

# Build a sovereign economy for the Papuan people

Sunday 4 December 2011, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 26 November 2011).

## Joint Statement by Traditional Papuan Women's Traders

**November 26, 2011**

Long live the Papuan people... Long live Papuan women... Long live the urban poor

Papua is rich in natural resources, but it is not the indigenous people of Papua who own it. This can be seen from the character of economic development in Papua, particularly in and around the provincial capital of Jayapura, where the many shops, stalls and malls are not even owned by us, the people who own the land.

The reality at the moment is that the suffering experienced by traditional Papuan women traders — referred to as mama-mama — has been going on for some time. The mama-mama are steadily being pushed aside by residents who control large amounts of capital in Jayapura.

The government has closed its eyes to the problem and refuses to acknowledge use, the traditional communities. The government places more importance on those who have large amounts of capital, which enables them to poses economic rights in this land. To this day the fate of the promised permanent market remains unclear. Despite the official opening of the temporary market, which has barely been operating for one year, the mama-mama are still suffering losses on a daily basis because there are two markets in the city.

A meeting on February 1, 2011 between the mama-mama, the Papuan Regional House of Representatives (DPRP) Commission D and the municipal government, reached an agreement that the market at the Mesran bus terminal would only be allowed to sell manufactured goods such as VCDs and clothing. Agricultural products meanwhile would only be sold by the mama-mama who trade at the temporary market on Jl. Percetakan. The situation however is not as was imagined, with the market at the Mesran terminal still selling agricultural products. The mama-mama have suffered losses for a prolonged period as a result of declining interest of buyers at the temporary market.

The additional capital of 600 million rupiah, provided as a result of the mama-mama's struggle in the form of a loan from the mama-mama cooperative, has still not been repaid because the mama-mama have suffered losses over the last year. It is unclear meanwhile who is responsible for the temporary market. The provincial and municipal government both claim it is the others responsibility. Electricity, clean water, rubbish disposal and toilets are a mess and have not been organised.

In a situation where economic violence against Papuan women is steadily increasing, the mama-mama, which have united in a coalition to STOP violence and discrimination against women and children in Papua, state the following.

1. We demand the construction of a special and permanent market for traditional Papuan traders.
2. We demand and urge the government not to evict the mama-mama areca sellers on Jl. Irian until a

permanent market is built.

3. We demand the closure of and relocation of traders at the Mesran market.
4. We urge the government to abolish the cheap markets in Jayapura city.
5. We urge the government to take firm measures against traders who sell vegetables and fresh fish that use motorised vehicles.
6. We urge the government to prohibit those who own malls from selling agricultural products from this land.
7. We urge the government to prohibit non-Papuans from selling fresh areca and sago in Papua.
8. We urge the government to stop building malls and shops in Jayapura city.
9. We urge the government to immediately build a special market for traditional Papuan traders in every regency in Papua.

This statement was made for the indigenous Papuan people who should have economic sovereignty over this land instead of those who own capital.

Port Numbay, November 25, 2011

Mama-Mama traditional Papuan women's groups supporting this statement:

- Vegetable Traders Group, Yuliana Pigai
- Fruit Traders Group, Maria Tabuni
- The Spices Traders Group, Esterfinah Antoh
- The Fresh Sago Traders Group, Selfiana Wondiwoi
- The Areca Traders Group, Kathrina Tekege
- The Asar Fish Trader Group, Yusthea Waromi
- The Fresh Fish Traders Group, Yokbet Yowei
- The Toasted Bread Traders Group, Anne Imbiri
- The Coconut Meat Traders Group, Pipersina Makamur
- The Cut Chicken Traders Group, Yohana Yumame
- The Processed Food Traders Group, Miryam Awarawi
- the Areca Traders Group Jl. Irian, Martina Sawen

---

**P.S.**

\* Translated by James Balowski.