Media Release: Rights group condemns attack on protestors in Deiyai

29 August 2019

Institute for Papuan Advocacy & Human Rights today condemns the fatal shootings in the military attack on protestors in Deiyai yesterday. Paula Makabory spokesperson for Institute for Papuan Advocacy and Human Rights ( IPAHR) calls for an end to the violence and help for the shooting victims.

Paula Makabory said today ‘The Indonesian President must stand down the Indonesian security forces in West Papua. They are the perpetrators who triggered this conflict at a peaceful demonstration.’

‘In this case, Indonesian security forces triggered the conflict by calling the locals “monkeys.” They ridiculed the demonstrators first and then attacked them with tear gas. When some local people responded with traditional bows and arrows the military opened fire with live ammunition and killed civilians,’ Makabory said.

‘This incident is part of a broader pattern of violence in Deiyai,’ said Dr. Eben Kirksey, an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Deakin University in Melbourne. Kirksey traveled to Deiyai in 2018 where he found evidence of 29 extrajudicial killings by Indonesian security forces over the past two decades. “The United Nations has requested access to West Papua to investigate this long history of killings,” Dr. Kirksey said. “The Indonesian government should stop stone walling and grant access to UN Special Rapporteurs.”

Paula Makabory went on to say, ‘a Genocide is happening in West Papua. Provocation of conflict by Indonesian security forces in Deiyai is evidence of genocidal intent by the Indonesian military against ethnic Papuans. Military operations against the Papuan people have been intensifying in the remote mountainous areas in recent months.’

‘West Papua, must be opened up to outside world, especially the mountainous region of Deiyai, Paniai, Puncak Jaya and Nduga, for an independent Human Rights investigation by the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner and especially, the UN Special Rapporteurs on Torture and Extra Judicial Killings.’
Chronology: Deiyai 28 August, 2019,

It is reported by the local sources by phone to Institute of Papua Advocacy & Human Rights that there were 12 incoming airplanes to Enarotali airport from Timika which dropped additional an large number of Indonesian army into the region. These soldiers then deployed to Deiyai District, during the mass demonstration at the Regent office.

The demonstration was initially peaceful. When security forces started calling the Papua demonstrators ‘monkeys’ the demonstrators became agitated. The security forces then fired tear gas into the crowd. While protestors were suffering impacts from the tear gas the army started firing live ammunition. Local indigenous people were reportedly armed with traditional bows and arrows. They reportedly retaliated with arrows after the firing of the tear gas and bullets. The intention of the troops of Indonesia military and police was clearly to provoke the anger of the people and justify the use of lethal force.

An unknown number of local people were killed from bullet wounds and 5 security forces were shot by arrows from the demonstrators. It is noted that yesterday Reuters and Aljazeera report that 6 people were killed in the incident.

Among the civilians a 20 year old named Alpius Pigai was shot dead. Several young children aged 9 and 10 that were shot and injured. Martinus Iyai 27 was shot in the thigh and Naomi Pigome was also injured at the crime scene. Pictures of two civilians shot in the incident are circulating on social media. One shows a young woman with mid abdominal wound and a young man with patch over a shoulder injury in the hospital.

It is reported that some of the victims couldn't be approached to be identified because the security forces were standing guard. Medical care of these injured people appears to be hampered by the security forces. It was reported that 5 security forces and 3 local victims were sent and being treated at the public hospital.

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