



Friday  
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# WEST PAPUA CAMPAIGN USA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2025 Edition

## TOP NEWS

### Celebrating West Papua Independence Day

On November 29, 2025, we joined our brothers and sisters across the Pacific in commemorating West Papua Independence Day. Through ceremony, song, and solidarity, we honored the resilience of our people and reaffirmed our collective commitment to freedom. This day reminds us that our struggle is rooted in dignity, culture, and the unbreakable spirit of our ancestors.

### Official Opening of Our New Office

We are proud to announce the official opening of our new office space in the Pacific Northwest. This milestone marks a step forward in building sustainable infrastructure for our advocacy work. Our new home will serve as a hub for coalition-building, community organizing, and cultural programming that uplifts West Papuan voices.



### Welcoming Our New Team Members on Boarding

Beginning January 5, 2026, West Papua Campaign USA is honored to welcome three new members to our growing team:

- Arso Gombo : Full-time, serving as our Community Health and Cultural Wellness Navigator, bringing vital expertise in strengthening community resilience and cultural healing.
- Framuel Wanimbo: Full-time, joining the Media Campaign Outreach and Communication Department Team, amplifying our message and ensuring West Papuan voices reach broader audiences.
- Yanto Assuk: Part-time, contributing to our Policy and Strategy Team, supporting the development of advocacy frameworks and long-term strategic goals. Their leadership and dedication will expand our capacity to engage communities, deepen our advocacy, and strengthen the organizational roots of WPC USA.



## IE OPINION

## West Papua's long struggle for independence under Indonesian colonialism

By West Papua Campaign USA,  
Arso Gombo, and Mirius Wenda  
IE Contributors

We are the West Papua Campaign USA, a nonprofit organization established in 2021 with the support of the Pacific Island Community Association of Washington State (PICA-WA). Our mission is to advocate on behalf of West Papua, addressing issues such as genocide, ecocide, ethniccide, education, immigration, refugee rights, and emergency assistance for West Papuan students in need. Our office is located near the Aurora Transit Center. Every December 1st, we commemorate the fallen leaders of West Papua's freedom struggle.

This day marks our collective remembrance of those who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of West Papua. Beginning on December 1st, we also celebrate 19 days of independence, honoring the resilience, courage, and spirit of our people in the ongoing struggle for self-determination.

West Papua's independence movement started in 1961 after Dutch colonization for over 300 years. That same year, Indonesia invaded West Papua, which today is an Indonesian colony that has faced challenges such as genocide, ecocide, and ethniccide.

### Genocide and ethniccide

Genocide is extremely committed by Indonesia government since 1961 up to now. Indonesia have launched over 17 military operations in Papua, and thousands of West Papuan lives have been taken.

According to The Neglected Genocide, a report published by the Asian Human Rights Commission, using historical records, field research and the testimony of survivors in 15 affected communities, the groups identified 4,146 victims of the killings but said the total number of victims who died from torture, disease and hunger as a result of the violence could be as high as 10,000. The report concludes that bombings and "indiscriminate shootings" occurred alongside "unspeakable atrocities including rape, torture and mass executions." Villagers were slashed with razors and forced to watch the killings. Some were buried, boiled, and burnt alive.

"While clashes with the Indonesian military were nothing new for the Papuans," the report writes, "what was happening in the Central Highlands during 1977-1978 was extraordinary in terms of the number of casualties as well as military officials and type of equipment deployed."

The military operation listed above was conducted in West Papua over a two-year period. In that time, more than 5,000 West Papuans fled for their lives. West Papuan refugees now live around



Wika Wika speaks at a West Papua Campaign USA event in Shoreline, in celebration of West Papua Independence Day in late November 2025. Photo by Arso Gombo.



Members of the West Papua Campaign USA, including Mirius Wenda, the current executive director of the nonprofit. Photo courtesy of West Papua Campaign USA.

the border of West Papua, Indonesia, or Papua New Guinea. Some have run all the way to Australia and the United Kingdom due to ongoing aggressive military actions.

According to Human Rights Monitor, "As of October 2025, more than 103,218 civilians across multiple agencies remained displaced due to military operations and armed conflict. The vast majority of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are Indigenous Papuans."

As a result, many IDPs do not have access to medical treatment, clean water, or food to eat. One refugee woman even gave birth in a jungle during one military operation.

Serious concerns over healthcare and security in West Papua have sparked protests after two recent tragedies.

In November 2025, in Jayapura, a pregnant woman named Irene Sokoy reportedly died—along with her unborn child—after being denied care at a hospital. Staff allegedly refused to admit her because she could not afford the costs of childbirth, a case that community members say reflects ongoing neglect of healthcare for Papuans.

Separately, that same month, a high school student in Yahukimo Regency was seriously injured following an alleged Indonesian drone strike. The attack left him bedridden and prompted his family and local residents to gather in protest, demanding accountability from the Yahukimo government.

### Ecocide

West Papua, home to the world's third largest rainforest after the Amazon and Congo, is facing rapid deforestation. Since Indonesia's takeover, illegal logging has surged. The UNODC Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific reports that Indonesia loses 1.6 to 2.8 million hectares of forest annually—about 3 to 5 hectares every minute—largely due to weak enforcement. In West Papua alone, 770,000 hectares of tree cover vanished between 2001–2024, according to Global Forest Watch.

The Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE), Indonesian government's planned mega rice and sugarcane project, covering land the size of Lebanon, is expected to accelerate destruction, threatening biodiversity, indigenous communities, and contributing heavily to global climate change.

Indonesia nickel mining in Raja Ampat has also destroyed the beauty of the tourist area of the region, and many Papuans have gathered to protest it. However, the company still operates and destroys the habitat of mammals.

"Over 500 hectares of forest and native vegetation have been cleared for nickel mines on the islands of Gag, Kawe and Manuran in West Papua, resulting in soil runoff and sedimentation that endangers coral reefs and marine ecosystems," according to a study by Greenpeace and AP News. Forests are also being converted

into palm oil plantations.

Controversy following recent fires, including the burning of a bird-of-paradise, has long been a significant cultural attack and connection.

Local anti-publicly criticism, calling for cultural identity, and authorities with them must be owners rather than heritage items.

The incident between the Indonesian and Indonesian protecting the bird-of-paradise. Papuans must ensure the bird-of-paradise is not lost.

The National Center for Biodiversity Conservation (BBN) has made with officials said the end of many Papuan cultural identity.

Communities causing the loss of native Papuan ceremonial and its feast and other customs was lost to Indigenous.

Following used an appeal to the government to protect the bird-of-paradise. The incident how conservation with demand for protecting their.

Editor's note: This article is a view linked to the article noted above.

## ADVOCACY WORK IN 2026 OUR PLAN FORWARD

Looking ahead to 2026, WPC USA will:

- Launch Community Educational on Decolonize our youth and young adult mindset.
- Launch Community Rooted Initiatives that integrate art, ceremony, and education.
- Expand partnerships with Pacific Islander and Indigenous organizations.
- Support the West Papua Legal Clinic, offering low bono immigration legal services and holistic support for the diaspora.
- Build dignified employment opportunities through sustainable, culturally rooted programs.

Together, we will continue to amplify the call for self-determination, environmental justice, and Indigenous liberation.

Thank you for standing with us. Your solidarity fuels our movement and keeps the flame of freedom alive.

Papua Merdeka

