

Papua: The KNPB's position on the ULMWP and the solution of democratic unity

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The West Papua National Committee's (KNPB) position with regard to the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) at the moment is one of obedience to organisational decisions.

The KNPB views the ULMWP as an inter-organisational coordinating body which supports the international struggle in accordance with Paragraph 5 of the 2014 Saralana Declaration which established the ULMWP.

Where Paragraph 5 of the declaration reads, "We are determined that the ULMWP becomes the coordinating body to support all international efforts to regain our sovereignty" (see https://www.ulmwp.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Saralana-Declaration_with-Witnesses.pdf).

So it is clear that the ULMWP was born as a vehicle which can pursue the mandate of safeguarding unity between organisations in the struggle and be a coordinating body, both for the organisations in the struggle based within the country [West Papua] as well as overseas. So that all organisations and freedom fighters can sit and stand together at the same level to discuss and decide upon the program of struggle. [And] primarily in support of overseas diplomatic efforts.

The unity between organisations which we jointly dream of can only occur and be realised if the ULMWP is truly democratic. Democracy is the life blood of united struggle. No matter how strong its authority is, without unity and democracy, the struggle will collapse. The history of countries and nations in the world which have collapsed is evidence of this. The only others which survive those based on oligarchic fascist power which is maintained through oppression. This is more ruthless than colonialism. This is not the ideal of the struggle of the Papuan nation.

The desire of the Papuan nation to expel the colonialists is a democratic struggle, through the right to self-determination. So if the struggle of the Papuan nation is not democratic, then it will have no meaning for the independence struggle. This is because independence is the realisation of democracy itself (a democratic revolution). Where power truly lies in the hands of the Papuan people.

In order to achieve sovereignty for the people, the struggle must cultivate democratic unity within the organisations in the struggle. Namely coordination in decision making and struggling together because it is there that strength and authority are formed for each nation in itself.

The state is a manifestation of democratic unity. Because the state is the authority and the sovereignty of the people themselves (the people's politics), so the people and the activists in the struggle must unite. This unity is not the result of coercion, but a result of a consciousness of the need to determine our future together which is channeled and implemented within a united organisation. Not the property of a group or handful of people like the colonial oligarchic regime of Indonesia at the moment.

The ordinary people and the struggle today are the result of a historical tradition which has developed respectively. Each having their own historical elements and experiences in the struggle; whether they be sectoral, sectarian, organic as well as non-organic, but which have confronted and been constrained under the current of the colonial system. So it would be a truly fatal mistake if political cooptation (politics in the name of) is applied. This will be useless and futile. Sixty years of history have proven this.

No matter what declarations, proclamations and statements are made it will not have a direct impact if its authority is not founded on democracy and the people's politics. We must educate the people who are ready to sacrifice themselves in the struggle because of their desire and advanced consciousness to realise a greater liberation than just the ties of primordialism and historical romanticism. And this can only happen under democratic unity.

The KNPB holds this position and rejects the practices of struggle which are patron-client based, just going along with things without understanding the essence of the national liberation struggle. For example, the KNPB once gave birth to the Regional People's Parliament (PRD) New Guinea Council so that it would become a political tool for the Papuan masses, but it ran aground and stalled in the hands of people who did not understand the democratic organisational work domestically.

The West Papua National Parliament (PNWP) was managed as an organisation based on directives by one or two people who were outside the activities of the people's struggle domestically. The decisions from outside to those inside totally conflicted with the principles of revolutionary struggle where the basis of the reform movement must come from within as a determining revolutionary factor. This was made worse by the unilateral decisions and commandism which was applied. Not educating the ordinary people but fooling the people's leaders with the slogan "just follow us". As a consequence, the quality of democracy declined, and the blind were led by the blind. As a consequence, democracy was installed with violence like colonialism.

It is this culture of fascism which has been brought into the ULMWP so that united struggle has run aground. Instead they have made a nation-state which is artificial so it has buried the spirit of the people's united struggle. In the end the people's struggle became confused about the essence of the state being built. What was the urgency in rejecting unity and ardently declaring a state? If it is just a call, the declaration of a state, any living bird can make such a call.

The urgency at the moment is the unity of the Papuan people's struggle to expel the colonialists. If the urgency was the formation of a state, then why was the declaration of a Federal Republic of West Papua (NRFPB) jointly with the people in a revolutionary state, who are responsible in the colonial jail, not supported by the ULMWP, who then preferred to support people and a declaration from outside the country? This attitude proves that aside from not understanding, the political tendencies of factionalism, patronage and sentiment are prioritised rather than the needs of the struggle.

The KNPB will not just follow blindly because it understands the current needs of the struggle. The principle need at the moment is educating the people in struggle to actively establish a political forces in the practice of democratic unity, so that each organisations based among the masses is involved in jointly deciding on the agenda of struggle. So our duty is to formulate a role model for national unity.

The ULMWP is an public tool of democratic unity to coordinate international efforts, so the ULMWP must be saved. In accordance with the aims of the Saralana Declaration, the ULMWP does not have a mandate to form state structures. That is a domestic matter. This will in fact make unity rigid,

bureaucratic and commandist. The ULMWP's duty is to support the united struggle by all groups as a coordinating body for all organisations of struggle which are open, democratic, equal and collective. In order to cultivate democracy as the principle model in forming a nation-state, but also as a consolidation of power and sovereignty for the Papuan people.

The KNPB does not have a factional political sentiment towards any other organisation as long as each organisation is united and integrated in decisions concerning the struggle. Because that is the principle model by which to confront the colonial power holders in a single voice of liberation which works synergistically and strategically. Because organisational splits are an opportunity for the colonists. Victory is never determined by just one or two people. Victory is determined by the people united in struggle.

The people united in struggle refers to each and every Papuan who desires Papuan independence but is fragmented in their respective economic, social, cultural and political activities under colonialism, capitalism and militarism. Who are aware that independence is the solution, so they are seeking democratic space; a place where they can struggle and find their political power, but are hampered by factional obstacles in the struggle. Who are waiting for the momentum of united struggle to seize their sovereignty. Here is the stepping off point for the struggle to begun.

Because of this, the KNPB is inviting all parties to unite. Abolish political factionalism. The ULMWP must become a coordinating body for the entire overseas leadership, to support democratic unity domestically in West Papua. Because the political power of the people, both sectorally as well as territorially, must continue to be built. Build the politics of the people. Take over sovereignty over the land, water, forests and all sources of productivity through the struggle for independence.

We must see it through to its conclusion!

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P.S.

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