

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

IN PAPUA

MUSYAWARAH BESAR PAPUA

24-26 FEBRUARI 2000

serta

SUASANA PASCA-MUBES

Oleh

SEKRETARIAT KEADILAN & PERDAMAIAN

KEUSKUPAN JAYAPURA

JAYAPURA

April 2000

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“Papua pasca-MUBES”

The end of February 2000 marks a new stage in the developments around the Independence Movement (Gerekan Aspirasi M) in Papua (Indonesia). On the evening of February 23 a big meeting, named MUBES (*Musyawahar Besar*, which approximately means: “Great Consultation”) was officially opened, and lasted till February 26, 22.30pm. (exactly a year after the statement by the Team of 100 at the Presidential Palace in Jakarta), releasing an official statement on its results (see: attachment).

Around 400 people were gathering for the official meeting; 10 delegates from every district, complemented with a number of representatives of organisations including representatives from the OPM residing in PNG= and organising people. Besides the official participants, a score of sympathising people ‘hang around’ the meeting place, while they were enabled to follow the discussion via a sound-system. Security was handled by the so-called Satgas Papua (a kind of people’s security organisation, which officially is allowed by the Police to assist in maintaining security during big gatherings).

As a special note, it should be mentioned that quite some delegates from across the border (with PNG) were present, and this as well can be valued as a new development. On one hand this group comes with an own history, own ideas often stressing the wider Melanesian or Pacific scope; on the other hand they miss the experience of the daily context in Papua and of the concrete developments over the last two years in Indonesia. This difference was a source for some heated debates during the meeting.

Participating in the discussions was limited to the Papuan people officially invited; security was tight as to permitting people entering the main meeting room. Although official representatives of the government, police and army were invited to attend the opening ceremony, they failed to show up.

The MUBES took place in a hotel near Sentani, and while outside the Indonesian flag was waving, inside in the main meeting room the only flag

displayed was the Papuan Morning Star flag in a large number. The meeting lasted for three full days and gave room for a number of presentations and groups-discussions. It was the first time an event of this kind has taken place. The first time the Papuan Community has been allowed to meet in the way she did, and to discuss the matters at heart in an open way. Really something extra-ordinary! And that is the way a lot of people experienced these days of the MUBES.

The MUBES was announced at the meeting with President Wahid during his visit at Jayapura on December 31, 1999. The main objective of the MUBES was set as follows¹:

Political decisions in the past have been made without involvement of the Papuan People itself as 'legal person' (Dutch: rechts persoon). In line with the commitment to reformation/renewal and political openness in Indonesia the Papuan Community has opened up being aware of the need to demand that justice has to be done and truth has to be looked for. This search for the truth has to be processed via a political dialogue and a rectification of history. Hence the MUBES has been organised.

The main topics during the discussions have been:

1. the need to rectify history (pelurusan sejarah)
2. the need to compose a political agenda
3. the need to consolidate the movement

[1] The most dominating one -is my impression- has been the call for rectifying history (pelurusan sejarah). This topic is directly connected to subjects like:

(a) An evaluation of the process of integrating Papua into the Indonesian Republic,

(b) Specially also an evaluation of the execution of the "Act of Free Choice" in 1969, which was meant to be a democratic way of determining as people its future political status, and last but not least

(c) The real meaning of the historical date December 1, 1961, the day that the Papuan Morning Star flag was raised for the first time along side with the Dutch flag; together with the singing of the Papuan National Hymn and the inauguration of the Papuan members (50%) of the New Guinea Council.

Each of these sub-topics has given room for heated discussions and has shown the divergence of thinking and opinion among the Papuans themselves.

¹ Cfr. Tifa Papua, No. 008, Tahun 44, "Langkah menuju kemerdekaan", p.3.

[2] The discussion about the composition of a political agenda has been rather un-articulated and still has left a gap to be filled (in the near future). Most of the discussion was still close to very rough evaluating steps already taken (such as the statement in front of the President on February 26, 1999; the December 1, 1999 celebration; the meeting with President Wahid on December 31, 1999 and the change of name into Papua.

Within this context the issue of the formation of a transition government has been raised, which was reacted on very emotionally, but a systematic discussion didn't really start. Hence the discussion has been closed unfinished, leaving the topic to be discussed by the future Presidium. The matter stays 'unsolved'. Therefore the issue also didn't get a place in the final summary of the results of the MUBES.

Anyway, generally speaking, strategies for the future still have to be formulated and are delayed till the Papua Congress, while they have to be prepared via the home-work that the Presidium is meant to take charge of.

[3] As to the consolidation of the movement, the main item within this context has been the forming of a leading board of 18 persons, called Presidium. The Presidium is meant to lead the future movement and has the following elements represented (2 of each) in it: representatives of the tradition (adat), of history, of the intelligentsia/ profession, of the politicians, of the women, of the students, of the religions, of the youth and of the ex-political detained.

Persons nominated: Theys Hiyo Eluay (tradition) and Tom Beanal (politician) as the two chairpersons; Herman Awom (religion), Benny Giyai (profession) and Frans-Albert Joku (tradition) as the Moderators; and as members: Beatriks Koibur and Ketty Yabansabra (women), Isack Ayomi (politician), Don Flassy (profession), Martinus Werimon and Leo Imbiri (students), Elieser Awom and John S.Mambor (ex-political detained), Fred Suebu and Melkias Mandosir (historians), Andi Manobi and Yakob Kasima (youth) and Haji Muh Said Sabuku (religion).

In the original concept also representatives of the OPM -Papuan Independence Organisation-, TPN -Papuan National Army- as well as the Satgas were suggested, but at the end the MUBES-participants left both groups out after heavy discussion.

The main job to be done by the Presidium is to follow-up the decisions taken during the MUBES, to elaborate pending issues and proposals made during the MUBES and to prepare the up-coming Papua Congress.

Some elements of reflection on actual situation

[1] “Going International”

Already before the MUBES was on there has been a heavy discussion among Papuan leaders about the support the Papuan Movement enjoys abroad. A statement by a local Human Rights Organisation (Els-HAM) that the “Papua issue was not on the agenda of the UN” sparked off a real emotional reaction by people who like to believe that the movement has real support abroad. Above that it has been almost generally spread information among the large Papuan Community that its struggle had the active support by the UN as well as some foreign governments. Although some critical observers have often denied that fact, a lot of people never accepted the denial, and took the support for granted. After Els-HAM made a more public statement, people was really invited to believe the facts, and to realise that some of their leaders had been telling ‘stories’ in the recent past. It was a rather uneasy confrontation.

Some people in Jakarta (including high up officials in the government) like to tell that the central government in Jakarta is not too worried about the independence movement in Papua “as it will die down because of internal conflicts! too many tribal groups are involved to make a strong united force!”; however what “Jakarta” is scared about is that “*the Papuan struggle becomes an international issue*”. This might be the background of the heavy control that has been applied to media-representatives from abroad over the recent months. Opposing the government’s wish the Papuan people is really looking for ways to get its cause taken care of by international organisations.

Two items which have been expressed as concrete ways to get the Papuan Movement to the international forum (UN and foreign governments), in other words to “go international”. These two are:

- (1) *A throughout study of what happened in 1969 (especially the execution of the Act of Free Choice -Pepera- from its legal aspects), and*
- (2) *A clearer articulation of violations of human rights over the period of 38 years.*

This last element should get more attention reminding the statement by the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, in an interview in Jakarta on February 13, 2000, where he declares that he supports the Papuan Movement “*in the context of Human Rights*”. Therefore some observers of the MUBES have drawn attention to the fact that during the MUBES there has been hardly any discussion concerning the Human Rights issue.

If true that the Dutch government (via its Minister for Foreign Affairs) has proposed to do a real research on the way the Act of Free Choice has been executed, an important step might have been taken already to get more international attention. The presence at the MUBES of delegates from PNG and the Pacific might be interpreted as another important element of 'connecting with the international world'.

[2] "Going National"

It has been often said that the government never has answered properly on the intention statement made by the Team of 100 way back on February 26, 1999, or on the "Independence Movement" since. In a certain way this might be true, as -even if a very positive answer not can be expected- the government has excelled in showing a kind of ignorance of the movement, never making a real effort to understand WHY this movement and 'crying out' is happening. The government has just shown itself by ignoring the settlement of human rights cases, by pointing to legal limits for expression (or straightaway pointing to subversive action), by pointing at the internal conflicts within the Papuan Community, by pointing at the lack of internal capabilities, and by selling its own program of regional autonomy. The way of showing a complete indifference even hurts more than a straight refusal to give room for independence.

At least the actual President has made a clear statement while meeting with the leading persons of the Independence Movement on December 31, 1999. He made clear that there is no room for "separating Papua from the Republic of Indonesia". So, whether the Papuan Community likes it or not, there is an answer.

What surprises any open-minded observer -I guess- is the fact that President's answer never has been really taken for an answer. During the MUBES his answer never has become a real issue for discussion, inviting people to find out how to proceed from here? At the same time the movement is just going ahead. It might be that during the upcoming Congress more attention will be given to concrete strategies, which means also that ways have to be articulated taken in account the reality as it presents itself, a/o. as presented via President's answer.

As if there has been never an answer Papuan leaders just keep visiting the President informing him about the results of the MUBES and keep telling the President that he should recognise the Papuan right for independence. It might be the most appropriate one, countering the government's ignorance of suffering of the Papuan people over the last 38 years. On the other hand, to

be honest, it worries me as well, as I think the question has to be asked: given the government response shouldn't the Papuan leaders show more realism in their way of talking and acting? Don't they have to ask the question: how to proceed with the aspiration for independence within the context given? Facing reality is not easy; but is there an alternative? It is not a matter of giving up the aspiration to free themselves, but avoiding the risk of just dreaming and putting the Papuan Community on the wrong foot. At least it would be refreshing when this matter would have been discussed openly in the MUBES, as it might serve the leaders themselves (setting their policy) as well as the listening large Papuan Community.

Anyway it seems to me that the movement has to 'go national', trying to deal with what is up in the Republic of Indonesia of today, trying to make people 'at home' (Papuan as well as Non-Papuan) understand, trying to get sympathy besides understanding, trying to find the political channels which are open for dialogue, and such. The upcoming Congress might be the next very suitable opportunity to reflect more on this side of the story.

[3] "Going local"

Related to what has been said above the most wanted move to be made by the Papuan leaders -in my personal opinion- is to "go local". A more open dialogue among the Papuan Community is more needed than ever. The large Papuan Community is left with partial information on issues but not really informed in "what is on the agenda", hence they have all reasons to feel confused about what to expect next? How to organise that kind of a dialogue in order to involve more people into the discussions, and to get the more complete picture of the variety of opinion?

It looks like quite a number of Papuan people feel left out, as their opinion is not asked for, or as they have been 'marked' already as 'pro-autonomy', or as more moderate people (which often is thought of as an equivalent for 'pro autonomy'). It looks like the leading persons have difficulties to create the "open-mind" which is so needed to articulate the movement into concrete policies and strategies, and at the same time to unite themselves on a specific program.

Over the last weeks the Papuan Community has been confused by a number of issues. The confusion comes *from inside* the community as well as *from outside*.

From inside.

First of all the vagueness about 'who is in charge?' the Presidium has two chairpersons: Theys Eluay and Tom Beanal. Nevertheless the local paper on March 1 opens its edition with a big headline "Saya Pemimpinnya, Bukan Tom" (I am the leader, not Tom), quoting comments by Theys Eluay.

Secondly, for some weeks a discussion has been given full attention in the local paper confronting personalities of Presidium in relation with the issue about the plan to form a transition government. Once again a split in the Presidium has been shown which makes the community feeling confused.

Thirdly, the planned Papuan Congress has been postponed; the announcement has been made after a meeting of the Presidium. The reasons given: (1) to get it better prepared, (2) because of the confusion around the transition government issue, and (3) because of most of the Presidium members are actually kept busy by the police as they have been asked in for interrogation. No new date has been set, although it has been made clear later that it will not be organised before June 2000. Although presented as a Presidium-decision, Theys has made clear that he wants it organised before June 2000.

Fourth, there is the "May 1"-issue. People is asked to believe that independence will become reality on May 1, 2000, or at least that by then a transition government will be in place. Looks like this issue and the related beliefs are widespread, as we get reports on it from Jayawijaya as well as Paniai. A number of people are really expecting that independence will be reached by May 1, 2000. This kind of expectation is really very disturbing, and leads to fear, especially among people from outside, and to overacting among the Papuans themselves. The situation as pictured by some local reports is really very worrying and local confusion and tension seem to be the only results.

From outside.

First of all the disturbing statement by the security forces after the MUBES was over as the Head of the Police voiced his opinion that he "didn't know yet how to evaluate the results of the MUBES" and "*to determine whether the MUBES has violated the law and with that might be looked at as subversive*"². Before the MUBES was on I never heard anything about someone telling that the MUBES might be classified as "subversive". Confusing and intimidating interrogations, including almost all the leading figures of the Presidium, have followed the initial statement. Confusing for the leaders as well as for the on-looking Papuan Community. Looks like the security forces like to display a

² In: CEPOS, February 28, 2000.

kind of 'creating mystery', which means: "leave things in the vague", "let them guess", and "let them think that anything can happen". This works very paralysing indeed.

Above that a message by the deputy Head of the Police that everybody is 'accused'; that is much more than "being asked for explanation" (which normally have been the terms used to call people in). Strange thing is that the status of being accused only surfaced in the international press and hardly can be read about in the local main paper (Cepos). Why? Is this a move on very purpose to create confusion? Or is it just a move to make it impossible for the Papuan leaders to prepare the Congress? As they need the calm so badly to handle that job properly?

If indeed the leading persons are kept busy and if it might be made impossible for them to deal with the more important matters at hand, the community will be deprived of the direction it most needs. At the end of the day the community might become very impatient and open to any disturbing uncontrolled action. If that happens it might be the end of any promising future, and a violent crackdown on the movement by the security-forces will be imminent.

Secondly, more reason for confusion yet has been given by what happened far from the centre, in Nabire. In the middle of the feeling of hope and satisfaction, all of a sudden Papuans are shot at again. Three people killed, and scores of people called in for interrogation and all kinds of acts of intimidation and even torture is reported on.

Thirdly as if that might not yet be enough the most recent troubles have taken place in Fakfak (March 19-20), which at the end confronted the Satgas Papua (Papuan people's security group) with the Satgas Merah Putih (the Army led people's security group). How far are we still from real "militia activities" in Tanah Papua? is a question that more and more is heard.

Fourth also the connection made with the information that fresh military troops have been added to the ones already present, creates a new ambience of uncertainty and fear. Although already raised as a worrying issue since mid-March, only in the local paper (Cepos) of March 30, it has been officially denied that fresh troops have been added. The new troops just 'replace' the old ones, the explanation said. It has not been explained why it took the Army that long to come up with the denial. Which game is really played by the security forces? A question asked by many people.

This is just a very rough picture of the confusion, but it might be enough to understand how much urgent action is needed. Urgent action in terms of:

- a. formulating a clear agenda which translates the people's aspiration,
- b. which is easy to understand by the large community, and
- c. which sets clear objectives to be aimed for,
- d. including the strategies that will be followed.

It is my honest feeling that this is the most needed action to be taken by the Presidium, and which should also help the Presidium to act as team. "Going local" should be the first step in the long process ahead and really 'a must'.

[4] Independence: what does people understand?

Often people will tell that "independence" is a matter of life or death (kemerdekaan adalah 'harga mati'). Just interpreting what people thinks about when using the term "independence" you don't need much imagination to fill it in: it is the dream of an own independent country. For sure the government has made clear that this kind of 'independence' is not open for discussion; any action towards it will be met with action by the security. That message has been delivered very clearly by the President and a lot of officials.

The moment during the MUBES that the discussion on the forming of a transition government was on, the emotions went up high. The issue is not new as it was already one of the three main points in the declaration delivered by the Team of 100 on February 26, 1999 at the presidential palace. During the meeting of the MUBES some leading figure of the DPRD tried to explain that forming a transition government can really be valued by the authorities as a 'subversive act', and so he strongly advised against it "*if we like to keep the movement peaceful!*" His statement might have made quite some people nervous or at least uncertain about what to do and what to expect. Opting for a transition government, means explicitly opting for "an independent country at the end of the day". So, basically the discussion about the forming of a transition government was a discussion about: do we go for an independent country or not? Is the 'independence' as often filled in spontaneously, indeed a matter of life or death?

The discussion has made clear that a lot of (prominent) people doubt when confronted what that kind of a direct question. There is quite a variety of wording when people talk about "independence". Although ultimately hoping for an own independent state a number of people prefer to take the long way, preparing themselves via 'conditional' forms of autonomy for the time being.

There is also a number of people trying to articulate "independence" as 'freeing themselves from all forms of oppression', free of intimidation, free of

being jailed, free of being mistrusted, free to speak up, free to organise themselves, free to display its own identity as a people, free of being looked down at, free of arbitrary military action, free to set their own style of development, free to participate in decision-making etc. The list can be extended and for sure mirrors the opposite of what the Head of the Police understands by independence; according to him “the real meaning of independence is being free of poverty, free of stupidity, and free of backwardness”³. It is the almost classic formulation by people who feel themselves superior and in charge. For sure in that kind of formulation there is hardly any room for elements expressed by the “independence movement”; there might be even hardly room for mere justice in this classic concept, and only just room for paternalistic charity (not: love!).

The difference of interpretation as mentioned above makes once again very clear how important and urgent it is that (and here I like refer once more to the section above -“go local”-) the concept of independence should be filled more clearly and easy to understand for a large Papuan Community. Above that -in my personal opinion- it should be formulated as the contents of the movement within the factual political setting nowadays, which means not just the formulation of the ‘ideal’ but also the formulation of the ‘road leading to realisation of the ideal’. If the Congress would succeed to come up with that formulation it will perform a major step and create the base for a more solid organisation and more promising future.

[5] Are we closer to an atmosphere of dialogue?

Under this heading I would to draw some attention to several circumstantial aspects such as

- (a) the socialisation of the MUBES results in the government’s circle,
- (b) the crack down in Nabire followed by a conflict in Fakfak, and
- (c) especially the role of the Satgas.

[a] - Socialisation of MUBES results to the government-top.

What for exactly? To look after all for a legitimisation of the MUBES? Might be wise as well, as the local security officials seem more and more eager to declare the MUBES as ‘illegal’. According to Governor (and Minister) Freddy Numberi the President is willing to open the upcoming Papuan Congress. Does it change anything in the political will of the government to dialogue? The mere lack of understanding, lack of openness, and lack of a capacity for dialoguing shown by the government over all these months is still a very worrying fact. The government hasn’t been capable to open up; it just has reacted on the aspirations by ‘selling its own concept’ of autonomy, and

³ In: Tifa Papua, No. 11 Tahun 44, 20-25 Maret 2000, p. 5, ‘Mereka bicara tentang pemerintahan transisi’.

completely unilaterally pushing the dividing up of Papua into three new provinces. The most stunning example of its attitude has been the silent inauguration of two new governors, while keeping the people completely ignorant of the planned ceremony.

To my understanding a local human rights activist was completely correct when he pointed that as long as the government doesn't really show an honest will

[1] to take the already known -reported on- human rights violations serious, which means to investigate them and reach a legal verdict,

[2] to listen to the Papuan people about their complaints, feelings of powerlessness and ideas, and

[3] to involve the Papuan community in any policy-decision concerning the developments in Papua and affecting their life,

the government will be looked at as oppressive, violating basic rights and not worth to talk with⁴. Does the President's willingness to open the upcoming Papuan Congress signal to a change of policy, at least from his part? Will he be capable to involve the "governmental jet-set" in his new approach?

[b] - The Nabire crackdown.

Straight away after the MUBES the Papuan community has been shocked by fresh irregularities in Nabire leaving three people dead. Is it a coincidence that the crackdown on the protesters at Timika was directly following the successful December 1 celebration in 1999? This time Nabire just after a successfully lead MUBES? Has it been carefully planned? Was it an incident which has been used for further reaching purpose? As a flag-raising incident in Sorong (July 5, 1999) once was used to go after peaceful militant activists (organised in a local 'posko'), was the incident in Nabire used to crackdown on the Satgas as the real target? Or is the whole situation used to set the tune and warn everybody who still thinks that supporting the independence movement is his or her very good right?

The Nabire troubles leave any observer with a lot of open questions. Since the very beginning of February it looks like the security-forces in Nabire (and Jayapura) took a new approach, adding on the way a hundred extra personnel to control the small town. Operations started and were mainly aimed at 'people who disturbed social life'. The Nabire police has sent a long list of crimes committed by the Satgas -according to the police-⁵ to its headquarters in Jayapura. This kind of reporting is used as the main legitimisation for any

⁴ In: Jakarta Post, March 24, 2000, 'No letup in security approach spells trouble in Irian Jaya'.

⁵ Official Police report: "Dampak negatif yang dilakukan oleh Satgas Papua di wilayah hukum Polres Paniai yang telah meresahkan masyarakat dan melanggar HAM", Nabire, 09 Februari 2000. Followed by a second one: "Laporan Pelanggaran Hukum/Tindak Pidana dan Pelanggaran Hak Azasi Manusia yang dilakukan oleh Satgas Papua", Nabire, 4 Maret 2000.

police action afterwards. By the way the Papuan flag -which has been in top since December 1, 1999 in the middle of town- has never been taken down during the clashes and is still in top today (March 31, 2000).

In a meeting with a protesting delegation of the Papuan Community, the Head of the Police takes ample time to picture the situation in Nabire as more and more criminal and the police see most of the criminality as the responsibility of the Satgas Papua⁶. The head of the Police makes clear that the police will never allow having a competing security force on the spot. Having this setting, it might be expected that any minor incident will be used 'to clear the spot', and it shouldn't wonder anybody that the victims during and after the clashes starting on February 28 have been Satgas related persons.

For the time being things have not yet been sorted out, but it remains a clear fact that shooting has taken place where other means might have been sufficient, and people have been taken in custody and treated badly⁷. There is little reason to doubt that we are facing clear-cut violations of basic human rights! A real investigation in what happened is very needed.

And if Nabire was not yet enough, Fakfak has been added to the recent trouble spots. Clashes have taken place confronting Papuan supporting the Independence Movement with supporters of the local Head of the Regency (Bupati). A sudden visit by the Bupati to a local village on March 19, 2000 sparked off the conflict. In fact just a very minor incident. Nevertheless in the aftermath of it the Satgas Merah-Putih⁸ reacted for the Bupati by attacking the Satgas Papua. A military operation followed a day later, while a striking presence of Satgas Merah-Putih was dominating in the small town of Fakfak.

[c] - The confusing role of the Satgas.

It might be very relevant to make a special additional note on the phenomenon of this people's security groups (called: Satgas). If asked about the origins of this "people's task force" it is not easy to trace them down. First rumours about having special "people's task forces" in place was heard in the wake of organising the national general elections (June 1999)⁹. It became a national issue, as quite some people feared that having this kind of people's organised security groups could easily get out of hand. Nevertheless at the end a number of people have been trained for it, including the province of

⁶ Public meeting between Papuan Community delegation and Head of the Police in the regency Papua, at Jayapura, March 1, 2000.

⁷ A concrete case has been documented. Others are just reported on by local NGO representatives.

⁸ in Indonesian: Satgas Merah-Putih (Red-White, related to the two colours of the Indonesian flag), which refers to a people's security group organised and trained by the Indonesian Army.

⁹ In Indonesian called: Kamra (keamanan rakyat).

Papua. Where all these trained people have gone after the elections were over, is not clear. But at least it can be said that a first presence of “a people’s task force” had been created by then.

Later on slowly a group of people has been building up just to protect the house of the Papuan leader Theys Eluay. His group made a good impression on the December 1, 1999 celebration, taking care of the disciplined order of the ceremony. Since then Satgas Papua is a well-known group, and respected because of what they did. In the meantime almost all over the place groups of “Satgas-like people” have been set up; it even might be that the process has practically started directly after the declaration of the Team of 100 in February, 1999, but in the beginning having their function mainly limited to protect the local “posko’s”, and partly also set up as a reaction on initial intimidation to people involved in the Team of 100.

Over the period of a year the Satgas has developed itself as a very large difficult to overseen group and as a group, which puts itself in charge of any event connected with the Movement for Independence. It has also caused conflicts in several places as the members over-acted, run out of control and went clearly beyond its socially acceptable authority (such as: checking on passengers at incoming boats at Manokwari, Sorong and Fakfak in 1999; destroying a motorbike-taxi centre in Sentani, January 2000; involvement in the death of a drunk in Merauke, January 2000). The group acted also interfering with practices it values as not correct such as the practice of selling hard liquor by security personnel; acting also against the involvement of security personnel in unfair trade in the inland, especially related to ‘kayu geharu’¹⁰. Brief it seems that the Satgas is very hard to be kept under control. It might be even not clear “who controls the Satgas?” under whose responsibility is the Satgas functioning?¹¹ This vagueness combined with the fact that people with normally rather low education (and jobless) tend to join this group, while obtaining a kind of status in life by joining, added to the fact that the group “takes initiatives”, makes the group quite unpredictable in its action¹².

¹⁰ A kind of ‘rotten wood’ which is very expensive as it contains basic materials for expensive perfumes.

¹¹ Originally the Satgas Papua was under the control of the local Traditional Council (Lembaga Adat). But since its start a lot has changed (cfr. footnote no. 12)

¹² According to credible sources in Nabire, Satgas Papua in fact a mixed group. There are three groups mixed up: (1) the original pure-independence movement related group, protecting the flag raised in top (2) the group of easy ‘followers’, and (3) a group which is used -and paid- by the official security forces. Because of this mixing up of ‘different intentions’ the Satgas has become an untrustworthy lot of people. The pattern is not far from what I have witnessed in Timika at the end of last year.

Over-viewing what the experience has been up till now, and also receiving more and more information about “other task forces” as well (Army trained Satgas) it really becomes time to watch the development of these groups very closely. It should be a matter of serious attention for anyone who prefers to keep developments in Papua peaceful. What recently happened in Fakfak makes clear that we are not far anymore from really competing militia-groups. That is bad news for everybody, and we might be best of if we still could get rid of “any kind of Satgas”, Satgas Papua as well as Army trained Satgas. At least that lesson we might learn from what we have recently witnessed in East Timor.

So far this personal reflection I like to share with anyone who cares for what is happening in Papua and in its Papuan Community.

Sdr. Theo van den Broek ofm
Director Office for Justice & Peace

ATTACHMENT

The results of the MUBES is summarised in a official statement¹³:

PAPUAN POLITICAL COMMUNIQUÉ

Musyawahar Besar Papua 2000 at Sentani, Port Numbay, February 26, 2000

We, Papuan Community, gathered for consultation on 23-26 February 2000, have dialogued on and discussed the political rights, justice and human rights we have as Papuan People, and herewith submit a political statement as Papuan People as follows:

[1] The Papuan Community conveys her profound appreciation to the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Kiai Haji Abdurahman Wahid, who already has paid attention to hear the Papuans outcry regarding their sense of identity as a Papuan People, and therefore on December 31, 1999 has officially allowed changing the name Irian into Papua. Therefore now and forever we will use the name Papua instead of Irian.

The same appreciation we address to Third President of the Republic of Indonesia, BJ Habibie, who already has received the Papuan Community for a dialogue at the Presidential Palace in Jakarta on February 26, 1999.

[2] The Papuan Community deeply regrets and values the transition of its sovereignty as Papuan People from the Dutch through the UN to Indonesia on May 1, 1963 as illegal. The Papuan Community or its West Papuan National Council, which has the right and the authority to determine its fate as Papuan People, has agreed the handing over of the sovereignty of the Papuan People never on.

[3] Because of the illegality of the transition of its sovereignty as Papuan People from the Dutch through the UN to Indonesia, the Papuan Community rejects categorically the results of the Act of Self Determination (Pepera) which has been conducted

¹³ I use the text published in Tifa Papua, No. 008, Tahun 44, "Komunike Politik Papua", p.3., and are responsible for the translation in English offered in this paper.

be the Indonesian Government based on the New York Agreement of August 15, 1962.

The rejection of the results of the Act of Self Determination, which has been held and won by the Indonesian Government in 1969, we base on:

[3.1.] The execution of the Act of Self Determination was not in accordance with the terms of agreement reached at New York August 15, 1962, article 18, item D, "which stipulated the freedom to vote for all adult persons, male and female, and which stipulated that the execution of the Act of Self Determination had to be done according to normal customs or to the international practice", or with other words according to the "one man one vote"-system.

[3.2.] The way the Indonesian Government has executed the Act of Self Determination, which normally is called 'Pepera', was such that the rights and the political customs of the Papuan Community have been denied completely. This has been achieved by political and military intimidation, by arrests, imprisonment and by killing Papuans who opposed the Indonesian way of implementing the Act of Self Determination, which was not in accord with the intention of the New York Agreement.

[3.3.] The 1025 persons selected by Indonesia to determine the result of the Act of Self Determination as a victory for Indonesia were a tiny group of the Papuan Community. They account for 0.8 % of the Papuan Community, which totalled 800,000 people¹⁴. The majority of the Papuan Community, 99.2 %, has not been given the right to vote and only has been intimidated in the meantime.

[4] After being integrated into Indonesia through an unjust and fraudulent execution of the Act of Self Determination, and after having been a part of Indonesia for 36 years, the Papuan People has experienced a brutal inhuman treatment all along: human rights abuses, killings, rape, ignorance, poverty, social and legal injustice which lead to ethnic and cultural genocide as Papuan People. Therefore based on what has been side above

¹⁴ I leave the original figure in although according to my calculation the group of 1025 is just 0,128% of the total population of 800.000.

we declare our will to opt for independence and to separate ourselves from the Republic of Indonesia, in order to get back the political status we initially had as Papuan People and Papuan State since December 1, 1961, and as already has been made clear by the Papuan People to President BJ Habibie and the ministers of his reformation cabinet on February 26, 1999, in the presidential palace at Jakarta.

[5] To achieve the Papuan People's will of independence - separated from Indonesia-, we shall pursue dialogue and peaceful and democratic ways in order to secure the recognition by the Indonesian government and other peoples.

[6] Related to the recognition of the rightful sovereignty of the Papuan Community any kind of development policy by the Indonesian Government in Papua has to be negotiated with the Papuan Community as the holder of her sovereignty.

[7] This political communiqué we respectfully submit to the Indonesian Government, the Dutch Government, the Government of the United States and the United Nations as the parties, which in the past have obliterated the political rights of the Papuan People. It is also submitted to the nations and peoples of the world to enable them to understand our reasons and to give their support to the Papuan People.

Signed on behalf of the Grand Assembly of the Papuan People,
held at Sentani,
February 23-26, 2000,

Theys Hiyo Eluay, Great Leader of the Papuan People,
Tom Beanal, Great Leader of the Papuan People,
Participants of the Papuan MUBES 23-26 February 2000