Methodist Consultative Council of the Pacific  
C/- Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga  
Nuku’alofa  
Tonga  

May 5th 2017

Dear Member Churches,

From May 1st to May 5th 2017 Leaders from Methodist and Uniting Churches in the Pacific met in Tonga for their biennial consultative meeting. The Theme of the meeting was Wesleyan Heritage: Oceanic Methodist “Lotu” now. Wesley opposed slavery and social justice is central for Methodists.

During the meeting we received a report of human rights abuses in West Papua. This statement is in response to that presentation.

The report included the following.

- It is estimated that in the last 50 years, approximately 500,000 West Papuans have been killed.
- Ivan Mendez, the former special advisor to the UN Secretary General on genocide prevention has said that due to such high levels of violence and denials of fundamental human rights, West Papua as an indigenous Melanesian Community is at risk of extinction.
- The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission delegation to West Papua in February 2016 found no improvement in the human rights situation. [Ref Committee Report: A report on a Human Rights Fact Finding Mission to West Papua]
- It has also been reported West Papuans are just as much concerned about their growing economic and social marginalization as they are about violence.

Methodist and Uniting Church Leaders meeting as MCCP ask:

1. That member churches and their members are encouraged to pray for West Papua at this difficult time for them.
2. That the matter of West Papua be placed on the agenda of our churches’ Conferences and Assemblies.
3. The Pacific Council of Churches [PCC] is encouraged to continue working alongside and encouraging churches in West Papua.
4. That member churches who have relationships with churches in West Papua continue to walk alongside them as they seek justice and resolution to their concerns.
5. That member churches, as appropriate, raise the issues of West Papua with their respective Governments.

We thank you in advance for your careful consideration of these matters.
The letter is jointly signed by the leaders of the delegations of the nations present.

Yours faithfully

Rev. Dr. 'Ahio
President Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga

Rev. Faulalo Paaga
General Secretary Methodist Church, Samoa

Mrs. Viv Whimster
Vice President, Methodist Church of New Zealand

Rev. Dr. Tevita Banivanua
President Methodist Church, Fiji

Mr. Stuart McMillian
President, Uniting Church in Australia

Rev. David Garunu
Moderator Elect United Church in Solomons

Steve Pearce
Partnership Coordinator Methodist Church in Britain