

## **Questionnaire to Indigenous Peoples' Organizations**

The secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invites Indigenous Peoples' Organizations to complete the attached questionnaire on any action taken or planned related to indigenous peoples' rights, policies and the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Questionnaire responses will be placed on the Permanent Forum's website and also compiled into one report for the Forum's fifteenth session.

Please submit your completed questionnaire by **1 January 2016** to:

Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
Division for Social Policy and Development  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Room: S- 2958  
United Nations Headquarters  
New York, USA 10017  
Telephone : 917-367-5100; fax : 917- 367-5102  
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The fifteenth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 9 to 20 May 2016.

**The provisional agenda for the Permanent Forum's fifteenth session includes:**

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum.
4. Implementation of the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
5. Discussion on the theme "Indigenous peoples: conflict, peace and resolution".
6. Dialogue with indigenous peoples.
7. Dialogue with Member States.
8. Dialogue with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.
9. Coordination among the three United Nations mechanisms pertaining to indigenous peoples:
  - (a) Coordination among the three United Nations mechanisms pertaining to indigenous peoples;
  - (b) Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
10. Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues.
11. Provisional agenda for the sixteenth session.
12. Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its fifteenth session.

## Questionnaire

### 1. Please provide the name of your organization and the country where it is based.

West Papua National Authority: Based in Jayapura, the capital city of West Papua, with its international offices based in Melbourne, Australia, and Washington, D.C, United States.

### 2. What are the main objectives and goals of your organization?

#### Objectives

The main objectives of the WPNA are to:

- Preserve and promote the unique culture of West Papuan people, which disappearing at a faster rate, and to promote peace and stability within West Papuan territory.

#### Goal

- To ensure that West Papua achieves its goal of “Self-determination,” which has been denied to them for decades, and to becoming a member of the United Nations family?

### 3. Which indigenous groups does your organization represent and what is the total number of indigenous peoples within these groups?

The WPNA represents the Melanesian people of West Papua, who are indigenous people of the mainland and the Islands that made up West Papua. These indigenous people make up about three million people by estimation.

### 4. Has your Organization participated in any sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues? If yes, please indicate the year(s).

Yes, as a scholar and representative of the WPNA, I attended the *UN Indigenous People Day* every August 9<sup>th</sup> at the United Nations in New York City (NYC) since 2010. And on invitation, I attended the *UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issue* last year – 2014.

### 5. In what ways does the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues support indigenous peoples in your organization?

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues provides an avenue for West Papuan National Authority (WPNA) to regularly participate in discussion of issues pertaining to the rights of indigenous West Papuan in their own land. And it also gives WPNA a voice for the people to hear their issues.

### 6. At its fifteenth session in 2016, the Permanent Forum’s theme will be Indigenous Peoples: conflict, peace and resolution. Please provide information as to whether your organization is working on issues related to conflict, peace and resolution for indigenous peoples. Where possible, please include information on the situation of indigenous women in your responses.

The WPNA promotes peaceful approaches to settling issues between Indonesian and indigenous West Papuans with the goal that West Papuan issues can be addressed without the use of deadly force. Indonesia, as a member of the United Nations, often ignored public dialogue as a mean of resolving the grievance of the West Papuan people. As a result, a lot of people got hurt from both sides. However, peace remains the founding principle the WPNA to promote security, diplomatic dialogue and to seek peaceful resolutions the issues facing West Papuans. It is this principle of peace that the “West Papuan Melanesian Women Solidarity,” which was founded to promote gender equality, Melanesian women culture, and to ensure the security the indigenous Women of West Papua who are the foundation of our nation.

**7. In the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2), member States committed themselves to “taking, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, appropriate measures at the national level, including legislative, policy and administrative measures, to achieve the ends of the Declaration...” (paragraph 7) on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and that the action plan be developed in consultation with Member States, Indigenous Peoples and the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues.**

In relation to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, please outline the following:

**(i) Has your organization been involved in any State-led measures to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples? Please provide details on the level of your participation.**

WPNA welcomes any dialogue with the government of Indonesia on issues that affected West Papuan people, but in most cases, Indonesia continues to acknowledge the existence of any problem in West Papua. In other words, the frustrations and the needs of indigenous people are not being heard by the Indonesian government simply by design – the government’s regulations outlawing the expression of one’s cultural rights, or symbols, make things extremely complicated.

**(ii) What are the major successes as well as the remaining obstacles for the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the people that organization represents?**

There are many obstacles, but the main one is the Indonesian government. The Indonesian government has created barriers between the government in Jakarta and the indigenous people of West Papua. Certainly, WPNA cannot hold any effective dialogue with Indonesia because Indonesia refuses to hold talks, instead arrest anyone that expresses his opinions, or attacks any organization that attempts to bring up the issue of West Papua to the Indonesian authority. Thus, West Papuans are afraid of even talking about their own culture for fear of being harassed or arrested by the Indonesian government. The lack of respect for one’s indigenous culture is a huge problem in West Papua because Indonesia doesn’t recognize our culture.

**(iii) Is your organization involved in the collection and dissemination of disaggregated data or culturally relevant data on indigenous peoples?**

Yes, we have good amount of data of the various organizations within West Papua, including colleges and various organizations: data on women, students, church, children etc. We encourage women to stand up for their rights, and to advocate for women across West Papua, and it is within the goal of the WPNA to preserve and protect various elements of the West Papuan cultures. Example, language, food, songs – chants, cultural dances, traditional motifs – arts and crafts, painting, poetry etc., these things, WPNA believes hold the national cultural identity of the people.

**8. How does your organization implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the community level?**

WPNA vigorously promotes public cultural awareness throughout West Papua, by educating them about what is going on in politics; about their cultural rights; and the things that make them who they are – as Melanesian people distinctive of other ethnic groups in West Papua. As a non English speaking ethnic group, WPNA translated the ‘UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People’ into the local language – Papua Malay – so that the indigenous people understand their “inalienable rights” in that declaration.

**9. Does your organization provide regular or ad hoc capacity-building programmes on indigenous peoples’ rights for staff and members of the community, or planned capacity-building activities in this area?**

WPNA and the West Papuan communities hold regular training in which local people are trained to understand the rule of law in relation their cultural rights, and how their Melanesian West Papuan culture can fit in to this West Cultural influence, and how to tackle the overwhelming Indonesian cultural presence in West Papua. The community also greatly involved in this effort by encouraging dialogue amongst themselves, especially in places where WPNA doesn’t go. To achieve this goal, leaders throughout West Papua come together once a month to discuss their progress or anything concerns that the people may have. It is a very effective program.

**10. Does the United Nations support your organization’s work on indigenous peoples’ issues?**

Recently, the United Nations has given us a voice in participating in indigenous rights’ forums, and give up the opportunity to attending and expressing our voices. However, the UN could do more to honour the “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” which we believe we are entitled to. Giving us a platform to express our views on our indigenous is a very good thing, but to this day, our rights are still being held back by the Indonesian government. We need the support so that our indigenous cultural rights and our dignity are protected.

**11. Please provide information of conferences and other meetings organized or supported by your Organization for 2016 and 2017.**

For 2016 and 2017, our affiliates will participate in various meetings around the Pacific region, such as the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), the Pacific Islands Forum – direct dialogue with countries in the region for their support for indigenous West Papuans, and for their support in recognizing the rights of West Papuans to self-determination. Here in the US,

we continue to speak and educate people in schools – high schools and colleges, about the issues of indigenous West Papuans, and also participate in UN meetings of indigenous people, Human Rights etc. And we hope that our rights to government ourselves are fully recognized and honoured.

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Documentary: ‘Unbreakable Melanesian Arrow’  
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