

UEM Council adopts statement on the situation in Papua

International church communion met in West Papua from 9 to 16 March and calls for an end to the violence and unhindered access for humanitarian aid

(Wuppertal/West Papua, 17 March 2026) – The Council of the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) met in West Papua, Indonesia, from 9 to 16 March 2026. The international governing body, comprising members from Africa, Asia and Germany, adopted [a statement](#) expressing its deep concern about the humanitarian situation in the region. The Council listened to the voices of its member church in Papua, the Gereja Kristen Injili di Tanah Papua (GKI-TP), as well as to indigenous communities who continue to suffer from violence, displacement and environmental destruction.

Complex crisis requires international attention

In the Council's assessment, the situation in Papua has developed into a multi-faceted humanitarian crisis. Under the guise of national security, indigenous Papuans are being deprived of fundamental rights and guarantees of protection. Violent conflicts and military operations have forced over 100,000 people to flee. At the same time, large-scale development projects such as the Merauke Food Estate are leading to ongoing ecocide: ancestral lands, food sources and the cultural identity of indigenous communities such as the Malind are being systematically destroyed. Added to this are serious shortcomings in basic state services: Papua has the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Indonesia, and an estimated 700,000 children are denied access to education. The Council emphasises that these developments do not represent separate problems, but rather facets of a single, profound crisis that requires a resolute response from the international community.

Solidarity and concrete demands

The Council acknowledges the strength and resilience of the people of Papua, assures the communities of its solidarity, and encourages the sisters and brothers on the ground to keep hope alive and to continue their commitment to peace and justice. Specifically, the Council calls for:

- an immediate end to all forms of violence against the people of Papua,
- safe and unhindered access for humanitarian aid organisations to the affected communities,
- the promotion of an open, inclusive and dignified dialogue with the equal participation of Papuan communities, and
- transparent monitoring and responsible evaluation of development initiatives, particularly those with significant environmental and social impacts.

Convinced that every human being is created in the image of God and guided by the biblical motto from Micah 6:8, UEM reaffirms that the Gospel of Jesus Christ calls the Church to stand with those who experience injustice.

Call to members

UEM calls on all members to continue to monitor the situation in Papua closely – through public advocacy, support for research, and the promotion of initiatives that strengthen education, self-determination and the resilience of communities. Members are also encouraged to accompany the people of Papua in prayer and active solidarity.

With this statement, the UEM Council reaffirms its commitment to justice, peace and the dignity of all people, and calls on the international community to promote constructive and peaceful solutions to the challenges in Papua.

About „UEM“

The United Evangelical Mission (UEM) with offices in Germany, Indonesia and Tanzania is an international, equal communion of 39 members, including 32 Protestant churches in Africa and Asia as well as six Protestant churches and the v. Bodelschwingh Foundations Bethel in Germany. The UEM consistently pursues a holistic understanding of mission. This includes improving the living conditions of suffering and disadvantaged people while respecting their personal dignity and taking their cultural context into account.

UEM is also a member of [the West Papua Network](#).