

**KEUSKUPAN JAYAPURA  
KOTAK POS 1379  
JAYAPURA 99013  
PAPUA—INDONESIA**

**SEKRETARIAT Keadilan & Perdamaian  
TEL: +62-967-534993  
FAX: +62-967-534993  
E-Mail: [sekkp@jayapura.wasantara.net.id](mailto:sekkp@jayapura.wasantara.net.id)**

*OFFICE FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE-DIOCESE OF JAYAPURA*

Jayapura, 13 Maret 2001

No. : 060/TB/01/3.3.10.

Hal : keadaan pengungsi di Vanimo

Kepada Yth.

Bp. Drs. JP Salosa Msi

Gubernur Tk. I Papua

Di

**JAYAPURA**

Dengan hormat,

Bersama ini kami menyampaikan beberapa laporan kepada untuk diketahui dan untuk dijadikan perhatian yang serius.

Atas segala perhatian Bapak, tak lupa kami mengucapkan banyak terima kasih.

Teriring salam kami,

Sdr. Theo van den Broek ofm  
Direktur SKP Jayapura

Subject: Appeal to Governor by Catholic Church in Papua (English version)  
Date: 26 Februari 2001 23:10

To  
The Governor  
Irian Jaya Province  
Mr Jaap Solossa MSi,  
Jayapura,

Dear Sir,

We, the four bishops of the Catholic Church in Papua, namely the Archbishop of Merauke, Mgr. J Duivenvoorde, the Bishop of Agats represented by the Acting Bishop, P. Virgil Petermeier, the Bishop of Sorong, Mgr. F.X Hadisumartra and the Bishop of Jayapura, Mgr. Leo Laba Ladjar, have just finished our annual meeting in Jayapura held between the 13-17 February 2001. One of the main subjects of discussion was the problem of the border crossers who have arrived in the diocese of Vanimo and the diocese of Daru-Kiunga in PNG. The main discussion on this subject was held on the 13 February together with a delegation from PNG including the bishop of Vanimo, Mgr. Cesare Bonivento, his deputy, P. Saverio Taffari, the Secretary of the Office for Justice and Peace of the Diocese of Vanimo, Mr. Michael Kalele and a representative from the Diocese of Daru-Kiunga, P. Jacque Gross. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the provincial government of Papua, by the Head of the Socio-Political Department, Mr. Wempi Wolla, Mr Wim Silubun, Mr. Sam Leimena as well as by the Head of Community Relations, Mr F.X Suryanto, who was accompanied by the Consul Republic of Indonesia in Vanimo, Mr. M. Budi and the military attaché from the Indonesia Embassy in Port Moresby. Also invited and present was the Chairman of the Synod of the GKI, Pastor Herman Saud, and the Vice-Chairman of the Synod of the GKII.

We want to state that the discussion that we had with the representative from the Catholic church from PNG were a continuation of the discussion we had with the Assistant Governor Mr. Constan Kama along with a representative of the provincial Socio-Political Department when they visited the Jayapura Diocese office on the 25 January 2001

As a result of the meeting we feel we need to convey some items that in our opinion Bapak Governor and other institutions should be informed about. We hope this information will be useful and helpful to create a climate of security and peace and also to assist our brothers and sisters who are now in PNG and who desire to come back.

#### 1. Refugees and Border crossers

In the Diocese of Daru-Kiunga there are refugees from years (1984) and also newcomers from Merauke area. This is also the case in the Diocese of Vanimo. The newcomers whom the Republic of Indonesia call "illegal border crossers" arrived before and after the 1 December 2000. In Vanimo alone the numbers rose from approximately 180 in November 2000 to approximately 500 now. In Daru-Kiunga there are several groups of differing numbers. As they are not classified as "refugees" they do not qualify for assistance from the PNG government or from the United Nations Commission for Refugees. The Catholic church for no other than humanitarian concerns have tried to prepare a place for them to stay and to give them food, water, health care, seeds, and agricultural tools so that they can utilize part of the Diocese land which is still available to plant some crops. The capability of the church is limited. The result is there is confusion and worry about the fate of this people, if their situation is not dealt with quickly.

Most of them are women and children. Because of this, one of the problems to be addressed is the problem of education. The representatives from PNG have asked us to provide schoolbooks, which can be used by the children with the help from certain people in their group.

## 2. What is hoped for

The representatives from PNG have heard what the border crossers themselves have said and conveyed their desires..

They all want to return to their homeland. This desire that is expressed openly or sometimes keep within their hearts. Why this desire did not materialize when "nothing to worry about happened on the 1 December"? The obstacle is they experience strong feeling of fear and also embarrassment. They feel afraid. This isn't without reason. They know there are a number of their people who have "disappeared" and the fate of these people is unknown. They feel embarrassed to come back empty handed after they have struggled so long for independence yet as it has turned out they have not yet got it in their hands.

From the government of PNG and also from the UNHCR the only one solution to the matter of the refugees is repatriation Nevertheless for repatriation to take place there are three conditions, these are (1) there has to be no compulsion or force used (2) it cannot be undertaken before the situation has returned to normal and (3) it must be monitored by an International body and the church.

The provincial government of Papua still considers the refugees or border crossers members of its society. Because of that they want to attend to them and help them return. They fled, in the opinion of the provincial government, because they were distrustful and afraid of incidents that didn't happen and also because certain people stirred them up or incited fear.

## 3. Suggestions

After the exchange of ideas and information with representatives from the provincial government, the PNG Catholic Church, we, the Bishops of Papua, feel the need to convey the following suggestions.

(1) We hope the humanitarian aid will continue and not be hindered because of political considerations. As the Catholic Church cannot on its own guarantee the continuation of this aid, we therefore hope that the Government can help whether directly or through the Church if it is of the opinion that that it is more tactful.

(2) It is important to give true information to the refugees and border crossers about what has happened, and what is being done by the provincial Government to create an atmosphere of life citizens can experience themselves as in charge and accept responsibility. It is our impression that the understanding of 'independence' and 'special autonomy' is yet very confused, or even absent. Information is needed.

(3) A means is needed for the Government and the four dioceses along the border (these are the Archdiocese of Merauke, the Diocese of Jayapura in Papua and the Diocese of Vanimo and diocese of Daru-Kiunga in PNG) to meet and talk openly, while acknowledging each other's position. There is also a need for the provincial government and the border crossers to talk openly with each other.

(4) The feeling of fear and distrust felt by the refugees and the border crossers which is a hindrance to them returning will only be overcome if the people really can feel secure and peaceful. Therefore:

\* We call into question the presence of Security personnel (Army and Police) which in certain areas is felt out of proportion.

\* Above all if their attitude is not to be friendly toward the community but just suspect anyone and take blind action against certain tribal groups, in particular those called the "penisgourd community" from the Central Highlands.

\* We call into question the attitude of the Security forces concerning TPN/OPM groups which is very ambivalent and causes confusion in the whole community in general, and in TPN/OPM circles and refugees-circles in particular. Will the TPN/OPM be strongly act on or will they be spoiled? Will there be forgiveness or punishment?

\* To reach a higher level of feeling secure, we suggest to the Governor as highest authority in Papua to grant amnesty to all political prisoners and to free all the "political enemies" from all charges when they wish to return and to live peacefully amidst the community and build her up together.

These are the results of our meeting together with some recommendations which we would like to communicate, trusting that Bapak Governor will give them serious attention. We pray and ask for wisdom for Bapak Governor and for all who have been given responsibility in the society of Papua, so that they might fulfill their leaderships role as best as possible for the wellbeing of the whole community. May all your efforts be blessed by God.

Jayapura, 16 February 2001  
Yours sincerely

Bishop Leo Laba Ladjar OFM      Archbishop J. Duivenvoorde MSC

Bishop F.X Hadisumarta O.Carm      Father P. Virgil Petermeier, OSC

Copied to:  
Assistant Governor, Province of Irian Jaya  
Army Commander Irian Jaya  
Head of the police, Irian jaya  
Head of provincial parliament  
Head of the Synod GKI Irian Jaya  
Head of the Synod GKII Irian Jaya  
Participants of the meeting

=====

We have just received the following reliable report on an attack on bordercrossers in Vanimo. The attack took place last night (6 March 2001).  
SKP

Sent: Wednesday, March 07, 2001 12:44 PM  
Subject: urgent

We have received incredible reports from Vanimo of an attack by members of the police task force on the border crossers there.

The information so far received is that the people were suddenly confronted by armed police yesterday evening, in the camp. They apparently sat as the police entered and pointed weapons at them. It is reported that the police then began beating them with wooden planks and that one of the crossers who speaks some Tok Pisin tried to reason with the police. He was immediately bashed badly and cut with a knife. He tried to protect his neck with his hand and received a deep wound to his hand as well. The attack on him apparently continued after

he was placed in a vehicle to go to the hospital. A second person was apparently identified as a leader of the people and immediately slashed with a knife. He is apparently undergoing surgery and has a deep wound. It seems the police continued to behave in an aggressive manner at the hospital.

There has been no explanation received as to why the police would attack a group of frightened border crossers (most of whom do not speak English or Tok Pisin). It appears most likely that the government has come to the conclusion that these people are not legitimate refugees and that they should return to West Papua. A delegation from West Papua is scheduled to meet with the people today.

Bishop Bonivento reported a tearful gathering with the people this morning as they prayed together with him. The Bishop has asked the police for action.

We have contacted Waigani and so far the response is a cautious "we are looking into the matter". It seems there may be a discussion with the police commissioner this afternoon. It seems also that efforts need to be made by people in Vanimo to have the police restrained. It seems that there is considerable community concern in Vanimo.

=====

The following statement has been issued by Bishop Stephen Reichert, Bishop of Mendi and President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

8 March, 2001

Media Release

Ill Treatment of West Papuan People Condemned

Allegations that police officers have engaged in attacks on West Papuan people in Vanimo must be investigated at the highest levels. The Catholic Bishops Conference views with great distress and serious concern allegations that members of a special police unit have participated in an un-provoked, vicious, and violent attack on defenceless people in a Church run care centre.

Reports received from Vanimo suggest that police officers used their fists, their boots, their weapons, pieces of wood and even knives in attacking people who fled West Papua and sought refuge among the Melanesian people of Vanimo.

Once again reports of the behaviour of police officers are reflecting on the good names of loyal, brave and hardworking policemen and women all over this country. The Catholic Bishops wish to assure other countries that such behaviour should not be seen as representative of the good people who comprise the majority of our police force. Our police, men and women, are as ashamed as we are when individuals representing the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary behave badly.

The Bishops are also concerned that failure by the government to take immediate action will reflect badly on this country, particularly in the light of similar and apparently orchestrated attacks the world witnessed in Timor.

The Catholic Church calls on the highest authorities in Papua New Guinea to investigate these reports immediately and to be seen to be taking action against those found to be involved in what appears to have been criminal assault on the weak.

BishopStephen Reichert OFM Cap

President

Phone: 5491002

=====

Subject: FW: attack at bordercrossers in Vanimo

Date: 09 Maret 2001 12:02

Report by VSO-director in PNG (when he has been asked whether he knew about the reported attack on the refugees in vanimo)

SKP

Yes, I know plenty about this as I have just got back from Vanimo and was in the 'refugee camp' yesterday morning and Thursday afternoon. I was also in Vanimo hospital with our VSO doctor on Thursday morning after he had seen to the two 'refugees' that were hospitalized.

What is written below (see above: first report on March 7) is definitely true (...). Absolutely outrageous and we just have to hope that the perpetrators are prosecuted.

=====

From: Lawrence Stephens <cbc@dg.com.pg>

Subject: West Papuan Injuries

Date: 13 Maret 2001 6:14

I could not help but notice the newspaper suggestion that the injuries to the two West Papuan men hospitalised were not serious. I see from the medical report that one had a "very deep knife wound left shoulder (7cm long 4 cm deep) and the other had swollen lip, 10 knife wounds on his back and left arm, deep knife wound neck and head, and deep knife wounds to the fingers and loss of "nail digit V". Can you imagine the fuss which would be mde if Australia treated any of its illegals to such treatment? I'd say these wounds sound pretty serious.

Lawrence Stephens  
Catholic Bishops Conference

-