



Franciscans International
A voice at the United Nations



**World Council
of Churches**

**55th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on
freedom of peaceful assembly and association**

7 March 2024

Delivered by Alexandro Rangga OFM

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Mr. President,

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur containing a technical and practical toolkit for use by law enforcement officials policing peaceful protests.

In West Papua, Indonesia, we recognize the difficulties of law enforcement in the current context of ongoing armed conflict. However, we are concerned about the continuous excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, harassment, intimidation and threats against Indigenous Papuan activists in the context of peaceful protests.

On 1 December 2023, a registered protest by the Papuan Peoples Alliance in Klademak, Sorong City was forcefully dispersed by the firing of tear gas grenades by the police officers. Two protesters were arrested and at least one protester sustained injuries.ⁱ Another incident occurred on the same day in Kupang, Nusa Tenggara Timur Province. Police officers stood by while members of nationalist mass organisations Garda Flobamora and Garuda assaulted students from the Papuan Student Alliance and the Indonesian People's Front for West Papua. The protest, which had continued peacefully despite the violence, was later dispersed by the police. 21 student protesters were arrested, arbitrarily detained and later released without charges. A police officer allegedly punched a Papuan student during the detention.ⁱⁱ

Civic space continues to shrink in West Papua. Since December 2023, the military has put up a large public billboard displaying photos and names of Indigenous Papuans on a Wanted List at Oksibil in Highland Papua. Such tactics are aimed at intimidating locals and thereby muzzling peaceful assembly and association.

We urge the Indonesian government to ensure that law enforcement officials uphold international standards on the use of force during peaceful protests. We call for a thorough and impartial investigation into these incidents and for those responsible to be held accountable.

Thank you.

ⁱ Human Rights Monitor, available at: [Peaceful 1 December commemorations responded with arbitrary arrests and violence against protesters - \(humanrightsmonitor.org\)](https://www.humanrightsmonitor.org/)

ⁱⁱ Ibid