

Tolikara: A Love Letter for Humanity

A STATEMENT OF CONCERN FROM PAPUA DIVERSITY NETWORKS

PAPUA Friday morning, 17 July 2015, when Muslims all around the world were celebrating the victory of Ramadhan, suddenly we were shocked by sad news regarding the violence suffered by the Muslim community who were performing Eid al-Fitr prayers in Karubaga, Tolikara Regency, Papua. Not surprisingly, our memory was brought back to tragic events of 15 years ago, when tensions in Ambon and Poso were simmering.

Assisted by the media, from mainstream media to social media, this tragic news thundered and spread quickly, triggering the anger of Muslims throughout Indonesia. Unfortunately, this situation does not help in improving the situation. This noise made by the media in turn prompts bias information and becomes even more unruly. Without having complete information gathered through thorough investigation, we then resort to “finger pointing” individual groups to be held accountable and to be quickly blamed.

Responding to this issue, several points need to be addressed. **Firstly**, the state, in fact, has never been present in tackling cases of religious-based violence including those that have previously taken place in certain parts of Papua, and in Indonesia in general. **Secondly**, the state has failed to provide assurance to minority communities to practice their religion in accordance to their beliefs. Because up till now the state has always given in to the wishes of certain majority groups. **Thirdly**, the state has failed to open a space for communication and mediation which can mutually strengthen relations between adherents of different faiths. The letter issued by GIDI which was circulated on 11 July 2105 proved that the local government did not take the initiative to carry out any preventive measures. **Fourthly**, particularly in Papua, the state still appears in a very militaristic manner and prioritizes the use of violence. Moreover, they deal with dissent amongst its citizens with the use of guns. The most recent information states that 11 people were seriously injured and one child was killed in the Tolikara incident. **Fifthly**, we all have failed to construct constructive communication among different religious communities. The ignorance of Muslims towards the different Christian denominations is comparable to the incomprehension of Christians towards the many different groups in Islam. Accusing (all) Christian groups as the perpetrators of the violent attack during Eid al-Fitr 1436 H is a grave mistake, because other Christian denominations in Tolikara too were casualties in the context of freedom of religion. To note, there are 40 different church denominations in Papua.

Accordingly the, Papua Diversity Network would like to convey the following points:

1. Condemning all violent attacks that occurred in Tolikara regency, both directed towards Muslims performing Eid al-Fitr prayers and also victims of violence amongst the Tolikara community
2. Expressing deep condolence towards all victims, both from the Muslim community and the Tolikara people
3. Appeal to all parties to restrain themselves and not to cause information to become even more distorted, until it triggers new cases of violence based on ulterior motives
4. Urging the national government to investigate and resolve this violent incident, including addressing violence based on intolerance in all parts of the Republic of Indonesia with the view that such cases will not be repeated and will to cease the tyranny of the majority in Indonesia

5. Regretting the reaction of the Local Government of Tolikara Regency, the Papuan Legislative Council of Tolikara, and police authorities as well as the Tolikara Military Command that did not take preventive actions towards the letter issued by GIDI (*Badan Pekerja Wilayah Toli Gereja Injili Di Indonesia – Workers’ Board of Evangelical Church for Toli Area in Indonesia*) number 90/SP/GIDI-WT/VII/2015
6. Requesting for the accountability of the Local Government of Tolikara Regency, the Papuan Legislative Council of Tolikara, police authorities as well as the Tolikara Military Command for the violence that has occurred
7. Urging the Local Government of Tolikara Regency, regional police as well as the Tolikara Military Command to guarantee security for all citizens of Tolikara Regency while continuing to provide space for gatherings which will strengthen relations among different religious communities
8. Urging the National Commission on Human Rights (*Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia, KOMNAS HAM*) to investigate and examine the violence that had occurred in Tolikara in an objective and comprehensive manner.

Jayapura, 18 July 2015

PAPUA DIVERSITY NETWORK

Pastor Goklian PH, OFM

Franciscans in Papua

Clergyman Kliong Tomhisa, S. Th

KPKC Protestant Church in Papua

Yuliana Langowuyo

SKPKC Franciscan Papua

Fr. Fredy Pawika, OFM

Franciscans in Papua

Burhanudin, S. Th. I, MA

Papua Writing School

Hardin Halidin

lalang Papua

Dzikry el Han

Alumnus of SPK V Papua

Petrus Supardi

Papua Pluralism Activist

Martha Langowuyo

Papua Pluralism Activist