



HUMAN RIGHTS
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MEDIA RELEASE

Pacific sings in solidarity for West Papua

2nd December, 2020

In commemorating the West Papuan Morning Star flag raising this year, Pacific artists who have been strong advocates for West Papua united with strong messages of freedom in an appeal to the region to stand up for West Papua.

The Morning Star is celebrated all over the world by West Papuans and their supporters each year on the 1st of December to remind them of the first ever flag raising ceremony in 1961, where it was hoisted alongside the Dutch flag.

This year marks the 59th anniversary since the Morning Star's inauguration, and despite the act of raising or using the Morningstar symbol being considered treasonous by Indonesia, Papuans continue to celebrate this day.

A virtual concert, Wan Musik, Wan Sing was organized by Youngsolwara Pacific in collaboration with Rize of the Morning Star, USP Human Rights Alumni, and the Pacific Conference of Churches Youth to commemorate the day.

The Wan Musik, Wan Sing concert saw over 15 artists and poets share unifying messages of freedom, liberation, and resistance through songs and spoken word in solidarity support of West Papua's struggle to be self-determining.

Vanuatu's Vanessa Quai, Papua New Guinean legend Sir George Telek, Fiji's Seru Serevi and spoken word artist Tamani Rarama will be featured in the concert, with new music launches by Youngsolwara artists' Paulini Bautani and Krystal Juffa.

Mere Tuilau of Youngsolwara Pacific highlighted the historical role of music and the arts in attaining solidarity amongst people, as well as in mobilising the resistance needed for change in fights for liberation and freedom, especially in the case of West Papua's continuous struggle.

"One of the good things West Papua appears to have proven, is that amidst the ongoing oppression, songs of Merdeka (Freedom) amplify West Papua's self-determination movement as a cause for celebration and as an unstoppable form of Talanoa dialogue," Ronny Kareni with Rize of the Morning Star.

Meanwhile, YS Pacific maintains its political call on Pacific island leaders to support the call of the current Pacific Island Forum (PIF) chair for the United National Human Rights Commission to intervene on the issue of West Papua, and to establish the process for dialogue between the main parties to resolve the human rights situation in West Papua and address the root causes of the conflict.

Youngsolwara Pacific is also calling on Indonesia to respect the call of Pacific Island Leaders for a United Nations Human Rights led fact finding mission into West Papua.

The virtual concert can be accessed through our Youngsolwara Pacific YouTube Channel as well as our We Bleed Black and Red Facebook page.

For concert viewing - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ErIn3kNBKY>