run this, the government settled here in-migrant farmers who moved from the overcrowded island of Java, and spontaneous in-migrants from other islands. These migrants quickly outnumbered the native population. Thousands of hectares of land were cleared for rice fields, for rice production to meet the demands of the market. These land clearing operations have had a serious impact on the ecological system, depriving Papuans from their lands, which they badly needed for their survival.

Place names in the in-migrants settlements were also changed into Jawa/Indonesian names, causing the indigenous population to loose their identity, which should be regarded as efforts of the annihilation of the Papuan minorities.

Without any technical skill and managerial skill and still fully depending on subsistent farming, food gathering, the Papuans are unable to get any job opportunity, in these three aspect (sectors) of economy. Already in the minority, they were made consumers of goods and services of Non-Papuans.

Sociologically, this economic system, in its development, resulted in a social pyramid, with on the top a handful Papuan elite, but at the large bottom, the vast majority of the indigenous Papuans : unskilled, uneducated and, while in the middle half, there are Non-Papuans, who control the whole infrastructure, economy and politics.

Mr. Chairman, this system implies that the whole development activities are concentrated in the town as the centre of marketing, financial transaction and government service with the consequences that the rural areas are being given minor attention. There is hard evidence that the education in the rural areas is not running. There are villages on the island of Kimaam which have been without schools since the Dutch left 40 years ago or there are school buildings without teachers. The healthcare is no better either. Mother and infant mortality is very high.

Mr Chairman, the above mentioned situation is a violation of the rights contained in the UNDM, in particular articles 1.1 and 2.

## Recommendations

1. I recommend herewith that the government of Indonesia should recognize the rights of the Papuans as it is stated in the special autonomy law for Papua.
2. In future government programmes, there should be vocational trainings for Papuan minorities to enable them to gain technical skills besides in addition to conventional education. This will assist with job opportunities.
3. The government should stop the influx of non-controlled immigrants to Papua especially to the Merauke area.
4. The government should abolish the plan to divide Papua into 8 smaller provinces because this division would mean the influx of even more migrants.

Thank you Mr Chairman for your attention.