

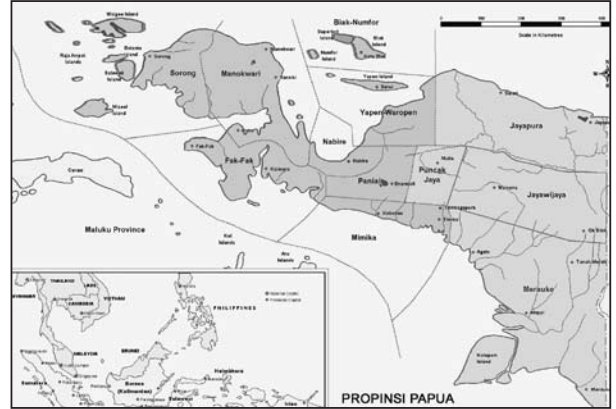


THE PULL-OUT

UK ARMS

Fuelling Conflict, Aiding Oppression, Harming Development

The island of New Guinea, 250km north of Australia, comprises the independent state of Papua New Guinea on one half and West Papua on the other. It is covered with tropical rainforest, home to many unique species of wildlife, and hugely rich in resources such as oil, gas, copper, gold and timber. Yet in this paradise the people of West Papua, like Benny Wenda, are suffering terrible oppression under Indonesian rule. This situation of oppression has been maintained by ruthless military crackdowns on political activity in the area. Despite this, the **UK has provided military support through arms sales to Indonesia over most of the last 30 years.**



“We did not want to become Indonesian in 1969 and after so many years of Indonesian oppression; we certainly do not want to be Indonesia now. We want to be free”.

***Benny Wenda,
Free West Papua activist***

Much of modern day Indonesia, was a Dutch colony until 1949, but the Dutch retained control of West Papua through the '50s. West Papuans are ethnically distinct from Indonesians, and have a different history, language and culture. In 1961, the people of West Papua held a Congress at which its people declared independence, and raised their new flag - the Morning Star.

Within months the dream was dead: the Indonesian military invaded West Papua and conflict broke out between the Netherlands, Indonesia and the indigenous population regarding control of the country. The US intervened and engineered an agreement between Indonesia and the Netherlands, which in 1962 gave control of West Papua to the United Nations and one year later transferred control to Indonesia. **The Papuans were never consulted.** However, the agreement did promise them their right to self-determination.

By 1969, there was wide-spread resistance to the oppressive and violent Indonesian rule. Under the auspices of the UN mandate, the Indonesian government held a referendum of independence for the West Papuan people. However, the vote was clearly rigged; they 'hand-picked' 1,026 people out of a population of over a million and threatened to kill them if they refused to vote in favour of Indonesian rule. Unsurprisingly, the result was 'unanimous' and West Papua has remained under Indonesian military rule ever since.

In 1977, in response to a peaceful resistance movement, Indonesia bombed Benny's village, using fighter jets supplied by the US. Just a year later a huge consignment of Hawk fighter jets

were sold to Indonesia by the UK, which were also used to oppress and intimidate the West Papuan people. Benny, who was just a young boy at the time, was forced to flee into the jungle with his family, where they lived for 6 years. Under the Suharto regime Indonesian violence and oppression continued and it is estimated that over 200,000 West Papuans have been killed at the hands of the Indonesian government for speaking out or even just for raising their flag, the Morning Star. The UK has continued to support the Indonesian military throughout most of this period through arms sales (there was briefly an EU-wide embargo before the UK called it off in 2000 to sell more fighter jets to Indonesia), including granting licenses for sales every year through 2003-2008 and probably beyond. The UK has also organised arms fairs off the coast of Indonesia, and invited Indonesia to UK-based arms fairs.

Defend Peace : Disarm Tax SPEAK's Campaign Against Government Support of the Arms Trade

SPEAK believes the arms sold by the UK to Indonesia over more than 30 years, despite frequent human rights abuses, show that something is not right. The presence of a government department (DSO), funded by taxpayers' money, that exists to promote the sale of weapons abroad distorts government policy by strengthening the arms industry's lobby. And Indonesia isn't an isolated example – in 2008 the UK exported arms to 11 of the 21 "countries of major concern" listed by the Foreign Office's annual human rights report.

The continuing relationship with Indonesia that is fostered by DSO, and the continued sale of arms, undermines any effort by the UK Government to challenge their record on human rights and legitimises what is essentially the occupation of West Papua.

UK Government support of the arms trade **FUELS CONFLICT, AIDS OPPRESSION AND HARMS DEVELOPMENT** keeping poor countries locked in poverty. Together we can end this. Please turn over to see what we are calling for, responses to some frequently asked questions, and what you can do about this scandal.

Volumize

Defend Peace : Disarm Tax SPEAK is calling for:

1. The closure of the Defence and Security Organisation (DSO).

This government department exists to support the arms trade.

We also oppose the proposed reopening of DESO, DSO's predecessor, which was even worse!

2. A new agency to facilitate diversification of skills, technologies, and jobs from arms to civil sector.

Ultimately we want to see an end to the government's disproportionate level of political and economic support for the arms trade. We believe these two goals would be crucial first steps.

FAQs

Ok...but isn't it good for our economy?

No! This level of support would be more understandable if arms exports were a vital part of the British economy, yet official figures do not support such a view. Arms exports account for 1.5% of total exports, 0.2% of the total workforce in Britain and only 2% of manufacturing employment.

Don't other industries receive support as well?

Nowhere near as much. DSO sits alongside the Sectors Group (SG), the other body that provides industry-specific export support to British industries. While DSO supports only one industry, the SG supports 34, but has less staff. The head of DSO sits on the board of its parent department alongside the SG head, but is paid more! When we say we want to end government support of the arms trade, we'd really be happy to see the support become proportional to its importance to the economy compared to other industries.

I work for an arms company, won't my job be at risk?

We don't want to victimise anyone who works for a company which is involved in the arms industry but instead we want to empower workers to challenge the ethical policy of their company. Ultimately we are calling for a new department to facilitate transfer of skills, technologies, and jobs from arms to civil sectors. This could be an amazing opportunity to create lots more jobs, as well as kick start a Green Industrial Revolution!

What about our security?

The simple truth is that arms deals can only lead to further instability and security threats. Furthermore, often the nations we consider today's allies could be tomorrow's enemies. The West sold weapons to the Taliban and Saddam Hussein in the 1980s.

What buying weapons for the armed forces?

We must separate the two issues here: getting a good deal when buying arms, and protecting an over-subsidised industry. By favouring British arms companies at any cost, the Ministry of Defence that buys equipment for the armed forces is actually more likely to receive a bad deal due to a lack of healthy competition.

What can you do?

1. Send the Pray & Post Card to DSO to call for an end to government support of the arms trade! You could also contact us asking for more so you can get friends signing them, or do a notice in your church or other community group asking everyone to sign one.

2. Book to come to Soundcheck and the Day of Action – as well as helping us plan for Soundcheck, this will help you prepare spiritually for the Day of Action. You could even be a mobiliser – invite friends, family, and people from your church or other community group. Let us know if you're mobilising so we can support you.

3. Invite your MP to meet you at the Day of Action. The day will end with a chance for you to meet your MP and present your concerns to them. Find a template letter and instructions on how to get hold of your MP at www.speak.org.uk/dayofaction10/prep. There'll be opportunities after the day as well – you can arrange to meet your MP at their next local surgery or arrange/attend a hustings during the General Election.

4. Donate to the campaign so we can put on the Day of Action and provide resources to equip the Network www.speak.org.uk/support-speak

5. Pray for the campaign: pray for the Day of Action, for funds for the campaign and for those around the world who are suffering the consequences of the arms trade.