

Freedom flotilla: Lake Eyre to West Papua press release 09.04.2013, Australia, Indymedia Australia, 08 de abril de 2013.

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Uncle Kevin (Kev) Buzzacott, a Peacemaker from Arabunna Nation at Lake Eyre in South Australia and Jacob Rumbiak (exiled Foreign Affairs Minister from the Federated Republic of Occupied West Papua) have announced a new action of creative resistance against the apartheid of colonisation and destruction caused by multinational mining companies on Indigenous land in Australia and West Papua.

The Lake Eyre to West Papua Freedom Flotilla is a journey that hopes to reunite the history and peoples of a land that was once geographically and culturally connected.

“We were one people, we still are one people, we must uphold our cultural connection, the old land is calling us,” proclaimed Uncle Kev, Arabunna Elder.

“We have a responsibility to care for our brothers and sisters from across the water. We must bring the water and the fire, the love and the music to heal the country and move in solidarity.”

This action has been called and endorsed by Indigenous Elders from both Australia and West Papua and is being actively supported by a coalition of environmental and human rights activists, artists and musicians from all over Australia.

Jacob Rumbiak, exiled West Papuan Elder confirmed, “We are one with this continent...Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait, Tasmania; we are one people.”

Uncle Kev and Jacob Rumbiak have called on their friends and families of all nations to join them at the shores of Lake Eyre from July 20th-25th for a ceremony and music/arts 'Protestival' to celebrate the survival of the old land and to stand strong.

The convoy intends to transport sacred water collected from the mound springs of Arabunna country while following the ancient song lines across Australia in a freedom ride from Lake Eyre to Cairns; reconnecting culturally and creatively with Aboriginal communities at Alice Springs, Tenant Creek and others on the way.

The West Papua Freedom Flotilla hopes to launch from Cairns around the 10th -15th of August with a big music and arts event in consultation with local Indigenous, Torres Strait and West Papuan communities.

From Cairns, Uncle Kev and his crew will transport the precious cargo of sacred water up through the Torres Strait to West Papua where they will attempt to engage in ceremony and cultural exchange with local Elders..

"This offering of peace will be carried by Uncle Kev on the flotilla to West Papua in solidarity for the freedom of the West Papuan people," said flotilla crew member, musician and film maker, Isabella Brown.

"We sail as an expression of peaceful, non-violent, direct action, to highlight environmental and human rights abuses being committed by Indonesia's illegal occupation of West Papua. We recognise the rights of indigenous people and their connection to land and water and acknowledge Aboriginal Sovereignty and West Papua Independence.

Human rights and environmental justice is a struggle that belongs to all humanity, with that knowledge we must proceed with strength, dedication and fine music."

Uncle Kev, Jacob Rumbiak and the Freedom Flotilla crew are asking for active support from environmental and human rights activists, artists, musicians and grassroots communities all over Australia.

An online fundraising event has also been set up online at Freedom Flotilla to West Papua on pozible.com and the details for local music & arts fundraisers in Melbourne, Sydney, Byron Bay and Brisbane can be found on the Freedom Flotilla West Papua website.

Thousands of West Papuans have been displaced, kidnapped, tortured and killed by Indonesian troops since 1963, when Indonesia took control of the country.

Al Jazeera reported in 2012 that as many as 500,000 West Papuans have been killed in the conflict so far.

Yet the plight of the West Papuans remains hidden from Australian's view by a massive military presence, a near-total ban on foreign journalists and NGOs, the interests of mining corporations and political indifference.

The time has come to take international action. Help Uncle Kev & Jacob Rumbiak raise awareness about the human rights abuses and the environmental destruction in West Papua. Support the Freedom Flotilla to help break the silence and take a stand for indigenous rights.

Media Contact:

Izzy Brown: 0410 535 896

Nicky Stott: 0424 307 921

web: freedomflotillawestpapua.org

facebook: Lake Eyre to West Papua FREEDOM FLOTILLA: Land and Sea Convoy for Peace and Justice

twitter: @flotilla2WP