Research Report

Leiden Model United Nations 2016
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Forum: *General Assembly Third Committee*
Issue: *The oppression of the Papua people*

Position: *Chair*

Introduction

Lord Harries of Pentregarth, the former Bishop of Oxford, and also a cofounder of the group International Parliamentarians for West Papua (IPWP), described West Papua as "one of the great neglected scandals of our time".[1]
The issue affects over two million people, who live in this region. The Indonesian government is accused of torture, abuse and killing the Papua people, who don't have freedom of speech or expression, which are rights, written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Definition of Key Terms

The Papua people:
People of different ethnical groups who live in the most eastern provinces of Indonesia, called Papua and West Papua.

General Overview

Papua and West Papua were known as Dutch New Guinea when they were a Dutch colony until 1962. The Dutch remained sovereign on Papua and West Papua while other Dutch colonies such as Indonesia became independent. However, they took steps to prepare Papua and West Papua to be an independent country. Tensions between the Netherlands and Indonesia escalated because Indonesia wanted to pass a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly stating their claim to the Papua and West Papua territory. Indonesia felt they had the right to this territory, since they were a Dutch colony for so many years.

The Dutch decided to speed up the process of becoming independent. The New Guinea Council was elected. This council was supposed to decide on self determination within in a year. On December 1st 1961 a new national anthem was elected and the Morning Star, as the new national flag was hoist. This flag remains the symbol of indolence for the rebels until this day.

From this moment Indonesia attacked the territory several times, but was defeated

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1 https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/03/west-papua-un-must-supervise-vote-on-independence-says-coalition

by Dutch forces. The Dutch agreed to renegotiate because of international pressure and the threat of an Indonesian invasion. They signed the New York agreement which stated that the authorisation would transfer to a temporary United Nations authority and that the people of the territory would be able to vote in an Act of Free choice later on.

After seven months of United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), the territory officially became a province of Indonesia on May 1st 1963.

In 1969, the Indonesian government organised the Act of Choice. This was, on the other hand, not an Act of Choice. The Indonesian government selected 1022 people to vote in favour of the Act. They had to do this in public and unanimously.

Ever since, the Indonesian government is accused of abuse, terror, torture an attacks on civilians, and accused of the oppression of freedom of speech and expression. Raising the Morning Star flag is seen as an act of treason. This is also against the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which was ratified by Indonesia in 2006.

Several separatist groups such as the Free Papua Movement (OPM) have protested against the occupation by the Indonesian government by taking hostages, attacks on military posts and attacks on Indonesian civilians. There are also less aggressive groups and organizations, such as the United Liberation Front of Wes Papua(ULMWP). The ULMWP has had some success. Some countries addressed the issue of West Papua in the United Nations General Assembly and the ULMWP was given observer status in the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), a regional intergovernmental organization (including Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu)

Morning Star flag
(http://www.wereldvlaggen.nl/en/vlag-special-offer-morning-star-papua.html)

Major Parties Involved

Indonesia
The Indonesian government took control of the territory in 1963 after the United Nations Temporary Authority. The government is accused of cruel crimes against the Papua people.

The Netherlands

The Dutch were the coloniser of the Papuan territory until 1962.

The United Nations (UN)

The United Nations appointed a temporary executive authority, led by José Rolz-Benett. Their part was to govern and keep peace. A lot of people question the part the UN played in the Act of Choice, since there were UN authorities present during the voting.

The United Liberation Front of West Papua (ULFWP)

The ULFWP is a United Kingdom based organisation that wishes to give the people of West Papua the freedom to choose their own destiny. [2]

Timeline of Events

August 1945	Indonesia becomes independent
1949	The Dutch colonise Papua and West Papua and call it Dutch New Guinea
1961	The New Guinea Council is elected and supposed to decide about independence within one year.
December 1st 1961	The council elects the national anthem and the Morning star as the national flag
August 15th 1962	The Dutch government signs the New York Agreement
May 1st 1963	Papua and West Papua officially become Indonesian provinces
1969	1022 Papua people vote in the Act of Free Choice

[2] https://www.freewestpapua.org/background/

2006	Indonesia ratifies the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
2015	ULMWP becomes observer state in the MSG

Previous Attempts to solve the issue

The organization ULFWP launched a campaign in 2004, called Free West Papua. Their aim is to give the people of West Papua a real choice, but in a peaceful way. Several other organizations, such as Amnesty International have launched campaigns and tried to raise awareness.

In 2005, the Indonesian government set up the Papuan People' Council (MRP) to meet with the tribes. This Council is a governmental council, but this does not mean that the Papua have actually any influence.

Possible Solutions

The Indonesian government and the aggressive separatist groups should both be stopping their actions that cause civilian's life's. Pressure and maybe even sanctions from the United Nations and other countries could help to accelerate this.

A new, fair and transparent referendum could be held. The Papua people could choose their own destiny. This referendum could be supervised, by for example the United Nations and ULFWP.

Also, more international organizations should set up campaigns to raise awareness for this issue. As mentioned in the introduction, the issue is relatively unknown, while it affects some many people.

Useful documents

https://www.freewestpapua.org

General Assembly resolution 1752:

https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/192/60/IMG/NR019260.pdf?OpenElement

General Assembly resolution 2504:

https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/256/38/IMG/NR025638.pdf?OpenElement

http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/

Appendix/Appendices

https://www.culturalsurvival.org/ourpublications/csq/article/west-papua-forgotten-war-unwanted-people

http://unpo.org/members/7843

http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/03/201232172539145809.html

http://thediplomat.com/2016/09/how-the-un-failed-west-papua/

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/03/west-papua-un-must-supervise-vote-on-independence-says-coalition
http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unsfbackgr.html
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/17/indonesia-accused-of-arresting-more-than-1000-in-west-papua
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/03/west-papua-un-must-supervise-vote-on-independence-says-coalition
https://www.freewestpapua.org/2016/07/12/msg-ulmwp-and-west-papua-what-you-need-to-know/
http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB128/
https://www.hrw.org/news/2009/11/18/indonesia-release-papuan-flag-raisers
https://www.bennywenda.org/biography/