

# CSI highlights racial discrimination towards indigenous peoples of West Papua

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, March 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Christian Solidarity International (CSI), a Christian human rights organization, has drawn attention at the United Nations in Geneva to the ongoing dispossession of and violence against the indigenous peoples of West Papua in Indonesia.

In an [oral statement](#) to the UN Human Rights Council 55th Session on March 28, CSI's Joel Veldkamp said this dispossession was "undergirded by a system of racial discrimination." He was speaking on Agenda item 9, which addressed racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance.



Displaced indigenous West Papuans wait to receive seeds to plant for crops. photo credit: csi

According to CSI's non-governmental sources in West Papua, indigenous people experience racial discrimination in five key areas, Veldkamp noted. The first of these is the lack of basic services, especially healthcare and education. As one source told CSI, "There are more plantations, more military posts, and fewer clinics in areas where indigenous people live."

The other four areas are: the appropriation of land and resources, which takes place without the free and informed consent of the indigenous people; the military operations which tend to follow mining and plantation development in indigenous lands; police violence against indigenous Papuans; and political representation.

CSI recalled that in its dialogue with the Human Rights Committee on March 12, the Indonesian delegation stated that, "Papua had its own legislature, with representatives from various local cultural groups." However, elected representatives from and in West Papua are predominantly non-indigenous.

"We urge the government of Indonesia to implement immediate reforms to ensure autonomy,

safety, and equal access to services for the indigenous people of West Papua, in the spirit of the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action,” said Veldkamp.

He concluded, “We also urge the Human Rights Council to increase its engagement and monitoring of this situation. The West Papuans’ 60-year struggle for freedom calls for no less.”

#### About CSI

Christian Solidarity International is an international human rights group campaigning for religious liberty and human dignity.

Joel Veldkamp

Christian Solidarity International

+41 76 258 15 74

[email us here](#)

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