



**Sovereign Union**  
**of First Nations and Peoples in Australia**  
*Asserting Australia's First Nations Sovereignty into Governance*  
**[www.sovereignunion.mobi](http://www.sovereignunion.mobi)**

23 August 2013

Your Excellency,

**Re: Safe passage for Freedom Floatilla to West Papua**

The Sovereign Union of Aboriginal Nations and Peoples wishes to advise that, after having had discussions with Jacob Rumbiak, Foreign Affairs Minister of the Federal republic of West Papua in exile – we wish to draw your attention to our ancient customary relationship since time immemorial with the Peoples of West Papua. We have traded both culturally and materially in the past, as we have done with the ancient Peoples of Timor Leste and Indonesia.

This correspondence is primarily focused on the need to have members of the United Nations understand our enduring cultural support for the Peoples of West Papua, who like many native Peoples around the world have been subject to some form of colonialism, which has at all times been to the detriment of the original inhabitants.

In this modern day the UN cannot stand idly by when its words resonate throughout the world with the objective to achieve full decolonisation and the establishment of democratic states. Rhetoric is not the symbol that we need in modern day politics. We need to promote action not words, because words are failing and we see hundreds and thousands of people being killed all over the world, while the UN stands hog-tied by the need for diplomacy. As the world changes, so too does the need for the UN to reassess its role.

The Sovereign Union understands the need to respect territorial integrity, however, when tragic conflicts arise threatening the lives of the innocent, then diplomacy must be supported by action.

There is currently a Freedom Floatilla of peaceful supporters who are traversing international waters by boat, taking a cultural message of peace and support for the Peoples of West Papua. The passengers include one of our highly respected Arabunna Elders, Kevin Buzzacott. The members of the floatilla are expressing grave concern for the actions of mining companies, including Rio Tinto and their mercenaries who are murdering the native population of West Papua, because they dared to object to the indiscriminate destruction of their Country for the purpose of profiting from the exploitation of their natural resources. West Papuans remain in stark poverty, with no right to be beneficiaries of the enormous wealth that comes from mining.

On 21 August 2013 a delegation from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy went to the Indonesian Embassy in Canberra, where cordial discussions took place. The delegation was seeking a guarantee of safe passage for the Freedom Flotilla, which is warmly anticipated and welcomed by West Papuan residents, but has been threatened by the Indonesian and Australian Governments. Visas were applied for but Indonesia refused to issue them.

The statement, released by Australian media, says that the Indonesian government may conduct a military strike on the small and unarmed crew of the Freedom Flotilla. The flotilla comprises three small boats, which are heading to West Papua to show solidarity with the West Papuans in their struggle against gross violations of human rights. The Australian Government's statements were equally concerning and publicly stated for Indonesia to use all means necessary.

Arabunna Elder Kevin Buzzacott, is a long-time veteran of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy and holds a significant status in Australia from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, as a highly respected cultural Law person and peace-maker, with a long-standing commitment to justice, sovereignty and land rights for Aboriginal Peoples.

News from the Australian press of a potential threat to his life and the lives of the other members of the West Papuan Freedom Flotilla has sparked immediate outrage in our communities;

The Indonesian Embassy diplomats welcomed the Aboriginal Embassy delegates and engaged in an open discussion. The following points were discussed:

- To convey to the President of Indonesia that we have our important Elders on the Freedom Flotilla coming as a peaceful envoy, and that our Elders must be treated with respect and allowed to return unharmed. They are bearing sacred fire and water only and come in peace;
- A call to immediately end bloodshed in West Papua;
- Non-violent relationships and only Peace while dealing with our People, who are sharing cultural and moral support with West Papuans;
- An understanding of our long-standing cultural ties with our close neighbours.

We ask that as a member state of the UN that you write to your colleagues of the State of Indonesia advising them that all people have a right to protest and not be harmed, as this is a fundamental human right in a true democracy.

Furthermore, I conclude by asking that you bring this correspondence to the attention of the Secretary-General of UN, Mr Ban Ki-Moon.

Yours Faithfully

Ghillar (Michael Anderson)

Convenor

Sovereign Union of Aboriginal Nations and Peoples in Australia  
and Convenor of Euahlayi Peoples Republic

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*Indonesian Embassy, Canberra, Australia, 21 August 2013: left to right – Alice Haines, Anthony Coombs, Lara Pullin, Third Secretaries Supriyanto Suwito and Sezargerry Sumardi Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia to Australia and Ruth Gilbert.*

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/world/australia-wont-help-flotilla-activists-carr-says-20130820-2s9gl.html>

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/indonesia-threatens-military-action-against-protest-flotilla-20130819-2s6e2.html>