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9 Forgotten Genocide in Indonesia: Mass Violence, Resource Exploitation and Struggle for Independence in West Papua

Introduction

With the withdrawal of the Dutch colonial administration from the Netherlands New Guinea in 1962, the implementation of Indonesian governance in 1963 and the formal absorption of Papua into Indonesia in 1969, the Free Papua Movement has engaged in a struggle to achieve independence from Jakarta or union with Papua New Guinea.¹ The price of resistance has also meant mass violence, torture and rape for the indigenous population of the territory.

The West Papua territory consists of the province of Papua and West Papua situated on the eastern most edge of the Indonesian archipelago and is Indonesia's only territory in Oceania. For the sake of clarity, this chapter will refer to the Melanesian term for West Papua, meaning the entirety of Western New Guinea, and not the Indonesian administrative term referring to the province of West Papua in the northwest of the island.

The ongoing Papua conflict since 1962 is one of the longest continuous insurgencies that has pitted the Indonesian government and large elements of the indigenous populations against each other. In the process of attempting to defeat the Papuan insurgency, the Indonesian military has engaged in a prolonged genocidal campaign against the indigenous inhabitants which has included mass violence, torture and rape.²

Jakarta's struggle to maintain control over the territory is not for the preservation of sovereignty with a people that have a shared linguistic, cultural, ethnic or religious connection as in the case of Aceh,³ but rather for the exploitation of West Papua's vast natural resources which is inhabited by

1 John Pike, "Free Papua Movement – Organisasi Papua Merdeka," *Federation of American Scientists*, last modified April 17, 2000. Accessed January 24, 2018. <https://fas.org/irp/world/para/papua.htm>

2 Ron Crocombe. *Asia in the Pacific Islands: Replacing the West* (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 2007), 289.

3 Joseph Chinyong Liow, *The Politics of Indonesia-Malaysia Relations: One Kin, Two Nations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 161–163.

a black Melanesian people. Indonesia is mostly inhabited by Austronesian peoples. It is in these economic concerns that Jakarta finds it necessary to not only subdue, but also subjugate dissidence within the indigenous population. An effective method besides systematic extermination has been demographic change by settling Austronesian colonizers from other regions of Indonesia, most particularly from the crowded and most-populated island on earth, Java.⁴

West Papua is rich in oil, gas, timber, gold, copper and other minerals, making it of primary importance to Jakarta.⁵ The claim for independence is made all the more difficult with settler populations making up around 51% of the population, rising from only 4% in 1971.⁶

The territory of West Papua makes up about 24% of Indonesia's total land-mass but contains only 1.7% of the nation's population.⁷ Over 500,000 Papuans have been killed, and thousands more have been raped, tortured and imprisoned by the Indonesian military since 1969. This is a significant amount considering that West Papua is home to only 4.5 million people, including the newly arrived settlers.⁸ Indonesian governance can be compared to that of a police state in its suppression of freedom of political association and political expression.

This chapter will explore why this genocide is occurring in relation to Jakarta's energy interests, resistance to the genocide and reactions from Indonesia's neighbours, primarily the Melanesian states of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Fiji and Vanuatu, as well as from Australia and the United States.

Historical Context

With the success of the Indonesian National Revolution at the end of 1949 and the Dutch recognition of the Dutch East Indies (later to become Indonesia)

4 Elizabeth Brundige et al., "Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua: Application of the Law of Genocide to the History of Indonesian Control," *Paper for Yale Law School* (2004), 33–34.

5 David Adam Stott, "Indonesian Colonisation, Resource Plunder and West Papuan Grievances," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 9, no. 12 (2011), 17–20.

6 Jim Elslie, "The Great Divide: West Papuan Demographics Revisited; Settlers Dominate Coastal Regions but the Highlands Still Overwhelmingly Papuan," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 15, no. 2 (2015), 2-3.; "West Papua," Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, last modified October 15, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2018. <http://www.unpo.org/members/7843>

7 Elslie, "The Great Divide," 1.

8 Alex P. Schmid and Albert J. Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, & Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 576.

independence, the Netherland's refused to allow the Netherland's New Guinea (later to become West Papua) to join the new state citing its ethnic, cultural and religious differences.⁹ The newly established nationalist Indonesian government however claimed that it was the successor state to the entirety of the Dutch East Indies which included the Netherland's New Guinea.

To Jakarta's dismay, the Dutch announced that it would continue to govern the region until it was capable of self-rule, despite the Dutch never having registered the Dutch East Indies as a United Nations mandated territory. Most of the international community agreed that the Papuans should be given their own self-determination. The only major exception in rejecting West Papua's independence was the United States (US) under the John F. Kennedy administration who wanted to maintain Jakarta's support in stemming the communist tide sweeping across Southeast Asia. Washington pressured Amsterdam to transfer West Papua to Indonesia to preserve Jakarta's support at the height of the Cold War.

The Dutch signed the New York Agreement in 1962 which relinquished their control over the disputed territory and allowed the United Nations (UN) to administer the region with the eventual handover of West Papua to Indonesia in 1963. A United States Department of State summary from 1962 asserts the "agreement was almost a total victory for Indonesia and a defeat for the Netherlands" and that the United States "Bureau of European Affairs was sympathetic to the Dutch view that annexation by Indonesia would simply trade white for brown colonialism" with the "The underlying reason that the Kennedy administration pressed the Netherlands to accept this agreement was that it believed that Cold War considerations of preventing Indonesia from going Communist overrode the Dutch case."¹⁰

The New York Agreement also meant that a plebiscite would be held before 1969 to determine the fate of West Papua, however the Indonesian military organized the Act of Free Choice, or known as the "Act of No Choice" by Papuans, vote in 1969 to supposedly determine the future of the territory.¹¹ The vote was conducted in dubious conditions with 1,025 people being handpicked

⁹ Bilveer Singh, *Papua: Geopolitics and the Quest for Nationhood* (Piscataway: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 61–64.

¹⁰ Office of the Historian, "95/03/06 Foreign Relations, 1961-63, Vol XXIII, Southeast Asia," *United States Department of State*, March 6, 1995. Accessed January 20, 2018. http://dosfan.lib.unc.edu/ERC/frus/summaries/950306_FRUS_XXIII_1961-63.html

¹¹ Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 148.

to vote with a show of hands at gunpoint.¹² It was no surprise that under such conditions those eligible to “vote” chose to integrate West Papua with Indonesia.

However, the indigenous people of West Papua did not wait until 1969 to begin their resistance against what can be correctly termed as Indonesian colonialism. The Free Papua Movement, or known in Indonesia as the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) was established in 1965 and began both a violent and non-violent struggle for independence while seeking international support. It is the resistance posed by the OPM that has made Jakarta react in the most brutal of ways.

Demographic Change, Javanization and Islamification in West Papua

One of the primary methods used by Indonesian authorities to subdue indigenous resistance to international mining firms was to undertake a complete demographic transformation of West Papua. With Malay Indonesians settlers moving in their tens of thousands to the territory, their securing of land far outweighed any concern for the operations of international mining companies such as Freeport McMoran’s exploitation of its \$100 billion gold and copper mine.¹³

Dr. Agus Sumule, professor of agricultural socio-economics at the University of Papua, stated that: “Land has been taken away, directly by Freeport . . . and indirectly, as the Indonesian settlers have appropriated it. The stresses [on indigenous people] are intense They have been very negatively impacted.”¹⁴ Transnational corporations have never had to consider the socio-economic or environmental impact their mining operations have had on the

12 Damien Kingsbury, “Indonesia on Notice – West Papuans Still Want Independence,” Deakin Speaking: A Deakin University weblog, September 28, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/deakin-speaking/2017/09/28/indonesia-on-notice-west-papuans-still-want-independence/>

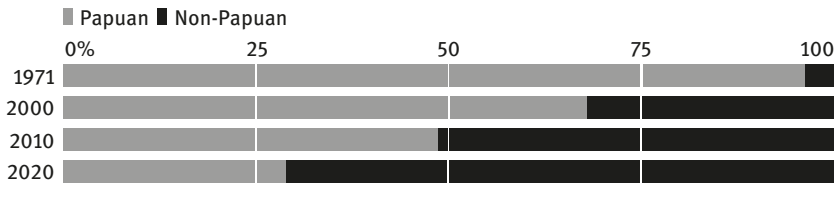
13 James Wilson and Avantika Chilkoti, “Freeport-McMoRan Mired in Indonesian Uncertainty,” *Financial Times*, May 9, 2016. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.ft.com/content/c65b8c78-12cf-11e6-91da-096d89bd2173>

14 Susan Schulman, “The \$100bn Gold Mine and the West Papuans Who Say They are Counting the Cost,” *The Guardian*, November 2, 2016. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/nov/02/100-bn-dollar-gold-mine-west-papuans-say-they-are-counting-the-cost-indonesia>

indigenous local population. Confronted with the destruction and depredations of large scale extractive mining and Jakarta's orchestrated demographic change through trans-migration, the indigenous West Papuans are projected to become an absolute minority in their own land by 2020.¹⁵

Ethnic Papuans will make up just 29% of the population by 2020

Demographic breakdown of the population in West Papua



Source: West Papuan Demographic Transition, Jim Elmslie

Spearheading this demographic change in West Papua was the transmigration program. Initially, the program was started by Dutch colonialists to move landless people from densely populated islands of Indonesia, particularly Java, to less populated islands to supposedly give poor people 'opportunities.' Economically, it was a means to exploit the natural resources in the outer islands by mobilizing cheap labour.¹⁶ The program was continued by Jakarta after Indonesia achieved independence, with the bulk of migrants moving to West Papua, but also to Kalimantan, Sumatra and Sulawesi.¹⁷

Critics of the program claim that the process is a means of implementing "Javanization" on native populations in an effort to homogenize Indonesian culture, language, politics and social life. The intensity of the Javanization process under the guise of the transmigration program has seen significant resistance and strengthened separatist movements and communal violence, especially in

¹⁵ Jim Elmslie, "West Papuan Demographic Transition and the 2010 Indonesian Census: 'Slow Motion Genocide' or not?," The University of Sydney, 2010. Accessed January 20, 2018. https://sydney.edu.au/arts/peace_conflict/docs/working_papers/West_Papuan_Demographics_in_2010_Census.pdf

¹⁶ Florence Lamoureux, *Indonesia: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 77–78.

¹⁷ David Pickell, *Indonesian New Guinea Adventure Guide: West Papua/Irian Jaya* (Singapore: Eric Oey, 2001), 60.

West Papua, Aceh and Kalimantan.¹⁸ Although official government policy stated that the aim of this policy was to encourage the unification of Indonesia through a singular national identity to replace regionalism and that Indonesia is a country “of indigenous people, run and governed by and for indigenous people,” the rhetoric was never readily accepted.¹⁹ This was especially true in West Papua which is an indigenous Melanesian territory whose people are primarily Christian. Indonesia is the world’s largest Muslim country that is primarily Austronesian. Although regionalism still exists among Indonesia’s ethnicities, the majority of peoples are still generally united through a shared religion with minor differences in culture, language and history.

This cannot be said of West Papua’s Melanesian peoples who have a different ethnic, cultural, historical and linguistic legacy. Therefore, an enforced Javanization through the transmigration process was met with continuing resistance, more so than any other region of Indonesia. Indigenous peoples saw the program as a part of an effort by the Java-based Indonesian Government to extend greater economic and political control over other regions, by moving in people with closer ties to Java and loyalty to the Indonesian state, especially the military. This was of paramount importance for the indigenous population who have a 50,000-year-old history in West Papua.²⁰ Although the transmigration program was ended in 2015, the demographic change has already occurred with the indigenous population now marginally the minority because of the migrants and their offspring.²¹

However, in conjunction with the Javanization of the Papuans, a process of Islamization is also taking place. Although the religious conversion of young children is illegal in Indonesia, and the United Nations deems any transfer of a minor, even for education, as trafficking, there are widespread reports of Christian Papuans being taken to Java to be educated in Islamic schools.²² With 32% of the population of West Papua

18 M. Adriana Sri Adhiati and Armin Bobsien, “Indonesia’s Transmigration Programme – An Update,” *Down To Earth*, July, 2001. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.downtoearth-indonesia.org/old-site/ctrans.htm

19 Tania Murray Li, “Locating Indigenous Environmental Knowledge in Indonesia,” in *Indigenous Environmental Knowledge Transformations: Critical Anthropological Perspectives*, eds. Roy Ellen, Peter Parkes and Alan Bicker (Amsterdam: Harwood, 2005), 121.

20 Elizabeth Brundige et al., “Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua,” 9.

21 “Papuans,” Minority Rights Group International, last modified June 2008. Accessed January 20, 2018. <http://www.minorityrights.org/minorities/papuans/>

22 Michael Bachelard, “Papuan Children Taken to Jakarta to Be Converted to Islam,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 4, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2018. <http://www.smh.com.au/world/papuan-children-taken-to-jakarta-to-be-converted-to-islam-20140301-33soq.html>

living below the poverty line, compared with the national average of 12.5%, offers of free education, boarding and food in Java for young Papuan children becomes difficult to refuse.²³ This is exemplified in a study conducted by Dr. Jim Elmslie who found that:

In the 15-44 years age group Papua province had an illiteracy rate of 34.83% in 2011, the latest figures available. This is against a national average of just 2.30%. The next worst province was Sulawesi Barat which had an illiteracy rate of 6.49%. The 15 plus years age group fared no better; again the worst in the nation by a huge margin which is still growing: in 2003 the illiteracy rate was 25.54 but by 2011 it had leapt up to 35.92%.²⁴

This is a demonstration of the vast inequalities which exist between Papuans and the rest of Indonesian society, including the settlers to the region who have a higher standard of education and health, and occupy important positions in local government. Religious discrimination is evident in West Papua with over 90% of civil servants being Muslim.²⁵ According to John Barr, general secretary for the international mission wing of the Uniting Church in Australia,

Christianity came to West Papua more than 100 years ago, and most Papuans eagerly adopted it to the point that Christianity reinforces and now underlines their identity. Where Papuan culture appears to be in the process of being eroded, Christianity serves to maintain local values and provide Papuans with a strong sense of who they are.²⁶

With Christianity playing a crucial role in Papuan identity, albeit with traditional influences, the forced conversion of children under the guise of providing free education, is a direct attack on the Papuan distinctiveness. The promise of free education meant the removal of Papuan children from their ancestral homeland, relocation to Java, and education provided in madrassas with a strict Islamic curriculum.²⁷

Although many Papuans are converting to Islam of their own free volition, it is the forced conversion of children that directly attacks Papuan self-identity

²³ Jim Elmslie, "Economic and Social Indicators in West Papua," *Pacific Institute of Public Policy*, June 19, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.pacificpolicy.org/2013/06/economic-and-social-indicators-in-west-papua/#_ftn4

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ G Roberts, "Irian Jaya: Caught in the Crossfire," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, January 27, 1996, 31.

²⁶ Compass Direct News, "Indonesia: Religious Tensions Rise In West Papua," July 14, 2008. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://wwwn.org/articles/29076/>

²⁷ Michael Bachelard, "Papuan Children Taken to Jakarta."

as part of the process of Javanization and Islamification of West Papua. However, it must be emphasized that the genocide against Papuans is not motivated by religious sectarianism, but rather to protect Jakarta's energy interests in West Papua. Although over 500,000 Papuans have been killed by the Indonesian military since 1969, by moving a huge number of settlers to West Papua and having indigenous children educated in Java-based Islamic schools, the destruction of Papuan identity and ethnic cleansing is also being instigated without the use of violence. The self-determination and establishment of a sovereign West Papua will mean that Jakarta will lose billions of dollars in natural resource revenues.

Jakarta's Energy Interests as Motivation for the Papuan Genocide

The primary reason for Jakarta not granting self-determination to the indigenous people of West Papua is because of the billions of dollars' worth of natural resources.²⁸ Although Papuans have been struggling for independence for over half a century, Indonesia through its military have been bolstering its global economic relevance by exploiting the territory's vast reserves of natural resources that make its way to markets in the US, Canada, Europe, China and Australia, where the majority of mining companies are based.

These same companies exploit their local workers, with Freeport paying miners as little as \$1.50 per hour, despite being the biggest taxpayer to the Indonesian government, and making so much profit that any strike by the workers would cost the company over \$30 million for every day of strike action.²⁹ The Indonesian military has often brutally repressed protesting miners. It has been reported that Freeport pays around \$20 million annually to the Indonesian government to provide security, most of it directly to the military, for one of the world's largest gold and copper mines.³⁰

28 Stuart Rollo, "Ending Our Pragmatic Complicity in West Papua," ABC (Australia), October 28, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-28/rollo-west-papua-complicity/5049204

29 William Lloyd George, "West Papua's Cry for Help," *Al-Jazeera*, November 8, 2011. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/11/201111673842314396.html

30 Jon Emont, "Foreigners Have Long Mined Indonesia, but Now There's an Outcry," *The New York Times*, March 31, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/31/business/energy-environment/indonesia-gold-mine-grasberg-freeport-mcmoran.html>

Jago Wadley, a senior forest campaigner for the Environmental Investigation Agency, argues that if the rapid rate of mineral extraction continues, West Papua will “lose millions of hectares of forests and be stripped of valuable resources without the benefits of value-adding industries to create wealth and jobs locally” and “will see an influx of millions of migrants from other parts of Indonesia, likely limiting indigenous Papuans to a tiny minority in their own land.”³¹ The land is a critical and essential part to daily Papuan life and identity. This sense of belonging to the land is not restricted to coastal or highland Papuans.

Along with land degradation, it is the uneven distribution of wealth from the profits of exploiting natural resources which fuels the Papuans’ desire for self-determination. Papuans have a higher percentage of people living below the poverty line compared to the rest of Indonesian society despite inhabiting the richest region of the Indonesian archipelago. Coupled with the Indonesian military’s aggressive defence of the transnational mining companies’ depredation of the land, the displacement of indigenous communities in West Papua continues. Although mining in West Papua provides the largest tax revenue for Jakarta, little of it has been or is to the benefit of the indigenous population.

Because West Papua is effectively administrated as a police-state, it is difficult to conduct independent research, especially as journalists are effectively barred from the region. This has made it difficult to estimate the exact extent of West Papua’s resources, but it is known that it contains vast deposits of gold, oil, gas, timber and copper.³² It is because of the limited access to information because of Jakarta’s policy of restrictiveness that an emphasis has been placed on Freeport as it was the first and longest continuing mining company to have a presence in West Papua.

The relationship between the mining companies and the Indonesian military is inseparable. In a 2011 opinion piece published in *The Guardian*, Benny Wenda, a West Papuan independence leader and an international lobbyist for the independence of West Papua, stated that “In the eyes of Papuans, those companies have given international legitimacy to Indonesia’s colonial rule.”³³ Freeport effectively legitimized the Indonesian colonial rule over West Papua with its first contract signed with Jakarta in 1967, two years before West Papuans were supposed to vote on independence as mandated by the UN as

³¹ George, “West Papua’s Cry for Help.”

³² Stott, “Indonesian Colonisations,” 17–20.

³³ Benny Wenda, “Everyone Profits from West Papua, Except for Papuans,” *The Guardian*, October 12, 2011. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/oct/12/west-papua-striking-miners-indonesia>

part of the international body's supposed commitment to the decolonization process across the world.³⁴ The Freeport deal was orchestrated by then US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, who later also became a board member.³⁵

Freeport's mining interests are inseparable from the mass murder, rape and torture by the Indonesian military against indigenous Papuans. Bishop Munninghoff revealed that:

widespread human rights abuses and atrocities by the Indonesian army against the West Papua people [including] people mysteriously disappearing daily. Those removed from their land to make room for mine-related operations were not compensated. Any who resisted were rounded up by the military, never to be seen again.³⁶

This effectively demonstrates the relationship between neoliberal capitalism and genocide. As Linda Green states: "Disposable people fit into a system in which violence, fear, and impunity are crucial components".³⁷ Leading genocide scholar Ben Kiernan highlights that there are four fundamental tenants to genocide: expansionism, cults of antiquity, agriculture/cultivation (land), and race; and these supposedly justify why states engage in genocide, although Kiernan particularly emphasizes on race and land as reasons for genocide.³⁸ Neoliberalism capitalism dictates how a state should cultivate or use their own land. In support of Kiernan's explanation that genocide is partially motivated by land, Carmen Gonzalez explains that neoliberalism believes "that each country should specialize in the goods that it produces relatively more efficiently and should import the goods that it produces relatively less efficiently".³⁹ Effectively, when applied to the case study of West Papua, neoliberalism justifies Indonesia's repression as Jakarta is dictating how land should be used on the territory instead of the native people. In support of Kiernan's race theory, David Roberts states that "race is mobilized to show that racialized subjectivities are essential in justifying certain impacts of neoliberalization that are experienced

³⁴ Crocombe, *Asia in the Pacific*, 285.

³⁵ Peter King, *West Papua and Indonesia Since Suharto: Independence, Autonomy Or Chaos?* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2004), 108.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Linda Green, *The Nobodies: Neoliberalism, Violence, and Migration*, *Medical Anthropology* 30 (4), 370.

³⁸ Ben Kiernan. (2007). *Blood and soil: A world history of genocide and extermination from Sparta to Darfur*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

³⁹ Carmen Gonzalez. (2011). An environmental justice critique of comparative advantage: Indigenous peoples, trade policy, and the Mexican neoliberal economic reforms. *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Law*, 32(3), 737.

disproportionately within racialized communities”.⁴⁰ Effectively race supposedly justifies why the Indonesian military slaughters West Papuans as it “allow[s] for the imagining of the inhumanity and rule over foreign people and the sovereign right to exterminate – or, in this context, render killable, disposable, and exploitable – certain populations”.⁴¹

Because Freeport’s security of tenure is underwritten by the Indonesian military, there is a virtual banning of most journalists from visiting West Papua. As a consequence, there is a virtual absence of reporting of or monitoring of the mass abuse of human rights occurring in their mining operations, as well as its unrecorded environmental catastrophe. From the Grasberg mine, one of the biggest copper and gold mines in the world, hundreds of thousands of tonnes of tailings contaminate the vital Aikwa delta system every day, destroying the environment in which the Kamoro tribe relies upon for food and trade.⁴² So devastating to the environment is the Grasberg mine that apart from the 80 million tons of waste debris which it dumps into the Ajkwa river system every year, the open cut mine can be seen clearly from space.⁴³ However, local Papuans whose ancestral home is being relentlessly devastated find it impossible to resist the mining operators who are protected by the Indonesian military.

Dr. George Aditjondro, an Indonesian academic, explained that it is impossible for any Indonesian or foreign company to do business in Indonesia without establishing commercial relations with the Indonesian police force or the military.⁴⁴ The connection between the Indonesian military and mining companies in West Papua, particularly Freeport, are inextricably inter-linked and long standing. One of many examples of this relationship include Indonesian soldiers being deployed to the Puncak Jaya region of West Papua in 2007, which caused an estimated 5,000 tribespeople to flee into the jungle out of fear for their lives, with a similar operation in the same region conducted in 2004 which resulted in 6,000 West

40 David J Roberts, Neoliberalizing race, racing neoliberalism: Placing “race” in neoliberal discourses, *Antipode*, 42 (2), 249.

41 Gilberto Rosas, *Barrio libre. Criminalizing states and delinquent refusals of the new frontier* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 17.

42 Susan Schulman, “West Papua’s Verdant Heartlands Devastated by Mine Waste – In Pictures,” *The Guardian*, November 2, 2016. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2016/nov/02/west-papua-indonesia-verdant-heartlands-devastated-by-mine-waste-in-pictures>

43 Alastair Bland, “The Environmental Disaster That is the Gold Industry,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 14, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/environmental-disaster-gold-industry-180949762/>

44 Heath Lander, “BP: Bleeding Papua,” *Daily Kos*, April 11, 2007. Accessed January 20, 2018., [https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2007/4/11/321979/-](https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2007/4/11/321979/)

Papuans fleeing their homes.⁴⁵ These are two documented examples that are innumerable when it comes to Papuans being continually driven from their homes by the Indonesian military to clear land for mining firms to expand their operations.

A Human Rights Watch investigation found that in 2016, Indonesian police arrested more than 3,900 peaceful protesters in West Papua for publicly displaying the pro-independence Morning Star flag.⁴⁶ Many of the protestors included people denouncing the destruction of their environment by mining firms and the lack of employment opportunities for Papuans in West Papua.

Although it is well documented that hundreds of thousands have been killed, as well as thousands tortured and raped, Freeport has been complicit in supporting the Indonesian military conduct these human rights violations and mass murder.⁴⁷ The Indonesian military since the early 1970's has used Freeport-built airports, roads and port sites to launch operations against the indigenous Papuans residing in the vicinity of the Grasberg's mine to eliminate indigenous resistance to mining operations and Indonesian colonialism.

It was also revealed that Freeport pays \$5,160,770 to the Army and an additional \$4,060,000 to police to build and maintain headquarters, recreational facilities, guard houses and guard posts, barracks, parade grounds and ammunition storage facilities.⁴⁸ Economically, Freeport completely finances the Indonesian military and police presence in West Papua.

The Catholic Church of Jayapura has revealed that indigenous people in 1994 and 1995 were taken to Freeport-operated buses and shipping containers to be tortured by Indonesian authorities.⁴⁹ The Catholic Church report stated:

[P]hysical torture consisted of kicking in the belly, chest and head with army boots; beating with fists, rattan, [sic!] sticks, rifle butts and stones; denial of food; kneeling with an iron bar in the knee hollows; standing for hours with a heavy weight on the head,

⁴⁵ John Ahni Schertow, "Supporting Genocide in West Papua," *Intercontinental Cry*, March 6, 2007. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://intercontinentalcry.org/supporting-genocide-in-west-papua/>

⁴⁶ Andreas Harsono, "Indonesia's Abuses in Papua Prompt Call for UN Probe," *Human Rights Watch*, March 8, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/03/08/in-donesias-abuses-papua-prompt-call-un-probe>

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Brundige et al., "Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua," 62–63.

⁴⁸ Abigail Abrash Walton, "Extracting Natural Resources: Corporate Responsibility and the Rule of Law," Antioch University – New England, September 24, 2008. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.antioch.edu/new-england/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/01/senatesub-committeetestimony9-08.pdf>

⁴⁹ Catholic Church of Jayapura, "Violations of Human Rights in the Timika Area of Irian Jaya, Indonesia," August 31, 1995. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.library.ohio.edu/indopubs/1995/08/31/0004.html>

shoulders, or cradled in the arms; stepping and stamping on hands; tying and shackling of thumbs, wrists and legs; sleeping on bare floors; stabbing, taping eyes shut; and forced labor in a weakened condition. The torture caused bleeding head wounds, swollen faces and hands, bruises, loss of consciousness and death because of a broken neck.⁵⁰

It is not the purpose of this chapter to document every atrocity committed by the Indonesian military on the behest of Freeport but rather to emphasize the continuous complicity the mining firm has in the direct genocide against Papuans. Although Freeport officials have consistently claimed that Freeport's Contract of Work with Jakarta stipulates that logistical support from the Indonesian military and police is necessary, neither the 1967 or 1991 Contract of Work include this essential arrangement.

In response, the OPM have offered limited resistance to Freeport, in which the mining company represents in the Papuan view the symbolism of Indonesian colonization and exploitation of their land. In November 2017, resistant fighters occupied five villages near the Grasberg mine and threatened to disrupt Freeport's operations. The operation by resistance fighters was quickly subdued.⁵¹ Although actions like this may temporarily disrupt operations, they never cause the cessation of mining operations. This demonstrates that the poorly armed and trained OPM fighters can only conduct limited and localized small-scale operations such as temporary village occupations. The OPM cannot logistically maintain a significant and protracted armed struggle against the Indonesian military or police force, rendering their efforts as largely symbolic.

West Papua's Relations with Melanesia and Intergovernmental Organizations

The most frustrating element for West Papuan self-determination and resistance to the ethnocide has been the studied indifference from the international community, including from many fellow Melanesian states. In September 2017, Benny Wenda presented a petition to the United Nation's decolonization

⁵⁰ Abrash Abigail Walton, "The Amungme, Kamoro and Freeport: How Indigenous Papuans Have Resisted The World's Largest Gold And Copper Mine," *Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine*, March, 2001. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/amungme-kamoro-freeport-how-indigenous-papuans-have>

⁵¹ Bobby Anderson, "Putting Indonesian Papua's Tensions in Context," *The Interpreter*, November 28, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/putting-indonesian-papua-s-tensions-context>

committee, known as the C24, that was banned by the Indonesian government but signed by over 1.8 million West Papuans in which the call for independence was made.⁵² However, the Venezuelan chair of the decolonization committee, Rafael Ramírez, immediately rejected the petition, stating:

I am the chair of the C24 and the issue of West Papua is not a matter for the C24. We are just working on the counties that are part of the list of non-self-governing territories. That list is issued by the general assembly. One of the principles of our movement is to defend the sovereignty and the full integrity of the territory of our members. We are not going to do anything against Indonesia as a C24.⁵³

Despite Wenda's plea and explanation on the decades of suffering, the United Nations refused to examine the complaints made about the Indonesian military's perpetration of mass violence in West Papua.

This has remained a consistent theme for West Papua internationally, with the only states taking the matter seriously, and only in recent times, being the Melanesian countries of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. During the general debate of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017, Vanuatu's Prime Minister Charlot Salwai stated: "We also call on our counterparts throughout the world to support the legal right of West Papua to self-determination and to jointly with Indonesia put an end to all kinds of violence and find common ground to facilitate a process to make their own choice." Following Salwai's appeal, the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands Manasseh Sogavare expressed his support for West Papua, stating:

Only international action by the international system, especially the United Nations, can pave the way for the recognition of a people whose right to self-determination had been denied for nearly fifty years. Failing this, we as a family of nations will become complicit in perpetuating the suffering and being blind to the injustice, missing yet another golden opportunity to remain true to the saying of leaving no one behind.⁵⁴

The only inter-governmental or international community body to which West Papua has nominal recognition is the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), comprising of Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and the

⁵² Ben Doherty and Kate Lamb, "West Papua independence petition is rebuffed at UN," *The Guardian*, September 30, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/30/west-papua-independence-petition-is-rebuffed-at-un>

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Radio NZ, "Fiery debate over West Papua at UN General Assembly," September 27, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2019. www.radionz.co.nz/international/programmes/datelinepacific/audio/201860156/fiery-debate-over-west-papua-at-un-general-assembly

Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS), a political party from New Caledonia. Timor-Leste (East Timor) and West Papua have observer status and Indonesia is an associate member of the MSG. Although the MSG was originally established to promote and strengthen trade amongst its members and exchange Melanesian culture, traditions and values, it has been used in recent times as a platform for Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and West Papua to highlight the mass violence in the disputed territory. Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands support for West Papua is purely rhetorical.

In 2015, Indonesia was elevated to an associate member of the MSG, with the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) remaining as an observer. This move, effectively made Indonesia the official representative of West Papua in the MSG while the ULMWP became the representative of Papuans in the diaspora. Despite the setback, ULMWP secretary-general Octavianus Mote stated that “We might not be a full member of the MSG, but a door has opened to us. We will sit across a table from Indonesia as equal.”⁵⁵ While this was seen as an important step for West Papua to join an intergovernmental organization, it also demonstrated the lack of support it has from most Melanesian states with the exception of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, with Fiji spearheading Indonesia’s accession as an associate member of the MSG. The reasons why the Solomons and Vanuatu tacitly support West Papua may be found in their own troubled relations with PNG and France respectively.

In addition, Fiji affirmed it had no desire in supporting West Papua despite their shared Melanesian heritage and kin, with Fijian Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama stating that:

The first and foremost of these is that Indonesian sovereignty over West Papua cannot be questioned. The province is an integral part of Indonesia. So that when we deal with West Papua and its people, the MSG has no choice but to deal with Indonesia and in a positive and constructive manner.⁵⁶

In this June 2015 statement, Fiji confirmed its position on West Papua and the denial of any support West Papuan self-determination. The MSG are split on its level of support for West Papua, with Solomon Islands and Vanuatu providing full backing and with Fiji and Papua New Guinea content with the status quo. New Caledonia is represented by the FLNKS in the MSG, who, while

⁵⁵ Liam Fox, “West Papuans Given Melanesia Bloc Access, But Not Full Membership,” *ABC* (Australia), June 27, 2015. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.abc.net.au/news/2015-06-27/west-papuans-given-melanesia-bloc-access/6577722

⁵⁶ Vuniwaqa Bola-Bari, “Fiji Guided by Overriding Principles,” *The Fiji Times*, June 28, 2015. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.fijitimes.com/story.aspx?id=311523

sympathetic to the Papuans, are pre-occupied with their own anti-colonial struggle for independence from France. Despite the division in the MSG, it remains the only regional platform where Jakarta and the West Papuan independence movement can engage in dialogue which otherwise could never occur within the domestic structures of Indonesia.

Most frustrating for West Papuans however when engaging with Melanesia is the official policy of Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea officially recognizes West Papua only as a province of the Indonesian Republic. This was emphasized by Papua New Guinean Prime Minister Peter O'Neill when meeting with Indonesian officials in Jakarta in 2013, he stated unequivocally that West Papua was an integral part of Indonesia, with no indications that Port Moresby would change this policy in the near future.⁵⁷ The leadership in Port Moresby are motivated to maintain a peaceful and productive relationship with Indonesia for economic reasons and fear of its much more powerful neighbor, and for this reason, do not support the West Papuan struggle for self-determination. Jakarta has been insistent on its claim to West Papua and has been using its diplomatic manoeuvring in the Pacific, including Papua New Guinea, to deter support for West Papuan independence, by maintaining that the humanitarian crisis in West Papua is and remains an internal issue.

Because of the brutality of the Indonesian military against indigenous Papuans, over the fifty-year struggle it has created periods of mass refugee movements from West Papua into Papua New Guinea. The cultural and ethnic affinity between West Papuans and Papua New Guineans has meant the consistent potential for a mass influx of refugees, especially when considering the vast 470-mile border consisting of mountain peaks and thick rainforest, it is untenable to fully monitor the entirety of the border.

As of 2014, 13,500 Papuan refugees live in exile in Papua New Guinea with battles between the OPM and Indonesian military occasionally crossing the Indonesia-Papua-New Guinea border.⁵⁸ The Papua New Guinea Defence Force in response has deployed patrols along its western border in the attempt to stop OPM using Papua New Guinea as a base and sanctuary to launch attacks

⁵⁷ Liam Cochrane, "Trade, Extradition and West Papua on Agenda for PNG-Indonesia Talks," *ABC* (Australia), June 13, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-14/an-png-pm-prepares-for-indonesia-talks/4753584

⁵⁸ Diana Glazebrook, "Papua New Guinea's Refugee Track Record and Its Obligations under the 2013 Regional Resettlement Arrangement with Australia," *SSGM Discussion Paper 2014/3*, Canberra: Australian National University.

against the Indonesian military.⁵⁹ To allay Indonesian concerns or reprisals, Port Moresby has pledged to outlaw and suppress any anti-Indonesian activities in Papua New Guinea. In response, the OPM has to attack Papua New Guinean business projects and politicians because of its military operations against the independence fighters.⁶⁰ Although West Papua has the verbal support of the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, Fiji and Papua New Guinea are the Melanesian powerhouses of Oceania, and without their firm support for West Papuan independence, the case for West Papuan self-determination is made all the more problematic.

Australia's Disinterest in the Ethnocide

Although Australia has condemned the alleged crimes against humanity by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi (1942–2011) of Libya and President Bashar al-Assad of Syria during armed conflict, it has remained silent on the ethnocide in West Papua. In October 2013, the Prime Minister Tony Abbott stated in relation to the Indonesia-West Papua problem, “We have a very strong relationship with Indonesia and we are not going to give people a platform to grandstand against Indonesia. And people seeking to grandstand against Indonesia, please, don’t look to do it in Australia. You are not welcome.”⁶¹

Abbott insisted that the situation in West Papua was getting better and not worse. Abbott’s claim was rejected by Elaine Pearson, Australian Director of Human Rights Watch who argued, “I don’t think the situation is getting better; you’d only say that if you were blind and deaf to the situation,” and also rejected by Dr. Jim Elmslie, co-ordinator at the West Papuan Project, who said “[Indonesian] soldiers have taken trophy videos of them torturing and killing West Papuan people . . . I was surprised to hear Prime Minister Abbott’s comments. To me, the situation is not getting better it’s

⁵⁹ Johnny Blades, “Line Between PNG and Indonesia Increasingly Blurred,” Radio New Zealand, December 21, 2015. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/292667/line-between-png-and-indonesia-increasingly-blurred>

⁶⁰ Ronald James May, *State and Society in Papua New Guinea: The First Twenty-Five Years* (Canberra: Australia National University Press, 2001), 238, 269 and 294.

⁶¹ Michael Bachelard and Amilia Rosa, “Claim of Australian Threat to West Papuans in Bali Consulate Protest,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, October 8, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/claim-of-australian-threat-to-west-papuans-in-bali-consulate-protest-20131007-2v4cg.html

getting worse.”⁶² Dr. Elmslie explained that potentially hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in West Papua and it is for that reason it can be characterized as a genocide.⁶³ Australia’s relationship with Indonesia has always been pragmatic. In 1975, Australia condoned the Indonesian invasion of East Timor and maintained that the former Portuguese colony was also an integral part of the Indonesian archipelago. The Indonesian occupation of East Timor was however reversed in 1999 when the Indonesian military began to violently subdue and suppress East Timorese after the Santa Cruz massacre which was recorded and broadcasted internationally. The UN intervened and called for a referendum on East Timorese independence to which Indonesia agreed. The United States pressured Indonesia to vacate its East Timorese colony. Australia sent troops as peace keepers to East Timor to end the Indonesian military’s continuing mass violence against East Timorese civilians and the destruction of property in its delayed departure, after a majority of East Timorese voted for self-determination.⁶⁴ Canberra, acting on behalf of the UN, was willing to intervene in Indonesian affairs only as a humanitarian crisis unfolded in East Timor. However, throughout Indonesia’s continuous history of State violence in West Papua, Canberra has remained silent and disinterested.

There are three primary reasons why the Australian government not only tolerates, but supports Jakarta’s authority over West Papua.

- 1) Indonesia as the world’s most populous Muslim country is Australia’s nearest neighbouring country, a trading partner and has become an important regional ally in the US-led “War Against Terror”.
- 2) A prolonged war in West Papua could unleash a wave of instability and violence as other separatist movements in Indonesia, such as those in Aceh and Kalimantan, wage their separate struggles, and spill over into tribal warfare which often plagues Papua New Guinea.
- 3) Most importantly, Australian-based corporations, particularly in the mining sector, have significant investments in not only West Papua, but across the Indonesian archipelago. The profitable returns of these mining ventures

⁶² Paddy Doulman, “Tony Abbott’s Claim West Papua ‘Getting Better’ Rejected by Experts,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, October 9, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/tony-abbotts-claim-west-papua-getting-better-rejected-by-experts-20131009-2v85h.html

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ James Cotton, *East Timor, Australia and Regional Order: Intervention and Its Aftermath in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004).

may be threatened or jeopardized even as Freeport's operations in West Papua has always taken precedence over social justice and human rights.

However, Australia has not only remained wilfully blind to the Indonesian military's atrocities against West Papuans, but also is indirectly complicit in the mass violence perpetrated. The Australian Defence Force trains the Indonesian military with Australian arms companies providing weaponry to the Indonesian military.⁶⁵ Although it is known that Australian armament companies supply weapons to the Indonesian military, the kind and number of weapons supplied remains unknown because of commercial in confidence agreements. However, in 2016 Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop acknowledged that Australia and Indonesia were engaged in "joint work to increase defence industry and military modernisation cooperation" and that "Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper reaffirmed the importance of supporting Indonesia as it modernises its defence forces" with "leading Indonesian and Australian defence industry members" having "signed a collaboration agreement to develop a mine-resistant armoured vehicle."⁶⁶ This is especially significant as Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced an ambitious plan on January 29, 2018 to make Australia a top 10 weapons exporting country.⁶⁷ As Indonesia is Southeast Asia's strongest military power and spent \$7.78 billion on its military in 2016, the investment opportunity presented to Australia overrides its belated humanitarian concern which previously motivated its interventions in East Timor and Solomon Islands.⁶⁸ The Australian training of Indonesian military personnel, funded through the Australian Defence budget, includes the special forces squad known as Kopassus, who allegedly behead, mutilate, torture and amputate West Papuans.⁶⁹

65 Joe Cochrane, "Indonesian Arms Industry Seeks to Drum Up Business," *The New York Times*, February 13, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/14/business/international/indonesian-arms-industry-seeks-to-drum-up-business.html>

66 Julie Bishop, "The Fourth Indonesia-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministers 2+2 Dialogue," *Minister for Foreign Affairs*, October 27, 2016. Accessed January 20, 2018. https://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2016/jb_mr_161027.aspx

67 Gareth Hutchens, "Australia unveils plan to become one of world's top 10 arms exporters," *The Guardian*, January 29, 2018. Accessed February 1, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/28/australia-unveils-plan-to-become-one-of-worlds-top-10-arms-exporters>

68 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, "Military expenditure by Country, in Constant (2015) US\$ m., 2007-2016," 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/Milex-constant-2015-USD.pdf>

69 West Papua Media, "Beheadings and Dumped Bodies Pile Up as Indonesian Special Forces Rampage Again in Tingginambut," May 27, 2013. Accessed January 20,

It is in the hope that providing logistical support, arms and training, that the Indonesian military will assist Australia in its security concerns by combatting terrorist organizations based throughout the archipelago. However, elements of the Indonesian military and intelligence have close links to Jemaah Islamiyah, the perpetrators of the 2002 Bali Bombing that killed 202 people including 88 Australians and with the Laskar Jihad group, an arm of the Jemaah Islamiyah network, establishing a foothold in West Papua and committing mass violence, despite an October 2002 announcement that it had supposedly disbanded.⁷⁰

In the effort to combat terrorism, the Australian Defence Force are indirectly assisting the genocide in West Papua and supporting Jemaah Islamiyah. The Indonesian military provides training and weapons to Laskar Jihad as well as opportunities to participate in legal and illegal business activities.⁷¹ According to academic activist Lesley McCulloch and retired Australian Army officer, Robert Lowry, the Indonesian military only receives 20%–30% of its operating budget from Jakarta, with the remainder made up from legal and illegal business activity, including payments from Freeport and joint business ventures with Laskar Jihad.⁷²

The famous Freeport mine is completely dependent on Australia, with its supply base in the northern Australian city of Cairns and the mining company contributing at least \$50–\$70AUD million to the local economy in 2006.⁷³ Cairns-based supplier Tong Sin provided fruit and vegetables to Freeport employees while cattle stations in the Northern Territory in northern Australia supply beef.⁷⁴ According to an Australian Government report, “Freeport ships all of its supplies from Australia through Cairns.”⁷⁵

2018. <https://westpapuamedia.info/2013/05/26/beheadings-and-dumped-bodies-pile-up-dead-as-indonesian-special-forces-rampage-again-in-tingginambut/>

⁷⁰ Michel Chossudovsky, “US-Australia Coverup: Was Al Qaeda Behind the 2002 Bali Bombing?,” *Global Research*, October 12, 2012. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.globalresearch.ca/us-australia-coverup-was-al-qaeda-behind-the-2002-bali-bombing/5307992>; John Otto Ondawame, “West Papua: The Discourse of Cultural Genocide and Conflict Resolution,” in *Cultural Genocide and Asian State Peripheries*, ed. Barry Sautman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 111.

⁷¹ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad* (New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2006), 220.

⁷² Frans Welman, *West Papua Free!!* (Bangkok: Bangkok Books, 2011), 205–206.

⁷³ Sarah Stephen, “West Papuan Asylum Seekers Call for Help,” *Green Left Weekly*, February 8, 2006. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/west-papuan-asylum-seekers-call-help>

⁷⁴ Welman, *West Papua Free*, 213.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, the Australian-British mining company, Rio Tinto, receives 40% of Grasberg's ore production above specific levels until 2021, then 40% cent of all production after 2021.⁷⁶ Policy watchdog, Global Policy Forum, stated that Freeport and Rio Tinto are "synonymous with abuse of social, labour, environmental and human rights wherever they operate."⁷⁷

Although, Australia has acted to end humanitarian abuses in East Timor and the Solomon Islands, it maintains its non-interference in West Papua as recorded in the Lombok Treaty, signed in 2006 by Australian Prime Minister, John Howard. The Lombok Treaty stipulates that, "Mutual respect and support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, national unity and political independence of each other [Australia and Indonesia], and also non-interference in the internal affairs of one another," and that:

The Parties, consistent with their respective domestic laws and international obligations, shall not in any manner support or participate in activities by any person or entity which constitutes a threat to the stability, sovereignty or territorial integrity of the other Party, including by those who seek to use its territory for encouraging or committing such activities, including separatism, in the territory of the other Party.⁷⁸

By this treaty, Canberra agreed to respect and support the territorial integrity of Indonesia and not allow West Papuans to engage in self-determination activities from within Australia. Canberra chose trade and investment opportunities in exchange for not highlighting the ethnocide occurring in West Papua.

Washington's Complicity for West Papua's Genocide

Washington's complicity in West Papua began in the Cold War with its struggle to turn the tide against the advances of communism that threatened to engulf

⁷⁶ Fergus Jensen, "Rio Tinto Looking at Exit from Giant Indonesia Mine," *Reuters*, February 9, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-rio-tinto-freeport-mcmoran-indonesia/rio-tinto-looking-at-exit-from-giant-indonesia-mine-idUSKBN150ORS>

⁷⁷ Global Policy Forum, "Risky Business: The Grasberg Gold Mine," 1998. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.globalpolicy.org/the-dark-side-of-natural-resources-st/water-in-conflict/40138-risky-business-the-grasberg-gold-mine.html>

⁷⁸ Australian Treaty Series, ATS 3, "Agreement Between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the Framework for Security Cooperation," 2008. Accessed January 20, 2018. <http://www.dfait.federalrepublicofwestpapua.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/33.-Lombok-Treaty-Article-2-13-Nov-2006.pdf>

all of Southeast Asia after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. It has ended in the post-Cold War period with America's entire lack of interest with the actions undertaken by Freeport. In the early 1960s US President John F. Kennedy (1917–1963) seeking to ensure Jakarta's support against communism gave Washington's blessing that Dutch West Papua to be transferred to Indonesia by the United Nations. The Phoenix-based mining corporation Freeport, with the help of Henry Kissinger, were given the first rights to begin exploiting the territory of its natural resources before the territory even became a part of the Indonesian Republic.

The US interaction with West Papua was inseparable from its corporate interests, especially when the communist tide was halted in Southeast Asia. In 2015, Freeport mined \$3.1 billion worth of gold and copper, while other US companies planned to exploit the estimated \$78 billion worth of timber resources in West Papua.⁷⁹ A 2014 US State Department Human Rights report found that Indonesia had engaged in mass killings, torture, detainment, restriction of journalists and media freedoms, racism and discrimination.⁸⁰ Despite these findings, Washington has done little more than issue statements against the mass violence perpetrated against West Papuans by Indonesian forces. Although the Free West Papua campaign described the State Department's document as a "historic and very encouraging report which highlights the reality of the continued systematic repression of human rights in West Papua by the Indonesian government as a means of cracking down on pro-independence and self-determination activities," the US has done little to change the situation since its media release. Rather, the report is just symbolic in gesture as US corporate interests will always take precedence over the violation of human rights in West Papua.⁸¹

Although Washington placed an arms ban on Indonesia for committing gross human rights violations in its departure from East Timor in 1999, it never affected US-Indonesia relations significantly, and Freeport continued to exploit West Papua's resources. The ban was finally fully lifted in 2010,

79 Febriana Firdaus, "A Tragic, Forgotten Place.' Poverty and Death in Indonesia's Land of Gold," *Time*, August 4, 2017. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.time.com/4880190/papua-poverty-shootings-justice-paniai/

80 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, "2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices," *U.S. Department of State*, 2015. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2014/>

81 Free West Papua Campaign, "US Condemns Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua," July 13, 2015. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.freewestpapua.org/2015/07/13/us-condemns-indonesian-human-rights-abuses-in-west-papua/>

but the original ban was never implemented for human rights violations in West Papua, and new sanctions are seemingly unlikely to be placed because of the situation in the territory. However, Luhut Panjaitan, a former commander of Indonesia's special forces and an advisor to Indonesian President Joko Widodo, revealed in 2014 that Indonesia's defence spending would grow to \$20 billion a year by 2019. He stated that: "We [the Indonesian military forces] link to economic growth of about 7 percent ... so by 2019, the national defence budget can go to around \$20 billion per annum."⁸²

With the significant investment in Indonesia's military, international states have tried to win lucrative contracts, particularly Australia and the US. In 2003, the US signed a contract to sell Indonesia eight Apache attack helicopters, including radar, training and maintenance in a deal worth \$500 million, with the then U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel stating that "Providing Indonesia these world-class helicopters is an example of our commitment to help build Indonesia's military capability."⁸³ This arms deal demonstrates that Washington prioritizes its trade and corporate interests with Indonesia over the humanitarian crisis in West Papua. Although the Free West Papua Campaign were enthusiastic that change would occur after the release of the 2014 Human Rights report by the US Department of State, it is unlikely that the corporate interests in the Indonesia province will be replaced by any form of humanitarian intervention.

Although the question of East Timor is or can be used as an example of a changing US policy towards Indonesia, it must be emphasized that its 1999 weapons ban was never because of the situation in West Papua as Washington has never and is not willing to challenge American corporate mining interests in the territory. Rather, as we have entered the "Asian Century", Washington will do all it can to deny China entry into an Indonesia where it still dominates mining and arms trade with Jakarta, unlike in other parts of Asia, even if it comes at the cost of humanitarian justice in West Papua.

⁸² David Brunnstorm, "China Worries May Boost Indonesia Defense Spending to \$20 bln/yr-Official," *Reuters*, December 9, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2018. www.reuters.com/article/china-southchinasea-indonesia/china-worries-may-boost-indonesia-defense-spending-to-20-bln-yr-official-idUSL6N0TT4IW20141209

⁸³ Phil Stewart, "U.S. to Sell Indonesia Apache Attack Helicopters in \$500 Million Deal," *Reuters*, August 26, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-indonesia-helicopters/u-s-to-sell-indonesia-apache-attack-helicopters-in-500-million-deal-idUSBRE97POCH20130826>

Conclusion

Although the events in West Papua are yet to be recognized as a genocide by any sovereign state or by the United Nations, when considering that not only 500,000 West Papuans have been killed since 1969, but also the significant demographic change, forced removals of people from their villages and free education being provided through an Islamic curriculum against the knowledge of children's parents, there is a systematic demolition against not only West Papuan people, but also their culture and livelihoods. Dr Elmslie's assertion that a genocide is occurring is correct. However, despite the evident genocide occurring, West Papua's closest partners, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, are unwilling to categorize the violence as genocide. This scenario is likely occurring because they are too small of states to be able to mount a serious and effective challenge against Jakarta who could economically and diplomatically cut their ties with these poor island states.

It is because of the mining interests, as already emphasized, that is fuelling the Indonesian violence against West Papuans. So long as mining firms, the most important being Freeport, not only ignore, but are also complicit, the violence will continue against West Papuans. Because of its isolated geographic location and not being a point of contention between the Great Power rivals of the US, China and Russia or other regional rivalries, weapons are not being smuggled into West Papua like we continue to see in Africa and the Middle East where proxy wars are occurring. This effectively means that West Papuan rebels in the foreseeable future will not be able to mount a significant insurgency against the Indonesian military, and so long as the international community remains silent, the violence will continue.

Whereas the West, including the US and Australia, galvanized to condemn Colonel Gaddafi's Libya and Bashar al-Assad's Syria since 2011 on charges of supposed human rights violations, these very same states are nonsensical to the atrocities occurring in West Papua. This is directly related to energy interests. Whereas Gaddafi and Assad did not allow their state resources to come under Western private control, Indonesia has openly welcomed foreign energy cartels to exploit the riches of West Papua. So long as Jakarta allows for profits to freely flow from West Papua to corporate hands, the overwhelming majority of the international community, including the Great Powers, will remain silent on the genocide.

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