

Indonesia: TPNPB-OPM asks Papuan rebel leader Egianus Kogoya to release Susi Air pilot

Sunday 11 February 2024, by [CNN Indonesia](#) (Date first published: 5 February 2024).

The West Papua National Liberation Army-Free Papua Organisation (TPNPB-OPM-><https://www.cnnindonesia.com/tag/tpnpb-opm>) is asking Papuan rebel leader Egianus Kogoya to immediately release [Susi Air](#) pilot Captain Philip Mark Marthens, who is being held captive by the armed group.

TPNPB-OPM spokesperson Sebby Sambom said the issue of Marthens' release is their responsibility. He also said that he is continuing to work with neutral and independent international parties as facilitators and also as mediators.

"The New Zealand pilot who was detained by TPNPB troops under the leadership of commander-in-chief Brigadier General Egianus Kogoya must be released for the sake of humanity based on the law of international humanitarian war, and there is no reason that the pilot has to be detained until the end of the world", Sambom said in his statement on Monday February 5.

Sambom also highlighted a statement by Kogoya that the release of the Susi Air pilot must be reciprocated by independence for Papua.

"We, from the leadership of the TPNPB National Commission Central Management Headquarters convey that this was an emotional statement without asking for the views from the TPNPB leadership at the TPNPB National Commission Central Management Headquarters, so it needs to be reviewed", he said.

Sambom said Kogoya must revoke his statement. According to Sambom there has never been any country in the world that has achieved independence in exchange the freedom of another person.

Sambom said they would free the Susi Air pilot by honorable means for the sake of Papua's respect and dignity.

"If we release the pilot from the New Zealand with honor, then we will be appreciated by the international community and even the United Nations, and also the dignity of Papuan nation's struggle for independence will be elevated, however if the pilot dies in the place where he's being held then we will be blamed by the international community and the United Nations", said Sambom.

Marthens was taken captive by an armed criminal group (KKB, the government's term for the TPNPB) led by Kogoya on February 7, 2023, after landing his airplane at the Paro landing field in Nduga regency, Papua highlands.

On May 26, the group released a video showing Marthens in which they said they would shoot the if there were no negotiations within two months.

In September, Indonesian security forces claimed that Marthens was still alive. Sambom has also said that the pilot is alive and well.

“The pilot is living with people, right, human beings, he’s still alive”, said Sambom not long ago.

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