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## Conflict Resolution Management in Papua: A Historical and National Integration Perspective

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**Abstract:** The resolution of the conflict in Papua not only requires a security approach but also necessitates a holistic treatment involving social, economic, and political aspects. A profound understanding of the root issues and active participation from all involved parties are key to formulating sustainable solutions. Through this approach, it is hoped that Indonesia can achieve a resolution to the conflict in Papua that is not only tactical but also provides a strong foundation for the ongoing peace and prosperity of all Indonesian citizens, including our brothers and sisters in Papua. Strategic and conceptual thinking from the perspectives of history and national integration are integral to efforts aimed at resolving conflicts based on separatism and terrorism in Papua through a multidisciplinary approach. From the viewpoint of history and national integration, innovative approaches and more effective solutions can be identified to safeguard national security. Thus, it can serve as a basis for designing a conflict resolution model that considers the historical context and national integration in the Papua context. Research findings indicate that this model should ideally encompass diplomatic strategies, active participation of local communities, and sustainable development approaches. Looking ahead, this research is expected to stimulate further studies to generate more profound strategic thoughts, enrich insights, and make significant contributions to addressing the complexity of conflicts in Papua in order to maintain national security.

**Keyword:** Thought, Resolution, Conflict, Papua, National Security.

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as an archipelagic nation with cultural and ethnic diversity, faces various challenges in maintaining its national integration. One of the highlighted conflicts is the Papua conflict, which has complex historical roots involving the lengthy process of Papua's integration into the Republic of Indonesia. In this essay, we will delve into the history of the Papua conflict and seek an understanding of how its resolution can be an integral part of efforts to preserve national integration.

The integration of Papua into Indonesian territory began in 1963 when the Indonesian government and the Netherlands signed the New York Agreement. This agreement transferred Papua, previously known as West Irian, from Dutch administration to the Indonesian

government. Although this transition was supposed to mark the end of the conflict, the reality was that the process of Papua's integration became complicated. A pinnacle of this tension was the implementation of the Act of Free Choice in 1969.

Despite being conducted as a form of self-determination, many parties viewed it as an unfair process controlled by Indonesia. This created dissatisfaction among the Papua community, feeling that their political and cultural rights were not recognized.

The Papua conflict is not merely a political issue but encompasses social, cultural, and economic dimensions. Essentially, dissatisfaction in Papua arises from several factors, including developmental inequality, human rights violations, and a sense that Papua's identity and culture are not adequately respected by the central government. Tensions are further exacerbated by economic issues, with Papua's natural resources being the primary focus of exploitation.

The concentration of economic benefits outside Papua leads to economic dissatisfaction among the Papua community, who feel they are not receiving fair benefits from the exploitation of their own natural resources. The Indonesian government recognizes the complexity of the Papua conflict and has made efforts to address it.

Steps such as dialogue, economic empowerment, and human rights protection have been taken to alleviate tensions in the region. It is essential to remember that conflict resolution is not solely the responsibility of the central government but also requires the participation and involvement of all relevant parties, including the Papua community. Inclusive dialogue processes and equitable development need to be the primary focus to achieve sustainable resolution.

Understanding the historical perspective of the Papua conflict is crucial in outlining resolution efforts. This intricate history involves colonialism, political changes, and developmental inequalities.

By comprehending the historical roots of the conflict, resolution measures can be designed in a more contextual and effective manner. History also teaches us the importance of respecting the cultural and political rights of every group in Indonesia. In building national integration, appreciation for diversity and justice must be the fundamental basis. One crucial approach to resolving the Papua conflict is through sustainable and inclusive development. Improvements in infrastructure, healthcare, and education in Papua should be prioritized. This not only alleviates economic dissatisfaction but also enhances the quality of life for the Papua community.

## **METHOD**

This research employs a qualitative methodological approach, considered as naturalistic research as it is conducted in a natural context, reflecting the existing conditions without any prior manipulation or arrangement. In the research design, several theories are referenced, including those proposed by Bogdan and Taylor, Denzin and Lincoln (1987), as well as Jhon W. Cresswell.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Historical Overview of Papua's Return to the Embrace of NKRI and the Development of Separatist and Terrorist Groups in Papua.**

The island of Papua (formerly Irian Barat between 1956–1973) and Irian Jaya (1973–2000) covers an area of approximately 312,224.37 km<sup>2</sup>. Located at the easternmost part of Indonesia, Papua possesses economically and strategically valuable natural resources, historically attracting Nusantara kingdoms and foreign nations to assert control over the island. Settlements by the Papua people in the region are estimated to have begun between 42,000 and 48,000 years ago. Austronesian ethnic groups migrating through Maritime Southeast Asia

inhabited the area several thousand years ago, developing diverse cultures and languages. There are more than 300 languages and an additional two hundred dialects in this region.

In the early 7th century, the Sriwijaya Kingdom centered in Sumatra (7th to 13th century) engaged in trade relations with the western part of Papua, initially receiving tribute items such as sandalwood and birds of paradise to be sent to China. The influence of the Majapahit Kingdom (1293-1527) centered in Java extended to the western edges of Papua. The 14th-century Majapahit Kakawin Nagarakertagama mentions Wanin or Onin as one of the known regions in the east, now recognized as the Onin Peninsula in the Fakfak Regency, the western part of the larger Bomberai Peninsula, south of the West Papua Bird's Head region.

The evolution of the origin of the name Papua has undergone a long journey in tandem with the history of interactions between foreign nations and the Papua community, including interactions with local languages in interpreting the name Papua. The name Papua originates from "Papo Ua," which in the Tidore language means "not joined," "not united," or "not connected." It signifies that the Papua region was distant and not part of the Tidore Sultanate's core territory. However, these areas remained subject to and were under the trading alliance of Tidore known as Uli Siwa. In its division, Papua's territory was separated into Korano Ngaruha or the Raja Ampat Islands, Papo-ua Gam Sio (Papua nine regions), and Mafor Soa Raha (Mafor Four Soa).

Another theory suggests that the name Papua comes from ancient Malay, "papuwah," meaning "curly hair." In the 16th-century records of the Portuguese and Spanish, the term Papua referred to the inhabitants of the Raja Ampat Islands and the Bird's Head coastal areas. According to F.C. Kamma, based on another theory, the name may originate from the Biak language 'Sup i Babwa,' used to refer to the Raja Ampat Islands, meaning land below (the setting sun), which later became 'Papwa' and then 'Papua.'

During the Dutch colonial era, the movement for the independence of the Papua people and the desire to unite with their fellow countrymen in Indonesia began. The intention to unite with Indonesia as brethren was initiated by Atmoprasojo, head of the School of Governance (government official) in the 1940s, along with several native Papuan sons who were determined to unite with Independent Indonesia, such as Frans Kaisiepo, leader of the Indonesian Freedom Committee (KIM), and Corinus Krey, Marthen Indey, and Silas Papare. They held a meeting in Tobati, Jayapura, which sparked the name Irian from the Mansren Koreri legend.

"Iri-an" in the Biak language means "hot land" due to the local hot weather and also comes from "Iryan," meaning "heating process," as a metaphor for a region entering a new era. In the Serui language, "Iri" means "land," and "An" means "nation," so the overall meaning is "nation's pillar." Meanwhile, in the Merauke language, "Iri" means "placed" or "raised high," and "an" means "nation." Hence, its meaning is "a nation raised high."

Understanding the etymology of the names Papua and Irian is crucial, given the historical development of separatist actions. The name Irian is considered a name given by Indonesia, associated with the abbreviation "Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti Netherland," even though in various original Papuan languages and dialects, Irian carries the meaning of "nation's pillar" or "a nation raised high." On the other hand, the name Papua is perceived as a symbol of resistance against Indonesia, but it has been in use since the Bird's Head region and the Bomberai Peninsula were under the rule of the Tidore Kingdom, carrying meanings in Malay such as "curly hair" or "land of the earliest sunset," depicting the orientation of Papua as the easternmost region of the archipelago.

### **European Colonialism in Papua.**

In 1606, an expedition led by Commander Wiliam Jansen from the Netherlands, named Duyfken, landed in Papua. The expedition consisted of three ships sailing from the northern coast of Java, making stops at the Kei Islands, Aru on the southwest coast of Papua, and naming it Papua, as recorded by Jorge de Menetes. As Dutch power expanded, Spain left Papua in 1663.

In an effort to strengthen its position in Papua in 1770, the Netherlands changed the name from Papua to Nieuw Guinea, a Dutch translation of Nova Guinea, published on international maps by Isaac Tiron, a Dutch cartographer in the 18th century.

In 1884, Papua New Guinea came under British rule, and simultaneously, Northeast Papua was controlled by Germany. The power struggle ended on May 16, 1895, in The Hague, where a meeting was held between the Netherlands and England to determine the territorial boundaries, known as the Treaty of The Hague (1895). It was documented in *Staatsblaad van Nederlandsch Indie* 1895 No. 220 and 221 dated May 16, 1895. The boundary line was established as the Bensbach River, dividing the regions into Dutch-controlled Western Papua and English-controlled Eastern Papua or known as Papua New Guinea.

After the end of World War II, Allied nations, including the Netherlands and England, began considering dividing their colonial territories as victorious powers. In contrast, nations in the Asia-Pacific region, long oppressed by European colonialism such as the Dutch and the British, simultaneously fought to leverage the power vacuum after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to declare their independence.

Notably, countries in the Asia-Pacific and Africa, such as Indonesia, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and several African nations, swiftly proclaimed their independence. In response, Britain and France promptly granted independence to their former colonies by creating the Commonwealth (former British colonies) and the Francophonie (former French colonies) to prevent rebellion while maintaining dominance over these former colonies.

This idea was considered by the Netherlands, which had just lost Indonesia, declaring independence on August 17, 1945. Considering the abundant natural resources in Papua, the Netherlands sought to create a Commonwealth by promising Papua's independence within the framework of the Non-Self-Governing Territory registered with the UN for decolonization into an independent state. In 1946, the Netherlands again changed the name of Papua from Nieuw Guinea to *Nederlands Nieuw Guinea*.

This name change aligned with the Dutch government's efforts to decolonize Nieuw Guinea, following the 1945 UN Charter on the Elimination of Colonial Territories. The motivation behind the Dutch separating Papua was based on its strategic location for the Dutch royal navy in the Pacific, relocating Indo-Eurasians from other Indonesian regions, and controlling its economic interests in Indonesia.

### **History of Struggle and Nationalism of Papuan Natives.**

To suppress Indonesian nationalism, the Dutch exiled nationalist figures from Papua to Makassar, Java, and Sumatra. Figures such as Silas Papare, Albert Karubuy, N.L. Suwages, and Machmud Singgirei Rumagesan were among those exiled. Some remained in Papua, including Steven Rumbewas, Corinus Krey, Marthen Indey, Abraham Koromath, Samuel Damianus Kawab, Elieser Jan Bonay, and Elly Uyo.

On July 16, 1946, Frans Kaisiepo, representing Nieuw Guinea, attended the Malino-Ujung Pandang conference. In Malino, through a national radio broadcast, he announced the change of the names Papua and Nieuw Guinea to Irian, stating that it should become part of Indonesia. The name Irian carried political significance, with Frans Kaisiepo stating, "Changing the name Papua to Irian not only has historical meaning but also embodies the spirit of struggle: IRIAN means Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti Nederland." In Manokwari, the Red and White Movement was established by Petrus Walebong and Samuel Damianus Kawab, spreading to Babo, Kokas, and Sorong. The KIM branch in Biak became the Party of Independent Indonesia (PIM) led by Lukas Rumkorem, while in Sorong, the Independence Pioneer was founded by Sangaji Malan.

On August 17, 1947, workers of *Nederlandsch Nieuw Guinea Petroleum Maatschappij* founded the Indonesian Youth Union (PPI) led by Abraham Koromath. On March 19, 1948, a

rebellion against the Dutch occurred in Biak, led by Stevanus Yoseph with Petro Jandi, Terianus Simbiak, Honokh Rambrar, Petrus Kaiwai, and Hermanus Rumere. The leaders of the rebellion were captured, Petro Jandi was sentenced to death, and others were imprisoned by the Dutch government.

### **Act of Free Choice (Pepera).**

Efforts for negotiations regarding the transfer of Dutch power over the entire independent Indonesia continued through various agreements such as the Linggarjati Agreement in 1946, the Renville Agreement in 1948, and the Roem-Royen Agreement in 1949 until the Round Table Conference in The Hague created unstable conditions in Indonesia and impacted the destabilization of the Southeast Asian regional area.

The post-WWII political dynamics, entering the Cold War era, the strong spread of communist influence in Asia, and the portrayal of Papua's abundant wealth prompted the United States to intervene in the Indonesia-Netherlands issue. On August 15, 1962, the New York Agreement was signed, mediated by the United States, transferring West Papua from the Netherlands through the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) to Indonesia. The UNTEA, a special UN body formed to oversee the act of free choice in Papua, used two names for Papua in 1969: West New Guinea/West Irian.

At that time, the Indonesian delegation was led by Subandrio, with representatives from Papua including J.A. Dimara, Albert Karubuy, Frits Kiriho, Silas Papare, M. Indey, and Efraim Somisu. From July 14 to August 2, 1969, to determine the status of the western region of Papua, whether it belonged to the Netherlands or Indonesia, 1,025 men and women were chosen as regional delegates and unanimously chose to join Indonesia. Subsequently, the name Papua or Nederlands Nieuw Guinea was changed to Irian Barat on May 5, 1963, when the region was handed over from the Netherlands to the Republic of Indonesia.

In the 1969 UN General Assembly, the discussion agenda on the implementation of the Act of Free Choice became a contentious issue between two blocs: the Pan-African Group consisting of African and Latin American countries opposed and demanded a reimplementation with One Man One Vote, not Indonesia's consensus-based approach in the Act of Free Choice. It is essential to emphasize that, ultimately, after a week of adjournment, Indonesia secured support from 53% of UN member states. Legally and in terms of international politics, Papua became a legitimate part of the Republic of Indonesia after the Act of Free Choice in 1969.

### **Free Papua Movement/Organizations of Separatists and Terrorists.**

As explained in the section "Efforts to Form the Dutch Version of the Commonwealth," where the motivation for the Netherlands to separate Papua was based on its strategic location to fulfill the Dutch dream of continuing imperialism by placing the Royal Dutch Navy's center in the Pacific, relocating Indo-Eurasian people/personnel from other Indonesian regions, and to control its economic interests in Indonesia. The UN decision supporting the results of the Act of Free Choice was undoubtedly a loss for the Netherlands, as it lost a source of natural wealth and demolished the dream of military power projection in the Asia-Pacific.

With Indonesia's victory in reclaiming Papua as part of the Republic of Indonesia, the Netherlands sought to plant a "time bomb" by exploiting the socio-cultural conditions of Papua's society prone to inter-tribal conflicts and the gap between coastal and mountainous Papuan communities.

This time bomb was created through an approach to mountainous communities who felt excluded from the struggle for Indonesian independence, which was dominated by coastal Papuan tribes. The promise of independence through the provision of the Gulden Nieuw Guinea currency, the Bintang Kejora flag, and the symbol of the Mambruk bird became Dutch propaganda to give a dream to some mountainous tribes that they would have power over their land. This Dutch propaganda eventually gave birth to the Free Papua Movement (Organisasi



Papua Merdeka or OPM) on December 1, 1963. The Free Papua Movement (OPM) ultimately triggered an unfavorable situation, hindering the development of Papua. The backwardness of Papua, which originally arose due to OPM terror actions, was transformed into an issue of human rights violations and genocide.

On the other hand, changes in the political constellation of the world post-Cold War, with the U.S. – Soviet rivalry ending and the emergence of China and Russia as new world powers, nurtured the OPM. This led to the emergence of political and youth wings such as the West Papua National Committee (KNPB), the military wing Tentara Pembebasan Nasional Papua Barat (TPNPB), and the foreign political wing United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) with the goal of total war for Papua's independence.

### **Nurturing Papua as the Offspring of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia**

History has proven that since the early 7th century, the Sriwijaya Kingdom centered in Sumatra (7th to 13th centuries) engaged in trade relations with Western Papua. Furthermore, the Majapahit Kingdom's power (1293-1527) centered in Java extended to the western edges of Papua. The 14th-century Majapahit Kakawin Nagarakertagama mentions Wanin or Onin as one of the known regions in the east, now recognized as the Onin Peninsula in Fakfak Regency, the western part of the larger Bomberai Peninsula, south of the West Papua Bird's Head region. This signifies that Papua is the offspring of the archipelago, which now has the modern name of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Papua is not a region taken by Indonesia but is an offspring that was once seized and is not desired to be returned by the Netherlands. Various efforts by the Indonesian government to nurture Papua as its offspring include:

1. Security Approach and Declaration of OPM as a Separatist and Terrorist Group in 2021: The Indonesian government has deployed reinforcements of TNI (Indonesian National Armed Forces) and Polri (Indonesian National Police) to handle separatist movements in Papua. These forces are tasked with maintaining security and ensuring that development in Papua is not terrorized or sabotaged by OPM.
2. Economic and Social Development: The Indonesian government has made efforts to enhance economic and social development in Papua. This includes investments in infrastructure, education, health, and community empowerment programs. The goal is to improve the welfare of the Papuan people and reduce dissatisfaction that could be a trigger for conflict.
3. Dialogue and Reconciliation: The Indonesian government has engaged in dialogue with Papuan leaders and community groups to seek peaceful solutions to the conflict in Papua. One example is the formation of the Unit for the Acceleration of Development in Papua and West Papua (UP4B) in 2011, aimed at improving development and welfare in the region.
4. Special Autonomy: The Indonesian government granted special autonomy status to the provinces of Papua and West Papua with the enactment of the Special Autonomy Law for Papua in 2001. This law provides broader authority to the regional government in managing internal affairs and development in the region.
5. International Diplomacy Efforts: The Indonesian government also seeks to explain its position and policies regarding Papua to the international community. Diplomacy efforts are made to ensure international support and recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty in Papua.

The Indonesian government continues to make sustainable efforts to find solutions to nurture Papua as its offspring, taking into account aspects of security, development, dialogue, and reconciliation.

### **CONCLUSION**

Papua is not a region taken by Indonesia but rather a native child that was temporarily seized and not wanted to be returned by the Netherlands. Papua's legal status as a native child has been validated through the Act of Free Choice (PEPERA) and recognized by the United Nations (UN) with 53% of the votes supporting Indonesia.

This reaffirms that Papua is an integral part of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). Resolving the conflict in Papua requires a holistic approach involving the central government, the Papua community, and all relevant parties.

The dialogue process and inclusive development need to be strengthened to establish a solid foundation for national integration. By understanding the historical perspective of the conflict, appropriate and meaningful steps can be designed to achieve peace and justice in Papua, ultimately strengthening national unity and diversity.

The existence of the Free Papua Movement (OPM) is a consequence of Dutch propaganda that instilled illusions in some Papua tribes that they would become rulers of Papua. However, the Netherlands actually viewed Papua as an object of control for its economic interests that required rich natural resources.

The dynamics of the strategic environment and the constellation of world political powers also influence the development of the OPM. Changes in global politics post-Cold War, along with efforts to contest the natural wealth of Papua by external powers, can affect the dynamics of the conflict in the region.

This indicates that an understanding of the global context needs to be considered in handling the Papua conflict. By delving into history, reinforcing dialogue, and empowering inclusive development, it is hoped that Papua can continue to be nurtured as a child of the NKRI, ending the conflict and realizing sustainable peace.

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