

**PAPUANS
BEHIND BARS**



**Papuans Behind Bars
Annual Overview
2024**

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by Papuans Behind Bars and TAPOL

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Papuans Behind Bars

Annual Overview 2024

The data

We recorded a total of 370 political arrests¹ throughout the year. Of those arrested, only 18 people were indicted and prosecuted on criminal charges, of whom 11 people were convicted and sentenced, with prison sentences ranging from five months to 12 years. Most of the political arrests in 2024 ended with the release of arrestees without any charges, within hours or a few days after the arrests. Two prisoners, both aged 15, were acquitted of all charges by the court. Of those arrested, at least 320 were released, or presumed to be released, at the time of writing.²

Political arrests in 2024 were carried out by security forces mostly in the Jayapura³ area. We also recorded two arrests of Timorese activists carried out by Timor-Leste police and intelligence services in Dili. Both cases related to their pro-West Papua solidarity actions surrounding the visit of Pope Francis to Dili in September.⁴

Of the 18 people brought to trial, four were charged and convicted of treason or makar articles (Articles 106 and 110 of the Criminal Code). Two received 18 month prison sentences and the other two were sentenced to three years' imprisonment. In 2024 we saw for the first time a Papuan prisoner, Fatem Gelek, receiving a death sentence – in the appeal court – for the murder of military personnel back in 2022. The death penalty for Fatem Gelek was the first death sentence in many decades for a politically-motivated crime in West Papua.⁵

1 A political prisoner might be arrested more than one time in separate incidents.

2 There are four detainees where we were unable to determine whether they are still being detained or not.

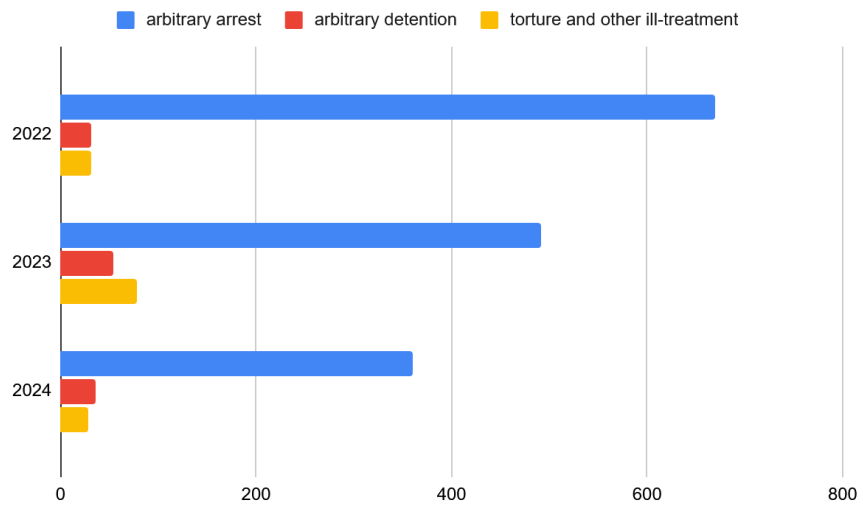
3 Jayapura is the biggest city in West Papua and the capital of Papua Province.

4 More information on the arrests is available in the Q3 2024 Papuans Behind Bars publication, at <https://papuansbehindbars.org/q3-2024/>.

5 For more information about the Fatem Gelek case, see Q1 and Q2 2024 of the Papuans Behind Bars publication, available at <https://papuansbehindbars.org/publications/>.

Chart 1.

Trends in arbitrary arrest, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment in West Papua



According to our database, there has been a downward trend in arbitrary arrests over the past three years. While this appears positive, it should be considered in view of the concurrent decline in the number of demonstrations. In 2022, there were at least 560 arbitrary arrests from 16 incidents, in 2023 there were 300 arbitrary arrests from 11 incidents, and in this reporting period there were 282 arbitrary arrests from eight incidents.⁶ So it may imply a narrowing of civil space rather than a changed approach on the part of security forces. Levels of arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment unfortunately remained largely unchanged, peaceful protest continues to be forcibly suppressed, and conditions for the enjoyment of human rights in West Papua remain challenging.

Who was arrested?

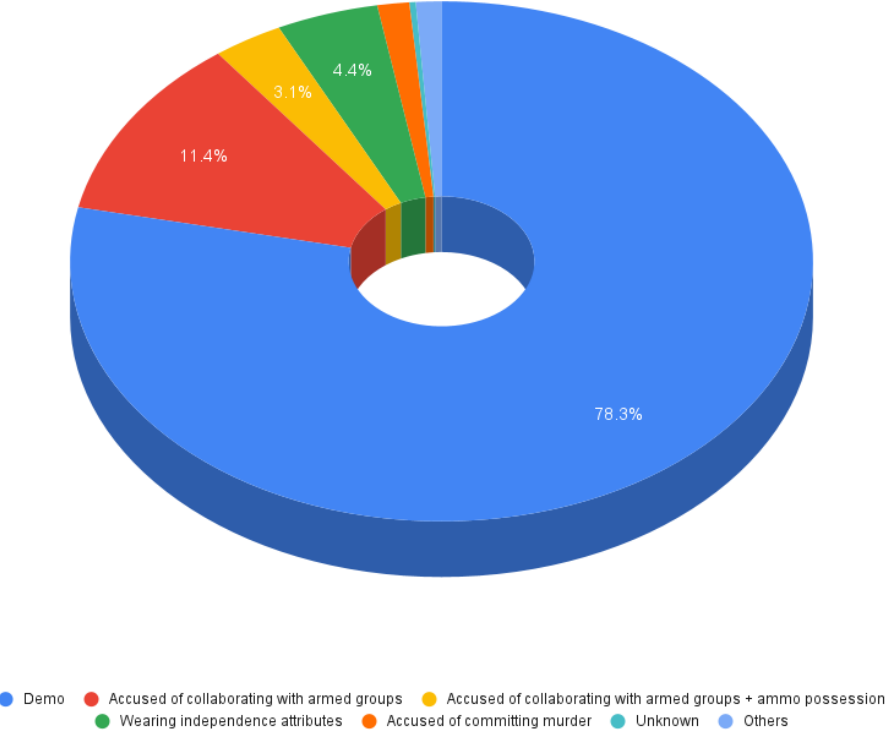
Of those arrested, 31 were female, 238 were male, and the sex of 101 arrestees could not be determined. Where it was possible to ascertain the age of arrestees, 26 were children or youths, 88 were young adults aged 18 to 24 years old, and 35 were adults aged 25 to 64, and three were elderly above 65. We could not identify the age of the other 218 arrestees. Where it was possible to record their occupation, most of those arrested were either activists, students, or both. With regards to their political affiliation, 171 of the arrestees were members of the KNPB (Komite Nasional Papua Barat, National Committee for West Papua), the largest political pro-Papua independence group in West Papua.

⁶ Each incident could consist of multiple demonstrations across more than one city. For example, on Human Rights Day, there may be several demonstrations across several cities.

Why were they arrested?

Similarly to previous years, the vast majority of political arrests – 268 cases – related to specific events which are either political in nature, or have become politicised within the framework of the ongoing struggle for self-determination in West Papua. We recorded 16 arrests against activists wearing the Morning Star symbol, an attribute of the West Papuan independence struggle; 15 of the arrests were in Nabire and one was in Timor-Leste. All of them were eventually released without charges.⁷ We also recorded the arrest of 59 people for allegedly being part of armed groups, 11 of whom were alleged to be in possession of sharp weapons, firearms, or ammunition prohibited by the 1951 Emergency Law.

Chart 2.
Reasons for arrest in figures



⁷ See the Q3 2024 Papuans Behind Bars publication.

Criminal Justice Process in Indonesia: A brief introduction

Inquiry and Investigation

This stage is conducted by the police in order to explore, assess, and determine whether an event is a criminal offence or not. If, in the inquiry (*penyelidikan*) process, the police finally find (a) criminal offence(s), then the police advance to investigation (*penyidikan*). At this stage, the police are authorised to name the alleged perpetrator as a suspect (*tersangka*) and take steps such as arrest, detention, search, seizure, and examination of documents.

In naming a person as a suspect, there is also a list of the articles they are accused of having violated (*pasal-pasal yang disangkakan*). These articles must be contained in the warrant of arrest and/or detention.

Prosecution

Once the case file and evidence are deemed sufficient, the police will submit the results of their investigation to the public prosecutor. If the public prosecutor deems the police file to be eligible, the public prosecutor will refer the case to the district court accompanied by an indictment (*surat dakwaan*) made by the public prosecutor. The indictment contains the articles charged against the defendant (*terdakwa*)—who is no longer called as suspect.

Lengthy pretrial detention

According to Indonesia's Criminal Procedure Code (*Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Acara Pidana*, KUHAP), a suspect can be arrested and held by the police for one day. Subsequently, the police can detain the suspect for up to 20 days, with the possibility of an extension agreed by the Prosecutor Office for an extra 40 days. In total the police can detain a suspect for 61 days in their own detention place. Subsequently, the prosecutor can detain the suspect for a further 20 days, with the possibility of an extension agreed by the head judge of a district court for an extra 30 days. A suspect who is charged with a crime punishable by nine years' imprisonment or more, such as treason (*makar*) can be detained for another 60 days by the chief judge of a district court without the suspect appearing in court. This means that a suspect in a treason (*makar*) case can be detained for up to 171 days before seeing a judge. In the KUHAP, there is no legal procedure for a suspect to challenge their detention before a court (*habeas corpus*). Many UN human rights bodies have criticised the lengthy pretrial detention period and the absence of habeas corpus in Indonesia's criminal justice system.

Court hearing

After receiving the indictment and related files from the public prosecutor, the district court appoints judges to hear the case. At the trial, the panel of judges listens to and examines the indictment read by the public prosecutor, the response of the defendant or his lawyer, as well as the evidence and testimony of witnesses. Before the panel of judges deliberates on the verdict, the public prosecutor will be asked to present the prosecution's case (*tuntutan*, a request to the judge regarding the verdict and punishment of the defendant). The defendant is also asked to respond to the prosecution's demands or to defend himself.

It is not uncommon for the prosecution's case to differ from what was read out in the indictment. From the many articles charged at the beginning, for example, it can become only one article.

Reading out the judge's verdict

After examining all charges, defences, evidence and witnesses, the panel of judges will deliberate and read out their decision on the case. It is not unusual for a judge's verdict (*putusan*) to differ from that of what the public prosecutor demanded. The panel of judges may even find the defendant guilty but for another criminal offence (another article) that was not in the indictment and prosecution.

The decision of the panel of judges of the district courts can be appealed before the high courts and the Supreme Court. After that, as the remaining legal avenues, the prosecutor and defendant/their lawyer can apply to the Supreme Court—via the district court which tried the case in the first instance—for a case review (*peninjauan kembali*, PK) if they have new evidence (that has not been presented in previous courts) or found contradictory judgements or judicial errors.

Additional notes

The introduction above refers to the Indonesian Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP), which was passed in 1981. Much of its content was adopted from the Dutch colonial criminal procedure code. While

the law has many sections that protect the rights of suspects and defendants, there are a number of sections that fall short of international fair trial standards.⁸ For example, to name a few, the half-hearted application of habeas corpus, lengthy detention periods, the right not to be compelled to testify or confess guilt and the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment are not explicitly regulated.

⁸ See Amnesty International, "Indonesia: Comments on the draft revised Criminal Procedure Code", 6 September 2006 (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA21/005/2006/en/>).

Key dynamics in Indonesia





Prabowo Subianto during the presidential debate, 12 December 2023.
Source: KPU RI on YouTube.

New administration under Prabowo Subianto, former disgraced military general

On 14 February 2024, people in Indonesia voted in national elections, including to elect the new President and Vice President. The outcome was a landslide victory for Prabowo Subianto, who received around 58% of the votes, and ran the presidential election with Gibran Rakabuming Raka, son of the outgoing President Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo. The new Prabowo administration took office on 20 October. Prabowo benefited from association with his popular predecessor – the 'Jokowi effect' – and his campaign spent enormous sums, apparently much higher than either of his main competitors. He may also have used state resources to campaign.

Prabowo, who had lost several presidential elections previously, has a highly problematic human rights record as a named military commander mentioned in various official human rights investigations. He was accused of involvement in serious human rights violation and war crimes in East Timor during Indonesia's occupation, the disappearance of pro-democracy activists in 1997 and 1998, masterminding the 1998 May Riot in Jakarta and some other cities, and some serious human rights violations when serving as military officer in Aceh and West Papua. Prabowo was dismissed from the military in August 1998 by the military generals' council. The reason for his dismissal included various human rights incidents in East Timor, Aceh and West Papua.⁹ Prabowo's last public position during the second term of Jokowi's administration was Minister of Defense, responsible for overseeing the national food estate project, including in southern areas of West Papua.

The new Prabowo administration appointed a huge number of ministerial officials and other state agencies, including over 100 people, to accommodate his large coalition of supporting political parties. The new cabinet also saw a significant increase of people from military backgrounds in various ministries, triggering concerns among human rights and pro-democracy activists that Indonesia may be heading back to a military government. Prabowo's first priority agenda items included free school meals, food and energy resilience and creating a more connected extractive industry, known as 'downstreaming.'

⁹ Tirto.id, Isi Surat Pemberhentian Prabowo Subianto dari Militer pada 1998 [Contents of the Dismissal Letter of Prabowo from Military Service in 1998], 28 February 2024, available at <https://tirto.id/isi-surat-pemberhentian-prabowo-subianto-dari-militer-pada-1998-gWn9>.

Haris and Fatia acquitted of defamation charges

On 8 January, the East Jakarta District Court acquitted two prominent Indonesian human rights defenders Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti of criminal defamation charges. The Court said that the online statement at the heart of the allegations was based on research. In September, the Supreme Court upheld the East Jakarta District Court's decision. In April 2023, Haris and Fatia were placed on trial in Jakarta for criminal defamation following a complaint by Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan – one of the most powerful politicians and ministers in the country – under Indonesia's Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) Law, relating to statements they made about Luhut Pandjaitan's alleged involvement in a gold mining project in West Papua.



Human rights activists Haris Azhar and Fatia Maulidiyanti during the verdict reading session by the judges of the Jakarta Timur District Court.
Source: Jakartanicus on YouTube.

Permanent Peoples' Tribunal initiative on West Papua

A public court known as the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT) on West Papua was held in London, UK, on 27-29 June¹⁰ and the final decision was delivered on 1 October in Geneva, Switzerland, during the 57th UN Human Rights Council Regular Session.¹¹ This alternative trial focused on the allegations of systematic human rights violations, state repression, marginalization and discrimination against Papuan indigenous peoples, land grabbing, exploitation of natural resources and environmental destruction. The PPT heard testimonies from Papuan activists and former political prisoners, national and international human rights NGOs and activists. The theme of Papua political prisoners was raised in a submission filed by TAPOL, a UK-based NGO.¹²

Pope Francis visit

In September, Pope Francis carried out visits to several countries, including Indonesia and Timor-Leste. While the itinerary did not include visiting West Papua, security arrangements were intense in West Papua and Jakarta, to prevent any visible protest on West Papuan affairs in front of the Pope's delegation.



Pope Francis accompanied by Minister of Religious Affairs of Indonesia Nasaruddin Umar at the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta, 5 September 2024.
Source: Narasi Newsroom on YouTube.

¹⁰ See <https://permanentpeopletribunal.org/london-27th-29th-june-2024-ppt-session-on-state-and-environmental-violence-in-west-papua/?lang=en>.

¹¹ The final decision of the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on West Papua can be accessed at <https://permanentpeopletribunal.org/the-judgement-on-west-papua-in-eight-points/?lang=en>.

¹² See TAPOL's Submission to the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on West Papua, 8 July 2024, available at <https://tapol.org/publications/tapols-submission-ppt-2024>.

Indonesia's human rights compliance reviewed by UN

Two UN Treaty Bodies, the CESCR (the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and CCPR (the Human Rights Committee), reviewed Indonesia's human rights compliance under each treaty for the second time in February and March, respectively, in Geneva, Switzerland. The CESCR and CCPR, deliberating on Indonesia's human rights performance, made some similar recommendations with regard to the effect of the situation in West Papua on the rights of indigenous Papuans.

First, both the CESCR and CCPR issued a recommendation that Indonesia should combat discrimination by introducing comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. For decades indigenous Papuans have suffered from discrimination in public and private spheres that undermine their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Second, both treaty bodies highlighted the problem of involuntary displacement in West Papua caused by the armed conflict between Indonesian security forces and Papuan armed pro-independence groups. The CESCR recommended that Indonesia allow national and international humanitarian organizations access to IDPs in West Papua. The CCPR recommended that Indonesia facilitate the safe return of the IDPs based on their consent.

Third, both treaty bodies issued a large number of recommendations regarding indigenous peoples' rights, a concept that the Indonesian Government has not recognized as being applicable in the country in either review sessions. The CESCR and CCPR recommended that Indonesia introduce national legislation regarding the rights of indigenous peoples. Both treaty bodies furthermore emphasized the right of indigenous peoples to free, prior, informed consent and access to remedy with regard to development and business projects on ancestral or traditional lands, as well as their right to participate in public affairs.

Fourth, both treaty bodies strongly recommended that human rights defenders be protected, including those working on the rights of indigenous peoples. They recommended that Indonesia improve the operating environment for human rights defenders, so that they are able to carry out their work free from harassment, intimidation, attack and criminalization. Specifically, the treaty bodies asked Indonesia to repeal or amend criminal defamation provisions under the repressive Electronic Information and Transactions Law. The CCPR also recommended that Indonesia introduce legislation protecting human rights defenders.

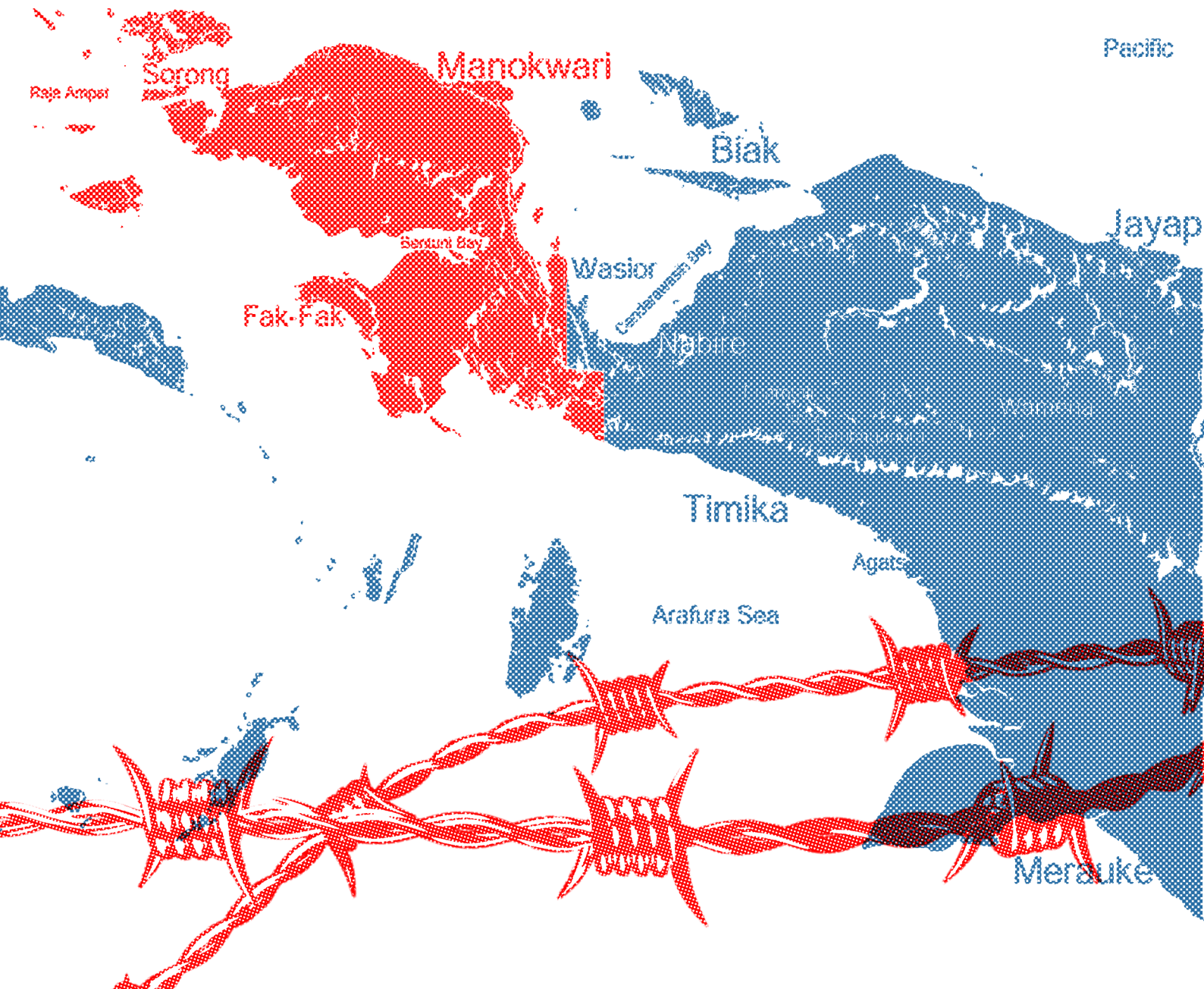
Other important issues highlighted by the CCPR included the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. As compared to other regions of Indonesia, the enjoyment of these rights has been curtailed far more in West Papua. Apart from recommending legislative reforms to ensure civic space is not restricted by repressive provisions in laws and regulations, the CCPR also recommended that Indonesia hold perpetrators accountable, including security forces committing violations in West Papua.

TAPOL and AIDP Joint Report on treason in the Land of Papua

On 26 July, TAPOL and AIDP (Aliansi Demokrasi untuk Papua, Alliance of Democracy for Papua), both members of Papuans Behind Bars, launched a joint report “Treason and Political Prisoners in the Land of Papua” on Papuan political prisoners based on a study of Indonesia’s legal system, court decisions and interviews with relevant people.¹³ The report highlights the pattern of criminal code articles used to criminalise Papuans and the inconsistency of judges in delivering their judgments based on vague interpretations of those provisions under Indonesia’s Criminal Code.

¹³ The report is currently only available in Bahasa Indonesia and can be accessed at <https://www.tapol.org/news/aidp-and-tapol-publish-finding-their-research-treason-articles-and-political-prisoners-west>.

Key dynamics in West Papua



Local Elections in West Papua

On 27 November, Indonesian people voted to elect their local governments at the provincial and sub-provincial level, including in the six provinces of West Papua. TAPOL and AIDP conducted limited monitoring in selected areas, targeting three provinces and 10 regencies. Initial findings discovered numerous flaws in the local elections from biased government officials and security forces, to the incitement of hatred based on religion and ethnicity by several candidates, to weak accountability of election officials. It was expected that many election disputes would be lodged with the Constitutional Court, questioning the election results in West Papua.

Continued Targeting of KNPB

Of the 370 political arrests this year, 171 (46%) of arrestees were reportedly members or loose affiliates of the KNPB. Of those arrested, five were charged. Three of them were charged with possession of sharp weapons under the 1951 Emergency Law. Their trial is still ongoing. Two others were charged with group assault under Article 170(1) of the Criminal Code, and in December both were convicted and sentenced to five months' imprisonment.



KNPB Lapago demonstrators commemorate the 62nd anniversary of the New York Agreement in Wamena, Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province, 15 August 2024.
Source: KNPB Lapago.



Demonstran KNPB Meepagi yang ditangkap dijemur di lapangan Polres Nabire, 15 Agustus 2024. Sumber: Jubi.id.

Mass arrests at the commemoration of 1962 New York Agreement

The largest number of political arrests (155) in 2024 were carried out across Nabire, Sentani (Jayapura) and Wamena, related to the commemoration of the 15 August 1962 New York Agreement.¹⁴ In early April, in the Jayapura area, a further 77 arrests related to anti-military protests organised by the Papuan Student and Peoples' Front Against Militarism (Front Mahasiswa dan Rakyat Papua Anti Milterisme, FMRPAM), a loose coalition of various Papuan university student organisations.

On 12 August, Nabire police personnel forcibly dispersed and arrested three Nabire KNPB activists for distributing leaflets at a market in Nabire. They were taken and detained at the police station before being released three days later. The leaflets called for a demonstration to commemorate the 1962 New York Agreement, scheduled for 15 August 2024.¹⁵ At least 99 KNPB members were further arrested by police forces in Nabire on 15 August for participating in the commemoration. Nabire police broke up five gathering points for activists in the city. The arrested activists were left unsheltered in the hot sun on the Nabire Police Headquarters field. The police claimed to have released the majority of them, except for eight who remained in custody for further questioning.¹⁶ It was later

found that five people were named as suspects, three of whom were charged with possession of sharp weapons (Article 2 Emergency Law) and the other two with vandalism/insulting the national flag (Article 66 of Law No. 24 of 2009).¹⁷

¹⁴ The New York Agreement was signed on 15 August 1962 by the Indonesian and Dutch governments, hosted by the US government, concerning the handover of the administration of West Papua to Indonesia from the UN Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) on 1 May 1963, pending a referendum to implement the Papuan peoples' right to self-determination in 1969. Full text of the 15 August New York Agreement is available at <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20437/volume-437-i-6311-english.pdf>.

¹⁵ Jubi recorded 101 KNPB members being arrested, see <https://jubi.id/meepago/2024/101-aktivisnya-dilepaskan-knpb-sebut-polres-nabire-tidak-memberikan-ruang-kebebasan/>.

¹⁶ Polres Nabire on Instagram, 15 August 2024, <https://www.instagram.com/p/C-t-FAsPr2Y/?igsh>.

¹⁷ Polres Nabire on Instagram, 5 September 2024, https://www.instagram.com/reel/C_hjQPcvL_E/?igsh.

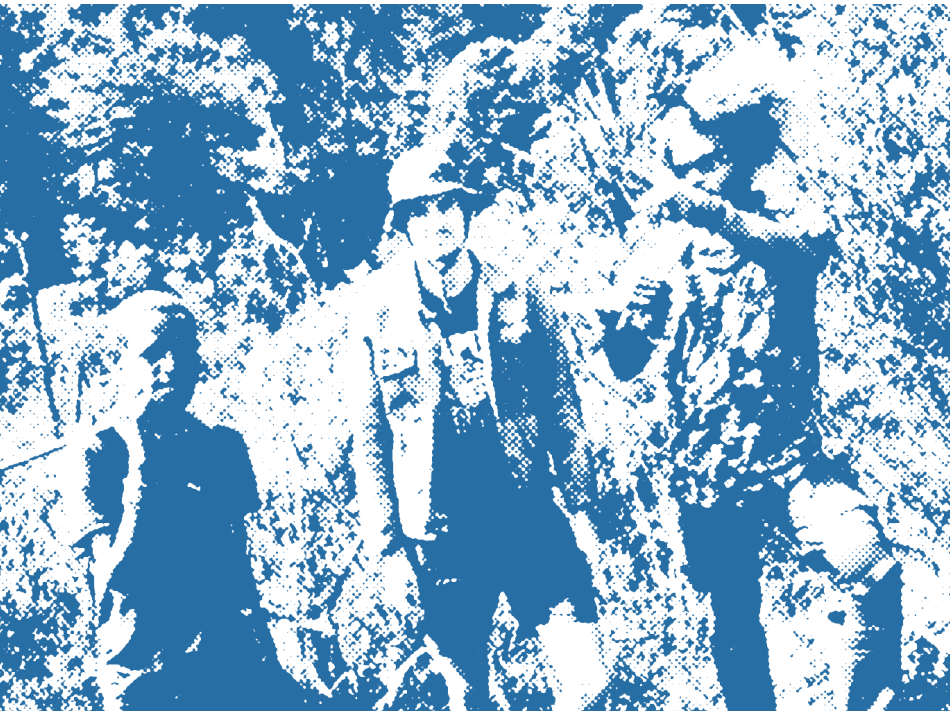
Other mass arrests of members of the KNPB related to commemorations of the 1962 New York Agreement in Sentani, Jayapura Regency, Papua Province. On 10 August, Jayapura police personnel dispersed KNPB Sentani activists who were distributing leaflets calling for action to commemorate the 1962 New York Agreement near Sentani Old Market. As well as dispersing the activity, police also arrested six KNPB activists at Jayapura Police Station. The activists were released after being questioned by police. On 13 August, Jayapura police personnel again dispersed KNPB Sentani activists who were about to distribute leaflets calling for people to commemorate the New York Agreement near Sentani Old Market. In addition to dispersing the activity, police officers also arrested at least 26 KNPB activists and took them to Jayapura Police Station. The activists were released later that day after being accompanied by Papua Legal Aid (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Papua, LBH Papua) during police questioning.

In Wamena, Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province, joint military and police forces (TNI-Polri) forcibly dispersed KNPB Lapago demonstrations on 15 August, also related to a commemoration of the 1962 New York Agreement. The police arrested 19 KNPB activists, all of whom were released on the same day.

Susi Air hostage

On 21 September, the armed pro-Papuan independence group, West Papua National Liberation Army (Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat, TPNPB), under the command of Egianus Kogoya, released New Zealand pilot Philip Mark Mehrtens after a series of negotiations between the TPNPB and Indonesian authorities. Mr Mehrtens was

taken hostage by the TPNPB's War Area Command (Kodap) III Ndugama-Derakma on 7 February 2023 after he landed a small commercial airplane in Nduga Regency from Timika city with five Papuan passengers.



Susi Air pilot Philip Mark Mehrtens (blue jacket) while being held hostage by TPNPB armed group. Source: Special

US ban Indonesian Sergeant for the killing of Pastor Yeremia Zanambani

In December, the US Department of State publicly designated Alpius Hasim Madi for involvement in a gross violation of human rights; the extrajudicial killing of Papuan Pastor Yeremia Zanambani in Hitadipa District, Intan Jaya Regency in September 2020.¹⁸ Pastor Zanambani was found dead near his pig pen, 300 metres from his home, with bullet and stab wounds. According to various reports, tensions in the area had increased since mid-September 2020 after an Indonesian soldier was killed by unknown individuals. The Indonesian military claims that the TPNPB was responsible for the soldier's death.¹⁹ Alpius Madi was the deputy commander of military territorial command (Koramil) in Hitadipa.

Increased armed conflict and IDPs

Armed conflict between TPNPB and security forces in a number of areas in West Papua, particularly the central mountainous region, is still ongoing. Human Rights Monitor recorded that armed attacks in 2024 increased to 135 cases, from 110 cases in the previous year. As a result of this armed conflict, around 85,000 Papuan internally displaced people (IDPs) took refuge in other areas.²⁰

¹⁸ The US Department of State, Accountability Actions to Counter Global Corruption and Human Rights, 9 December 2024, available at <https://2021-2025.state.gov/accountability-actions-to-counter-global-corruption-and-human-rights/>.

¹⁹ TAPOL, Statement on the Killing of the Papuan Church Minister, 23 September 2020, available at <https://www.tapol.org/publications/tapol-statement-killing-papuan-church-minister>.

²⁰ Human Rights Monitor, Human rights and conflict in West Papua 2024, available at <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/reports/annual-report-2024-human-rights-and-conflict-in-west-papua/>.

Key Concerns



At least 360 cases were considered arbitrary arrests. We also recorded 28 cases of torture or other ill-treatment, 7 cases of arbitrary arrest of a minor, several cases of concern regarding health treatment of a detainee, and one person died in custody. In some cases, there may have been multiple human rights violations against an arrestee or detainee.

Arbitrary arrests against teenagers

On 22 February, Satgas Pamtas, a joint police and military force from Yonif 1 Marinir, arrested two Papuan teenagers (BE and MH, both aged 15) at Brasa River, Dekai, Yahukimo, accusing them of being part of an armed group. The arrests were a result of the hunt for the perpetrators of the shooting down of a Wings Air commercial plane. Initially the police informed the media that the two teenagers had no connection to pro-independence armed groups, but they were still detained as witnesses, which is illegal under the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP).²¹ There were concerns that the two teenagers could also have been subjected to torture or other ill-treatment during their arrest and detention.²²

On 12 October, Yonif 509/BY personnel reportedly arrested and tortured two high school students around the Mamba Military Post in Intan Jaya. Soldiers allegedly tortured the two young men to obtain information about the TPNPB. The two young men were doused in cooking oil and threatened with being burned alive. The following day, one of the students was reportedly released while his friend was still missing.²³



Indonesian military personnel captured two minors on the bank of Brazza River, Yahukimo, Province of Papua Pegunungan, 22 February 2024. Source: Special.

²¹ BBC, *Dua remaja Papua ditangkap sebagai saksi usai penembakan pesawat di Yahukimo, tindakan aparat disebut 'merendahkan derajat manusia'* [Two Papuan teenagers arrested as witnesses after plane shooting in Yahukimo, authorities' actions called 'degrading'], 24 February 2024, available at <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/c2qe7e30gpyo>.

²² Ibid.

²³ Human Rights Monitor, *Human Rights News*, 30 October 2024, available at <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/news/yonif-509-balawara-yudha-military-members-accused-of-torture-and-extra-judicial-killings-in-intan-jaya/>.

Extrajudicial Executions and Death in custody

Satgas Damai Cartenz arrested and shot dead two suspected TPNPB members, Afrika Heluka and Toni Wetapo, on 11 April. They were both alleged to have been members of an armed group which was allegedly involved in attacks and killings of security force personnel. In their media statements, the police did not mention any reason for the execution of the two men, for example whether they had resisted arrest or investigation, or not.²⁴ The police only outlined the acts that Afrika and Toni had allegedly committed, saying that this was a strong message to the armed groups that their actions would be met with strict enforcement of the law.

Indonesian military personnel are also alleged to have arrested, detained and executed a TPNPB member, Atinus Kum, who was arrested on 30 June 2024, and detained and interrogated under torture for the next five days. Soldiers reportedly interrogated him to find the group leader, Aibon Kogoya. Atinus was executed when soldiers failed to find Aibon at the place Atinus had told them about. Soldiers reportedly set fire to several traditional houses in Kampung Mamba, Sugapa District, Intan Jaya Regency, Papua Tengah Province, threw Atinus into the burning house, and then shot him. A report also found that some informants saw that Atinus' body had been mutilated by the soldiers before it was burned.²⁵

On 3 to 4 September 2024, Nabire police officers allegedly arbitrarily arrested and tortured Yeremias Magai, a catechist and member of the civil service police, to death. Magai was arrested because he was allegedly involved in the persecution that caused the death of a security guard named Supriyono at the Security Post of CV Kurnia Jasa Mandiri, Jalan Poros Samabusa, Nabire Regency, on 23 August 2024. When handed over to the family, Magai's body was already in funeral attire and his coffin had been sealed by the Nabire Police. The police relied on CCTV footage of two men, one of whom was allegedly Magai, selling Supriyono's mobile phone at a kiosk. The family disputed this evidence because Magai's features and those of the man in the footage were very different.

Excessive use of force in policing public order

Excessive use of force by police was recorded during the policing of most demonstrations related to the 1962 New York Agreement commemorations, in various cities across West Papua. In the Nabire 12 August event, the dispersal was carried out immediately without negotiation. Police fired tear gas at activists, but smoke also reached vendors and people around the market. Police also beat the activists with rattan canes. Three days later, during another commemoration dispersal, Papuan activists were kicked and beaten by police using iron bars, rattan canes and rifle butts. Two activists were shot using rubber bullets and had to be rushed to hospital. In the Wamena commemoration event on 15

24 [Tempo.co](https://www.tempo.co), 'Satgas Operasi Damai Cartenz Tangkap Anggota OPM Afrika Heluka, DPO Kasus Penembakan Anggota Polres Yahukimo', 12 April 2024, available at <https://www.tempo.co/hukum/satgas-operasi-damai-cartenz-tangkap-anggota-opm-afrika-heluka-dpo-kasus-penembakan-anggota-polres-yahukimo--68658>.

25 Human Rights Monitor, 'Military members accused of executing Papuan rebel and disappearing body in Intan Jaya', 5 July 2024, available at <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/case/military-members-alleged-executing-papuan-rebel-in-intan-jaya-and-disappearing-the-body/>.

August, local police also reportedly used excessive force and confiscated a number of items including motorbikes, mobile phones, and money belonging to the protestors. As a result of the violent dispersal, at least 12 demonstrators were injured.

The perpetrators in this period also included the Timor-Leste Police Force. During the arrest of Timorese activist Nelson Roldão at Nicolau Lobato International Airport, Dili, on 2 September, he was held at gunpoint by either Timorese intelligence or police officers. They kicked Nelson until immigration officers intervened. Police also confiscated t-shirts, bags, flags and banners deemed to be associated with the West Papuan independence struggle.

Enforced disappearance

On 9 October military personnel from Infantry Battalion 509 (Batalyon Infanteri 509, Yonif 509/BY) arrested Alex Sondegau on suspicion of being a member of an armed group in Intan Jaya, Papua Pegunungan Province. Alex Sondegau was arrested near the Yonif 509/BY Preparation Command Post in Mamba Village, Sugapa District, Intan Jaya. The TPNPB spokesperson claimed that Alex was a civilian, not a TPNPB member, and was mentally ill. According to him, Alex had studied in Semarang, Central Java, but did not finish because he suffered from mental illness and was sent back to Papua. By the end of 2024, there was no further news regarding Alex's legal proceedings. There were even allegations that Alex had been forcibly disappeared and/or murdered. On 18 October, several videos were circulated showing his family searching for his body.²⁶

In the same area, Mamba Village, at least two teenagers were reported missing after allegedly being arrested by Yonif 509/BY personnel. The first was Nopianus Nabelau who



was arrested on 14 September 2024, when he and his friend RS were passing by and were stopped by military personnel. Nopianus was reportedly tortured at the military post for having TPNPB photos and videos on his phone. As of 30 September, there was no further news about Nopianus' condition or whereabouts, while RS was released later that afternoon. The second teenager's name is unknown. He was reportedly arrested on 12 October 2024 along with his friend, WT, by the same military unit to gather information about TPNPB. They were both doused in hot cooking oil and suffered burns. WT was released the following day, while his friend was reported missing.

Alex Sondegau when arrested by military personnel in Mamba Village, Intan Jaya Regency, Papua Tengah Province, 9 October 2024. Photo: Human Rights Monitor.

²⁶ Human Rights Monitor, 'Military members accused of executing Papuan rebel and disappearing body in Intan Jaya', 5 July 2024, available at <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/case/military-members-alleged-executing-papuan-rebel-in-intan-jaya-and-disappearing-the-body/>.

How do we collect the data?

The data used in this report is the result of monitoring cases of arrest, detention and trial of West Papuans, which are strongly suspected to have political motives. This monitoring was conducted by tracing and documenting information related to these cases.

Where available, we prioritised primary sources such as witness statements and in-depth investigations. However, the information we used can also come from local and national media coverage and statements from movement groups, reports by activists/human rights defenders, lawyers, police, court documents, and investigations by civil society. Where possible, we also conducted interviews with political prisoners, former political prisoners, their families/relatives and/or lawyers, as well as observations in courts and prisons.

As the flow of information from West Papua, especially in conflict-intensive areas, is limited and often fraught with authority bias, we use whatever sources of information are available and compare them. All sources referred to are recorded in the database so that readers can assess their accuracy for themselves.

The landscape of political arrests, legal process, trials and releases in West Papua is constantly changing, and each new development takes time to cross-check and verify. As such, our Annual Overviews are correct at the time of writing, however as time passes our database may show additional cases which have subsequently come to light, or changes to the status of particular detainees as their case progresses.

Further explanation of this data can be found at papuansbehindbars.org.

Political Prisoners Sentenced during 2024

No.	Name	Sex	Date of arrest	Reason for arrest	Verdict	Date of sentencing	Sentence	Detention facilities	Current status
1	Fatia Maulidiyanti	F	18/03/2022 ²⁸	Social Media Activity	Article 27 (3) EIT Law jo. Article 45 (3) EIT Law jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code ²⁹	11/09/2024**	Free of all charges	-	Released
2	Haris Azhar	M	18/03/2022 ³⁰	Social Media Activity	Article 27 (3) EIT Law jo. Article 45 (3) EIT Law jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code ³¹	11/09/2024**	Free of all charges	-	Released
3	Salam Telenggen alias Uras Telenggen (2024)	M	07/02/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Firearm and/or Ammo Possession	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	29/07/2024	18 years	Class IIB Prison, Nabire	Escaped
4	Musianus Mijele	M	01/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law jo. Article 56 (1) Criminal Code	04/07/2024**	2 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Released
5	Edison Sobolim	M	04/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	15/01/2024	16 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
6	Nindo Mohi	M	04/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	15/01/2024	16 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
7	Jen Sobolim	M	04/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	15/01/2024	16 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
8	Alowisius Frabuku alias Alo	M	10/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	29/01/2024	Life sentence	Class IIB prison, Sorong	Deceased
9	Apolos Aikingging alias Apo	M	11/05/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	29/01/2024	20 years	Class IIB prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
10	Yorim Nagen	M	12/05/2023	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law jo. Article 56 (2) Criminal Code	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law jo. Article 56 (2) Criminal Code	20/01/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned

²⁷ As of 30 June 2025. Any developments will be updated on the Papuans Behind Bars website or in subsequent reports.

²⁸ Determined as a suspect.

²⁹ Articles in prosecution.

³⁰ Determined as a suspect.

³¹ Articles in prosecution.

11	Annis Taplo	M	12/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of violent crime	Article 187 (1) jo. Article 56 Criminal Code	22/01/2024	3 years 6 months	Class IIB Prison Wamena	Imprisoned
12	Karel Fatem alias Gelek (Case no. 207)	M	14/05/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	29/01/2024**	20 years	Class IIB prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
13	Karel Fatem alias Gelek (Case no. 257)	M	14/05/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	19/09/2024**	Death penalty	Class IIB prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
14	Aminus Senik	M	16/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Affiliation with independence groups	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code, Article 170 (2) Criminal Code	07/02/2024	7 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
15	Penihas Heluka alias Kopi Tua Heluka	M	19/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder, Attacking Officers on Duty	Article 338 Criminal Code jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code jo. Article 65 (1) Criminal Code, Article 170 (2) Criminal Code	07/02/2024	13 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Escaped
16	Kelkianus Giban alias Kelkianus Balingga	M	31/05/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder, Attacking Officers on Duty	Article 340 Criminal Code jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code jo. Article 65 (1) Criminal Code, Article 170 (2) Criminal Code	07/02/2024	10 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
17	Yeremias Yesnath	M	09/06/2023	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	28/02/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
18	Willem Yekwam	M	09/06/2023	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	28/02/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
19	Urbanus Kamat	M	09/06/2023	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	28/02/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
20	Antonius Frabuku alias Anton	M	01/07/2023	Accused of committing murder, Attacking Officers on Duty	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	28/05/2024	Life sentence	Class IIB Prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
21	Viktor Makamuke	M	05/07/2023	Affiliation with independence groups, Flag raising, Social Media Activity	Article 106 jo. Article 110 (1) Criminal Code	29/01/2024	2 years 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Sorong	Imprisoned
22	Asom Giban	M	12/07/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Affiliation with independence groups, Firearm and/or Ammo Possession	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law jo. Article 56 (2) Criminal Code	30/01/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned

23	Anton Siranu	M	01/08/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Attacking Officers on Duty	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	15/01/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
24	Agus Kossay (2023)	M	02/09/2023	Accused of violent crime	Article 160 Criminal Code	01/02/2024	1 year	Class IIA Prison, Abepura	Released
25	Benius Murib	M	02/09/2023	Accused of violent crime	Article 351 (1) Criminal Code	01/02/2024	10 months	Class IIA Prison, Abepura	Released
26	Antonius Sikin Kramandondo	M	02/09/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 187 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code, Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code ³²	30/09/2024**	Free of all charges	-	Released
27	Alex Kramandondo alias Tete Peh	M	09/09/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 164 jo. Article 108 (1) jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	07/10/2024*	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Fakfak	Imprisoned
28	Yohanes Kramandondo	M	29/08/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 164 jo. Article 108 (1) jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	07/10/2024*	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Fakfak	Imprisoned
29	Hariyanto Iba	M	09/09/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 164 jo. Article 108 (1) jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	07/10/2024*	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Fakfak	Imprisoned
30	Vridolin Petrus Kramandondo	M	29/08/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 164 jo. Article 108 (1) jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	07/10/2024*	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Fakfak	Imprisoned
31	Ferdinandus Kramandondo	M	09/09/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 187 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	07/10/2024*	7 years	Class IIB Prison, Fakfak	Imprisoned
32	Alexander Kramandondo	M	29/09/2023	Accused of committing murder, Accused of violent crime	Article 164 jo. Article 108 (1) jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	07/10/2024*	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Fakfak	Imprisoned
33	Andinus Wenda alias Tikus	M	05/09/2023	Firearm and/or Ammo Possession	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law	21/03/2024	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
34	Yunus Temep alias Eri Jereko	M	07/09/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Affiliation with independence groups	Article 333 (1) jo. Article 56 (1) Criminal Code	29/02/2024	4 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned

³² Articles in prosecution.

35	Etanggu Doronggi alias Altau	M	19/09/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of committing murder Attacking Officers on Duty	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	08/05/2024	12 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
36	Ardinus Kogoya alias Artis	M	21/09/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of violent crime	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	02/05/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Nabire	Escaped
37	Melianus Iba	M	24/09/2023	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Accused of violent crime	Article 2 (1) Emergency Law 12/1951	17/05/2024	1 year	Class IIB Prison, Bintuni Bay	Released
38	Ditius Wenda alias Person Murib	M	05/10/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	17/10/2024*	15 years	Class IIA Prison, Abepura	Imprisoned
39	Aris Wenda	M	06/10/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	30/09/2024*	20 years	Class IIA Prison, Abepura	Imprisoned
40	Rupinus Murib alias Rudi Komba	M	06/10/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 56 Criminal Code	10/10/2024*	10 years	Class IIA Prison, Abepura	Imprisoned
41	Nias Wanimbo alias Jendri Wanimbo	M	09/11/2023	Accused of committing murder	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	10/10/2024*	15 years	Class IIA Prison, Abepura	Imprisoned
42	Phillips Wanggai	M	22/01/2024	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity, Meeting	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	12/06/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Serui	Imprisoned
43	Soleman Fonataba	M	22/01/2024	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity, Meeting	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	12/06/2024	3 years	Class IIB Prison, Serui	Imprisoned
44	Yuflius Frans Kareni	M	22/01/2024	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity, Meeting	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	12/06/2024	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Serui	Imprisoned
45	Gad Sendiaiora Fonataba	M	22/01/2024	Affiliation with independence groups, Political activity, Meeting	Article 106 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	12/06/2024	1 year 6 months	Class IIB Prison, Serui	Imprisoned
46	Alenus Tabuni alias Kobuter	M	18/02/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups	Article 187 (1) Criminal Code jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	24/06/2024	6 years	Class IIB Prison, Nabire	Escaped
47	Epson Nirigi	M	20/02/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups	Article 1 (1) Emergency Law jo. Article 56 (1) Criminal Code	09/07/2024	2 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned

48	BE	M	22/02/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups	Article 479f (a) Criminal Code jo. Article 56 Criminal Code ³³	10/09/2024	Free of all charges	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Released
49	MH	M	22/02/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups	Article 479f (a) Criminal Code jo. Article 56 Criminal Code ³⁴	10/09/2024	Free of all charges	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Released
50	Yoel Heluka	M	11/04/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Affiliation with independence groups	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	22/10/2024	10 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
51	Anius Payage	M	11/04/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Affiliation with independence groups	Article 340 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	22/10/2024	12 years	Class IIB Prison, Wamena	Imprisoned
52	Junius Waker alias Lupa Waker	M	19/05/2024	Accused of collaborating with armed groups, Affiliation with independence groups, Accused of violent crime	Article 187 jo. Article 55 (1) Criminal Code	24/10/2024	4 years	Class IIB Prison, Nabire	Escaped
53	Apedus Tebai	M	15/08/2024	Demo	Article 170 (1) Criminal Code	04/12/2024	5 months	Nabire Police Station	Released
54	Marten Dogomo	M	15/08/2024	Demo	Article 170 (1) Criminal Code	04/12/2024	5 months	Nabire Police Station	Released

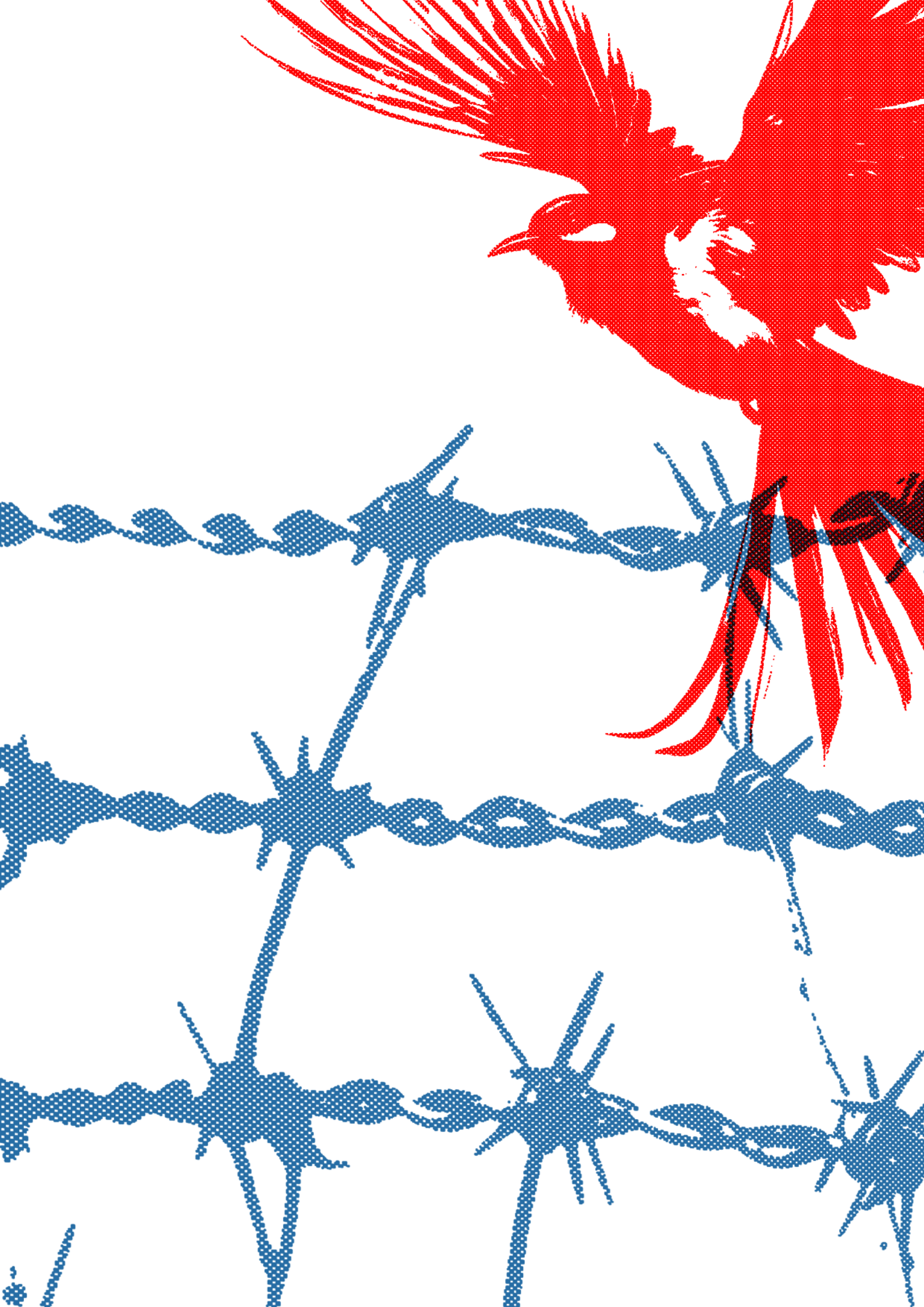
Note:

*) High Court verdict.


**) Supreme Court verdict.

³³ Articles in indictment.

³⁴ Articles in indictment.







Papuans Behind Bars aims to provide accurate and transparent data, published in English and Indonesian, to facilitate direct support for prisoners and promote wider debate and campaigning in support of free expression in West Papua.

Papuans Behind Bars is a collective effort initiated by Papuan civil society groups working together as the Civil Society Coalition to Uphold Law and Human Rights in Papua. It is a grass roots initiative and represents a broad collaboration between lawyers, human rights groups, adat groups, activists, journalists and individuals in West Papua, as well as Jakarta-based NGOs and international solidarity groups.

Questions, comments and corrections are welcomed, and you can write to us at info@papuansbehindbars.org

Visit **papuansbehindbars.org** for the latest information on West Papuan political prisoners.

