**Youngsolwara joins Pacific Churches and regional Civil Society in calling for West Papua to be allowed membership of the Melanesian Spearhead Group**

Three members of Pacific civil society have called for the United Liberation Movement for West Papua to be allowed membership of the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

The call comes ahead of an MSG Summit on April 21 and after increased human rights abuse of indigenous people by Indonesian security forces in Papua.

Pacific Conference of Churches General Secretary, Reverend James Bhagwan, said Papua representatives were entitled to full MSG membership as the voice of an oppressed people.

“Indonesian President Joko Widodo committed in 2019 that he was ready to enter into dialogue with the ULMWP,” Bhagwan said.

“We urge Indonesia to enter into dialogue with the ULMWP in good faith and support their entry into the MSG.’’

Indonesia has been allowed membership of the MSG by Fiji, Kanaky (New Caledonia) Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

“Being members of the MSG will allow both parties a neutral platform on which to discuss matters which affect people in a sincere and constructive manner,’’ Bhagwan said.

“Therefore, we humbly ask our Melanesian leaders to heed the cry of our brothers and sisters in Papua – allow the ULMWP to join the MSG.’’

Pacific Islands Associations of NGO (PIANGO) Executive Director Emeline Siale Ilolahia supported West Papua’s entry into the MSG.

“The Melanesian affiliates of PIANGO during their Subregional Meeting in Honiara reaffirmed (their) commitment to working in partnership and collaboration to deliver effective solutions for the development challenges of our sub region and scale up our efforts for a Free West Papua by 2030,” Ilolahia said.

“We reaffirm our commitment and supporting MSG to realise its full responsibilities and obligations to the people of Melanesia and specifically call on the MSG to strengthen its support to ensuring the right to self-determination for West Papua by 2030 by granting full membership to the ULMWP and facilitating its members’ cooperation for transitional support and international advocacy.’’

Youngsolwara Pacific’s Rosa Moiwend says the MSG must be reminded of its principles and cooperation amongst independent states and their commitment to ensuring independence as the inalienable right of colonial countries and peoples.

“We must be reminded by the words of a father of Melanesia and Vanuatu’s first prime minister, Father Walter Lini, that Vanuatu will not be fully free until all Melanesians are free,” stressed Moiwend.

The Pacific Network on Globalisation echoed the Youngsolwara sentiments.

The PCC and partners call came after the West Papua Council of Churches requested:

1. The UN Commissioner for Human Rights should visit the Land of Papua to carry out an investigation of human rights violations in Papua.

2. The involvement of an independent team as a third party to carry out accompaniment, health services, education and other needs of the residents living as refugees or those who are victims of violence in Nduga, Intan Jaya, Puncak Papua, and Timika.

3. That President Joko Widodo keeps the promise that he made on September 30, 2019 that the State is ready to "dialogue with the Papuan Pro-Referendum group, ULMWP."

4. The Indonesian government should carry out a dialogue with ULMWP to find a solution to the problem of Papua in the same way as the government of SBY (Yusuf Kala) resolved problems with GAM and Aceh mediated by a third country.

5. The leaders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) should accept ULMWP as a full

member of the MSG at the MSG summit in April 2021.

6. Papuans should pray and fast from 11 April 2021 for the healing of the land and people of Papua and for the unity of all cultural leaders, church leaders, government leaders, NGO leaders, women leaders and youth leaders.

7. The Papuan People, starting from their own family, should practice principles of a peaceful life and avoid things that can destroy their future. They should protect and guide all of their family members in a responsible way.

8. Prayer and fasting support from the people and church leaders in the Pacific.

The WPCC expressed its respect and thanks to the cultural leaders, church leaders, the media, government leaders, communities and academics in the Pacific region who had demonstrated true solidarity in the long journey of suffering of Gods People in the Land of Papua.