

Australia West Papua Association (Sydney)

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to speak today.

Our main concern with this treaty are the defence ties with the Indonesian military that this treaty would commit us to. We note that ties with the TNI are also a concern in a large number of the other submissions that the committee has received.

Although there has been much progress towards democracy in Indonesia, the Indonesian military itself has failed to reform. This is also a concern to Civil society organisations in Indonesia. KONTRAS, the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence has reported that "the nation's security forces are still operating above the law" and, the government's record on human rights was clouded by its reluctance to rein in security agencies including the Military (TNI), the State Intelligence Agency (BIN) and the National Police, which continue to defy the reform process.

We understand that strategically the whole island of New Guinea will always be important to Australia and it is in our interest to have stability in the regions to our north. However, we believe that it is the behavior of the Indonesian military in West Papua that will eventually lead to the very instability the government is trying to avoid.

We believe to a large extent that this treaty is being driven by the issue of West Papua and its main aim is to restore good relations with Jakarta which were damaged by the arrival of the 43 West Papuan asylum seekers in January 2006. We believe good relations with Jakarta should not be at the expense of the West Papuan people.

The Indonesian military have a past record of committing human rights abuses in East Timor, Aceh and West Papua, and human rights abuses are still being committed by the military in West Papua. We believe the TNI in West Papua, behave more like an occupying force than a national army, and in fact that is how the West Papuan people see the TNI. West Papuans can be arrested for simply raising their national flag, the Morning Star or for simply discussing or campaigning (peacefully) for self-determination.

A recent report by Human Rights Watch, documents a number of cases of political prisoners in West Papua that were arrested simply for these peaceful actions.

We are also concerned about article 2, principle 3.

We believe this article is a direct reference to West Papua. AWPA's concern is that if another incident occurred such as the arrival of the 43 West Papuan asylum seekers, the government might try and stifle comment by organizations raising awareness about the issue of West Papua in order to avoid another rift with Jakarta.

Also, in the field of intelligence cooperation this treaty could commit the various Australian intelligence organizations to pass on information to Indonesian intelligence about the activities of human rights organizations working on the issue of West Papua. This might not be a concern for Australian citizens but could certainly be a

concern for West Papuan or Indonesian citizens involved in rallies in Australia and could result in their families being intimidated back in West Papua and Indonesia.

We believe that a treaty with Indonesia at the present time is unnecessary as there is already a high level of cooperation with the Indonesian government in many areas, as was shown in the case of the Bali bombings and the tragedy of the tsunami in Aceh. We believe a treaty that involves training or aiding the Indonesian military in any way will only lead to an increase in human rights abuses in West Papua and other parts of the archipelago.

## Jaringan Pro Separatis Papua di Australia

