

Indonesia Country-wide Risk: Low / West Papua: High

While the fighting in Gaza is distant from Indonesia, tensions have risen between Jewish and non-Jewish peoples. Tension between Muslim and Jewish Indonesians has been apparent in Indonesian society for many years, as noted at the opening of Indonesia's only Holocaust Museum in 2022 where senior ministers and other officials expressed their discontent about the museum's presence.

Indonesia hosted the 2023 ASEAN Summit in which President Jokowi pleaded for regional and global peace. Speaking to leaders of attending nations, the President stated that nations have "a responsibility not to create new conflicts, new tensions, new wars . . . we also have a responsibility to reduce heated tensions, to melt the frozen atmosphere, to create space for dialogue, to bridge existing differences."¹ Part of the ASEAN Summit was a review of ASEAN's response to the Myanmar crisis and ASEAN's five-point consensus plan which, as noted in ASEAN's statement released on the 5th September, shows that status quo is the preferred model of approach to the crisis, replicating what ASEAN has been doing, including respecting the principle of non-interference that annuls any proactive response to the crises by ASEAN member states.²

Recommendations

The Indonesian government should:

- Appoint a senior official as National R2P Focal Point to coordinate national and international efforts to implement R2P.
- Continue to advance legislation that criminalises human rights abuse.
- Work to further implement legislation to prevent and punish hate speech and discrimination.

International partners should:

- Encourage Indonesia to take active steps to fulfil its responsibility to protect.
- Continue to explore avenues for cooperation with the Indonesian government and society in the areas of combatting disinformation and misinformation.
- Continue to provide humanitarian assistance when requested to help the government and civil society tackle challenges that stem from a lack of access to basic infrastructure.
- Explore dialogue with Indonesian officials to help discourage the use of hoax news as justification for military and police intervention.

West Papua
Risk: High

While tensions continue in West Papua between Indonesian military and police and independence fighters, there have been noticeable proclamations by governments in the region over responses to the ongoing fighting and human rights abuses. This comes as five teenagers were killed by Indonesian forces in the locality of Yahukimo, all supposed members of the West Papuan Liberation Army, and another five Papuans in coastal regions, alongside torture and torment being inflicted by Indonesian military. Yet this escalation of violence has been from both sides, with liberationists expanding and intensifying their own killings and hostilities due to an increase in Indonesian military presence, a lack of accountability by Indonesia for the crimes its forces commit and, in August 2023, a denial by the

Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) to grant the United Liberation Movement for West Papua, membership, which West Papuans have decried as “chequebook diplomacy.”³

This denial has been further exacerbated by the Solomon Island Prime Minister suggesting that the MSG no longer help facilitate West Papuan peace talks, nor should it help pursue West Papuan independence. In a report for *In-Depth Solomons*, the Solomon Island Prime Minister said that pursuing independence has only led to unnecessary human rights violations and that the West Papua issue is a domestic issue; that is, it lies with Indonesia.⁴ This approach seems representative of other governments in the region, including Australia that, as reported in *The Guardian*, “is seeking to strengthen its defence relationship with Indonesia, despite well-documented human rights abuses by the Indonesian military in West Papua.”⁵

Recommendations

The Indonesian Government should:

1. Address entrenched racial discrimination, hate speech, fake news and incitement against West Papuans, and provide clear advice to security forces to abide by international law and refrain from the use of violence and torture.
2. Take positive steps to ensure human rights are protected in all Indonesian territories, including freedom to protest and gather and freedom of speech.
3. Refrain from manipulating news to serve the interests of the Indonesian forces in the region.
4. Consider the aspirations of West Papuans and the underlying issues fueling the need for independence, and endeavour to consider these aspirations in future dealings with the province.

¹ Kalinga Senevirante, “Indonesia Favours “Cooperation” as Tensions Simmer at ASEAN Summit,” *IDN-InDepth News*, September 9, 2023, <https://indepthnews.net/indonesia-favours-cooperation-as-tensions-simmer-at-asean-summit/>

² Anon. “ASEAN Leaders’ Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus Plan,” ASEAN, September 5, 2023, <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/01.FINAL-ASEAN-LEADERS-REVIEW-AND-DECISION-ON-THE-IMPLEMENTATION-OF-THE-5PC-1.pdf>

³ Douglas Gerrard, “Indonesia Is Stepping Up Its Repression of West Papua’s Freedom Movement,” *Jacobin*, November 3, 2023, <https://jacobin.com/2023/11/indonesia-west-papua-colonialism-development-repression-resistance>

⁴ Anon. “Solomons PM Sogavare claims Melanesian Spearhead Group Ditch West Papua Independence Talks,” RNZ, September 28, 2023, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/498950/solomons-pm-sogavare-claims-melanesian-spearhead-group-ditch-west-papua-independence-talks>

⁵ Damien Kingsbury, “Why You Will Never Hear an Australian Leader Call Out Indonesia on West Papua,” *Guardian*, September 28, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/sep/28/australia-west-papua-human-rights-abuse-allegations-indonesia>