

Writing Rings for
Righting Wrongs
June 2015

Apolos Sroyer, a
traditional leader in
West Papua has been
arrested



The Papuan people...

...need your help

Apolos Sroyer was arrested on May 21 with more than 80 other people following other mass arrests at demonstrations during May 2015. The purpose of the Papuan demonstrations was to urge the Indonesian government to resolve the conflict in Papua (West Papua) 'peacefully and with dignity'. The demonstrations were peaceful and disciplined. Papuans did not hurt anyone physically, nor they did threaten anyone. They did not damage property. They were exercising the right many of us take for granted: the right to freely express an opinion.

Mr Gerard Kafiar, from the Department of Justice of the Traditional Council of West Papua, expressed appreciation that Indonesian president Joko (Jokowi) Widodo had released a few political prisoners and expressed his desire that West Papua be opened to foreign media. But he urged Jokowi to do more to protect the right to freedom of expression, a Right which Kafiar pointed out should be protected under Indonesian law. "The arrest and detention of West Papuans is inconsistent with the 1945 Indonesian constitution, Indonesian human rights law and the Indonesian government's signing of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights" he said.

The May demonstrations were also in support of the [United Liberation Movement for West Papua \(ULMWP\)](#). There are a lot of peace and freedom groups which are all part of ULMWP. The ULMWP is currently seeking membership of the [Melanesian Spearhead Group \(MSG\)](#). They want to return to the family of Pacific nations and hope the MSG will help them find a peaceful solution to the conflict with the Government of Indonesia.

[Benny Wenda](#), the spokesperson of the ULMWP says 'we have put our trust in the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) to represent us in the MSG. Though my people were only demonstrating peacefully, youths were arrested and some were tortured by the Indonesian authorities.'

The Papuan people ask us to contact the Indonesian president to urge that all political prisoners be released and the right to peacefully express a political opinion be guaranteed. Please contact your Federal representatives too. Raise your voice to help protect Apolos Sroyer and other Papuans in detention.

Crafting your message:

- Start with Dear President Joko Widodo
- Briefly describe who you are and where you are writing from
- Express your deep concern for Apolos Sroyer, and other Papuan political prisoners
- Ask President Widodo to personally ensure that the men are safe
- Express support for President Widodo's release of the five political prisoners and his desire to open up West Papua to foreign media
- Respectfully urge President Widodo to release the three men and to guarantee freedom of expression in West Papua.

Send letters to:

President Joko Widodo
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21 344 2233
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To contact your
representative
in Federal
Parliament,
go to
www.aph.gov.au