Third Papuan People’s Congress ends with loss of life

A Opening of the Third Papuan Congress

The Congress opened on 16 October at 2pm in a tranquil and peaceful atmosphere. The participants, observers and cheerleaders were all agreed with no one objecting to the Congress. The sense of enthusiasm was reflected in the decision to slaughter a pig by Congress chairman, Selpius Bobii, which was followed by the opening address by the Congress committee. As it was already evening, the session was closed and the participants returned to their dormitories.

Second day: On 17 October, the documents of the Congress were circulated by the Rev. Sofyan Yoman, Chairman of the Baptist Church in Papua, and Septer Manufandu, director of the Papuan NGO Forum. The participants were then divided into commissions.

B Plenary sessions:

On the third day, 18 October, the proceedings continued without any disturbances. The session began with the presentation of the chairman’s hammer and the performance of Tuupe dances by the Mee people. This was done to ensure that the meetings would proceed smoothly, safely and without disagreements. It was decided to focus on three themes: Politics, Law and Finance.

All the decisions adopted at these thematic sessions were approved by the leadership of the Congress. In the evening, the committee drew together all the contributions, opinions and proposals of the participants. The main objectives were agreed without any disturbances.

[There is no section C.]

D Congress Ends with Loss of Life

After these declarations had been presented, the sound of gunshots caused great consternation among the Papuan people. I was close to the shooting at 15.35pm on 19 October and I heard about a thousand shots in the first 25 minutes. Soon after, we heard more shooting so there must have been around 1,500 gunshots. I realised that this posed a threat to the Congress participants who started running to the hills behind the Zakeus soccer field which was where priests and friars had gathered. Many people ran towards UNCEN (Cenderawaisih University) along the main road in Abepura, to avoid being hit by the bullets and to avoid being arrested. Some of those who fled towards the hills returned safely. Some who knew my cell phone number rang me to say that they were returning to their homes. I know nothing about the condition of those I didn’t hear from. Had they fled to the hills or to the forest or had they been shot dead?
I realised that many Congress participants had fled to the hills in fear of their lives. I was very concerned about those who had fled to avoid the being hit by the joint forces of the TNI (Indonesian Army) and Polri (the Indonesian Police). I was hoping that there would be no casualties among these innocent people during the incident that occurred beside the soccer pitch or at the STFT (High School of Philosophy and Theology) campus. The STFT campus and the STFT Seminary were also attacked and some of the priests were arrested. They were deeply traumatised. Meanwhile, Sang Surya which is where colleagues of mine, members of the OFM Order, were residing, was also damaged by the TNI/Polri. Some people were arrested there while many others were beaten and tortured at the Sang Surya/OFM complex.

To ensure that things would go according to plan, the chief of police of Jayapura, AKBP Imam Setiawan was present with his troops from the moment of the declaration on 19 October. According to our observations, before this incident occurred, two TNI units were on guard on the two hills behind the STFT-Fajar Timor Abepura complex. When the shooting started, the mass of people were encircled and were shot at from the hills. The people were confused about where to run because the way to the hills was controlled by two groups of soldiers. When the soldiers later returned to the place where the incident had occurred in Tunas Harapan, we could hear that they were speaking Javanese.

On 21 October, *Cenderawasih Pos* (*Cepos*), quoted the Jayapura police chief Imam Setiawan as saying that the TPN/OPM (the military wing of the OPM) had been shooting from the hills. The Jayapura police chief disseminated this falsehood in *Cepos*. The *Papua One TV* channel also reported that there had been shooting from the hills aimed at the large crowd of people who were running towards the hills. The friars and pastors were very confused when the police chief’s statement was reported on TV. It was clearly wrong, a deception. We knew from what we had seen and heard ourselves that the shooting was not by members of the TPN/OPM but by the joint forces of the army and the police who, from the beginning, had been up in the hills when the shooting occurred.

In their declaration, the Papuan people announced that they had chosen the leadership of the West Papuan people, with Forkorus Yaboisembut as the head of state/President and Edison Waromi as the Prime Minister. But the two men were arrested by the joint forces of the Indonesian military and police because they were deemed to have set up a rival government. They were arrested at the Tunas Harapan Hostel, Jalan Yakonde, Abepura.

Many people were arrested, shot dead or wounded, but the victims have not yet been identified. The Tunas Harapan Hostel was completely destroyed and laptops and computers as well as cash were taken from the rooms occupied by people who were staying at the hostel. These rooms had been destroyed by the army and police troops.

Apart from this, one of the hostels which was used the Diocese of Agats at STFT-Fajar Timor Abepura was also destroyed by the joint team of the army and police. The rooms had been smashed up and the windows broken, having been struck by bullets. The CPU 2 unit (?) is under the command of the joint forces of the army and the police and they say that this was done to obtain evidence.
Conditions in Abepura are still very tense and are being watched closely by the STFT friars and priests. The local inhabitants are in a state of great anxiety and are mourning for the friends and relatives who have been shot dead.

Note: During these incidents, the Congress participants and members of the public did not launch any attacks. On the contrary, the Congress participants handed themselves in or were shot dead on the Zakeus Padangbulan soccer field in Abepura.

List of victims:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age/status</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Damianus Daniel Kadepa</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30 Petapa guard</td>
<td>Shot dead, shots to the head and chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yakop Samonsabra</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>37 Petapa guard</td>
<td>Shot dead, back of head (brains) totally shattered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maks Yeuw</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>37 Petapa guard</td>
<td>Shot dead, shots to stomach and chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A woman NN</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Shot in the buttocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A man NN</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Caught by bullets which pierced his palms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Forkorus Yabosembut and Edison Waromi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>DAP and WPNA</td>
<td>Arrested and remain in POLDA Papua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>August Makbrawen</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Arrested and remains in POLDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Daud Wilil</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Arrested, beaten and then sent home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 students from Sorong</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Umel Mandiri</td>
<td>Shot dead, identities not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2 students from Wamena</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>STIE Ottow and Getler</td>
<td>Shot dead, identities not confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Neles Siep</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SKPKC</td>
<td>Arrested, beaten by police after being interrogated and then sent home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pilatus Wetipo</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Shot in the leg resulting in shattering of bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Dominikus Sorabut and Gat Wenda</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Papuan activists</td>
<td>Arrested and remain in POLDA Papua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Six (6) friars and over 300 civilians.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrested and after interrogation were sent home. The civilians were detained at POLDA Papua. Some were sent home having been beaten till they were bleeding, bruised and swollen all over their bodies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Some Petapa guards remain in critical condition since being charged, detained, kicked with boots and hit till they were almost dead at POLDA Papua. I am specially monitoring these Petapa guards’ conditions.
1. Chronology of Incidents at the Catholic Mission Complex

The Tauboria Hostel Situation

At 5am on 19 October, there were many army troops along Jalan Sosiri, in front of the Tauboria Hostel but things appeared to be normal. However, at 3.33 in the afternoon, when people had had their lunch and were about to take a siesta, they heard shooting by units of the army and police. The shooting appeared to be directed towards the hostel. Very soon afterwards, the road in front of the Tauboria Hostel was packed with troops. They were trying to enter the hostel but were unable to do so because it was locked by the people inside so they were unable to gain access to the area around Tauboria Hostel II being used by the police. The troops were shouting to the people inside to come out of their rooms. We decided to come out; the troops searched every room, wanting to find out whether we were hiding any Papuans. The troops made notes about the students who were staying at the hostel.

After collecting this information, three indigenous students from Key who had come to the hostel to work with their friends were suspected of sympathising with the Third Papuan Congress. They were beaten so hard that they started bleeding.

The army issued the following warning: If, in our searches (during sweepings later than evening) we discover that there were more people there than before, the inhabitants themselves should know what to expect.

At around 5pm, a young man from Serui who was bleeding came the hostel. we took him in, gave him something to eat and some clothes and later that evening, Vincen Kudiai escorted him back to his dormitory at Perumnas III along with a fellow from Mamteng whose testa (testicles?) were bleeding. I cleaned him up, gave him a bath and some clothes and he was taken home by Vincen Kudiai, the president of the Students USTJ).

At 4.23 in the afternoon, a woman from Sentani came to the hostel. As soon as she arrived, this mother-of-three fainted on the floor upstairs. She asked us for some clothes, so we gave her a dress and one of the hostel inhabitants took her back home to Kamkei.

Very soon after, we met a man from Wamena who was an STFT student and who was bleeding. We discovered him laying him naked in Marsellino’s room. Seeing that his body was in such a state, I immediately gave him a shirt and said: ‘Papua Merdeka’. I told this man who lives with Friar Yuventus Tegeke in Tauboria to go back to Marvin.

Wah, so many Papuans were there at police headquarters in Tauboria. I met a white-haired man who lives in Organda who asked to be taken somewhere safe. Feeling very sorry for this elderly man, I took him to the dining room. But when he wanted to go home, I escorted him to the road even though there was a high security alert there. At seven in the evening, while we were sitting together in the dining room, I suddenly heard someone shouting ‘Oom, Oom! (Uncle, Uncle) saying: ‘Please help me.’ I realised that he was my nephew. This was Yulianus Tekege, a UNCEN student, who came and hugged me. He said: ‘I was almost a victim, Uncle’. He started crying and asked for help so we helped him. Soon afterwards, a 74-year-old white-haired woman started crying and asking for help. We took her in for her safety. She said: ‘Aduh, ever since I was young, I have been fed up. Why do the police always giving orders like this. We are always the victims.’ Vincen Kudiai escorted the two
of them. Yulianus Tekege went to Enirop while the woman went home to Sentani Post 7. Soon afterwards, an elderly man from Wamena arrived at the hostel and asked for help. We gave him some food, a bath and some clothes. Then along came Ibu Augustina and a Dani fellow. The woman spoke to us in the Mee language; she asked for somewhere to stay and for help. I told her to have a bath and gave her a soap, a towel and some clothes. She was very afraid of the sweepings by the army and police so Selpius Bobii and I took her to the STFT chapel. I asked two Dani men where they lived and they told us that they had been at Ekspo but didn’t know the way because they had never been to Jayapura before. They had only come here to attend the Third Papuan Congress. I felt very sad indeed to hear that but what could we do. We knew that in the evening, there would be sweepings so we took them as quickly as possible to the STFT chapel.

By the evening, there were still many Papuans hiding in Tauboria. I whistled from the back of the bathroom to convey to them that Papuans were living here. Three men approached me and we hid them in the STFT chapel. By this time it was already midnight but the Indonesian security forces were still out in force along Sosiri Road. The night silence was very frightening; my friends and I were too afraid to do anything. Soon after midnight, a black man with thin, curly hair came and wanted us to hide him. We tried to lift the ceiling of the hostel but couldn’t shift it so we didn’t know what to do. I give this man, a UNCEN student from Sorong, some clothes and a new battery for his HP and we ran with him in the direction of the STFT. The next day, he phoned to say that he was now safe from the clutches of the NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia) crocodile.

That night things were very tense; the torch lights from the police panzers pierced the darkness round the hills behind the STFT. Fearing that there would be sweepings during the night, I stayed awake till morning. Thanks be to God, nothing happened to me and my friends from Tauboria.

2   Chronology of Events in Tunas Harapan Hostel

Present Situation

According to Thedy Pekey, the manager of the Tunas Harapan Hostel, the situation has calmed down but the people living here are still traumatised because of all the sweepings by the army and police. We don’t feel safe. We are on the alert all the time. Sometimes we even feel afraid when the army or police just come to check the location of the incident.

Experiences

The hostel manager, Aleks Gadabii Giyai, had noticed that there were army and police teams everywhere because of the ‘red alert’, along Yakonde Road, Sosiri Road and round the Catholic Mission Complex. ‘It felt as if a war would break out and they would start searching for all the people who had attended the Congress. In the afternoon of 19 October, at 3.35pm, we heard firing at the front door of the hostel. I was afraid that there would be sweepings and shooting of people who had attended the Congress. The firing grew in intensity and people started running in all directions. There was tear gas everywhere which made our eyes smart and made us feel sick. So I started to run towards the hills at the back of the STFT. When I reached the STFT complex, the army and the police and intel officers were shooting at the mass of people who were running towards the hills. However, I decided to run through the area towards the hills. Even though I was being shot at by the army and police teams, I continue to run and spent the night in the forest. On the following
day, I returned to the hostel where everything had been destroyed. The doors and windows had been hit by bullets. Laptops and computers had been removed by the army and the police. All the rooms had been destroyed except Yulianus Pekey’s room. The other rooms had been ruined and everything had been taken away.

**Destruction**

The windows had been smashed by bullets. The triplex doors had been destroyed with knives. Some doors had been kicked down with army boots and people’s belongings were scattered everywhere.

**3 The New Yerusalam Inter-Dioceese High School and STFT**

**Present situation**

We priests are getting on with our daily activities, praying, cooking, all of which is going well. We are always happy to see all our friends in each of our hostels. But all the priests are still very traumatised, feeling deeply concerned about the behaviour of the army and the police.

**Experiences**

While we were having lunch, I heard gunshots and the screams of people running everywhere. While many of them were running towards the hills, gunshots could be heard following them from behind. Being very afraid myself as well, I started to run with the other priests towards the forest. Some of the priests stayed in the forest overnight and returned to the seminary the next morning. Some of them had cuts on their feet from all the running (Father Yance Yogi) but nevertheless continue to run towards the hills to avoid being attacked by the army and the police at the STFT-Fajar Timur complex in Abepura. Some returned in a state of deep trauma. I too suffered from this trauma, together with the other priests.

I well remember when we were being shot at and attacked with various weapons. Some of the priests, Fr Jhon Laltutl, Fr Jemmy Rahadat, Fr Moses Amiset, Fr Modes and others, fell into a pool of water and started crying. I shared their grief as they wept before me. It takes a long time to heal trauma. The army and police as well as the government think that you get over it quickly but we were very disappointed with the inhumane treatment meted out to ordinary human beings.

**The destruction**

The Wisma House which had been contracted by the Salib Suci Order was completely destroyed. It was being used by priests from the Agats Diocese. It was a beautiful place but it has now been completely destroyed by the army and police teams. The windows were smashed by bullets and the doors had been kicked down. A computer has been taken away by the army and police and two CPUs (?) were also taken. They said that this was to obtain evidence. None of these things have yet been returned to the seminaries or the STFT.

**4 STFT Report**

**Conditions in the campus**
Normal activities have resumed since 21 October. The priests are still traumatised but lectures have resumed without any disturbances. But the trauma is still with us. It takes a long time to deal with trauma. You need to have some recreation and sport to get rid of it. The priests and others who teach have complained about the inhumane activities of the army and police teams. People are treated people like pigs or wild animals in the forests. Using tear gas is inhumane as well because many people then get hit and injured by the bullets.

We feel very deeply about all those who were hit and killed. We know that three people, Damianus Daniel Taniwo Kadepa, Yokap Samonsabra and Maks Yeuw, were shot dead. While we are mourning the dead and suffering from trauma, we have resumed our everyday activities on the campus. We ask ourselves: Why did these teams of army and police start chasing the people in the STFT. Why did they aim their guns and pistols at priests like us? This is a cause for deep reflection for us at the STFT.

**Conclusion**

We all know who it was who triggered the conflict and the attacks. We would like to stress that it was triggered by teams of the Indonesian army and police. The people who attended the Congress, the observers and everyone else did nothing at all to cause any conflict. After issuing the national declaration of the West Papuan people, everyone just wanted to go home in peace and quiet but they were stunned by all the firing and the use of tear gas. The people ran away to seek safety in the mountains and hills round the STFT. Even though they were trying to save their lives, they were shot dead. All the damage sustained by the Agats Diocese and the STFT can be repaired but the trauma suffered by the people will need a long time to cure. Time will be needed to heal the trauma which resulted from the way the army and police hunted down people in the Catholic Mission in Padangbulan.