



**49th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 6 of the Agenda:
Adoption of the UPR Outcome of Papua New Guinea
March 23, 2022**

Joint Oral Statement

Submitted by

CCIG – Centre Catholique International de Genève

Co-signed by

Confédération internationale Société de Saint Vincent de Paul

Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers)

Edmund Rice International

Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Internazionale

International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education, Development

Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice

Mouvement International d’Apostolat des Milieux Sociaux Indépendants

With the support of

Callan Services for Persons with Disabilities National Unit PNG

Catholic Bishop Conference in PNG

Marist Brothers Province of Australia

International Catholic Mission Society *missio* Aachen

Ozeanien-Dialog

49th Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 6: UPR Outcomes – Papua New Guinea
23 March 2022
Speaker: Maria D’Onofrio

This NGO coalition welcomes the participation of Papua New Guinea in the Universal Periodic Review and its commitment for the rights of children, women and people with disabilities as well as environmental protection.

Despite much discussion over recent years to address the poor representation of **women in public institutions**, no women were elected to Parliament in the 2017 elections. The upcoming 2022 elections constitute a key time to increase women’s representation.

Equally worrying is the issue of **gender-based violence**, with 900 cases reported in 2019-2020, among which 81 cases involved girls. Belief in sorcery is also widespread across PNG, causing acts of torture often leading to death, especially for women and girls.

Regarding **children's rights**, accessibility to primary and secondary education is a major issue, due to the remote locations of many schools and to their lack of resources and trained teachers. Children with disabilities are particularly affected: only five out of 19 Inclusive Education Resources Centers (IERCs) offer inclusive learning.

Moreover, PNG is yet to establish a national disability data management system. **Persons with disabilities** are also greatly exposed to violence and excluded from participation in public affairs.

Finally, environmental and social impacts are often ignored in the context of **mining in PNG**. The Government and companies involved fail to carry out adequate consultations with affected populations. Among others, the Frieda River copper and gold mine is threatening 400 000 Sepik Indigenous Peoples, their identity, home and environment as pointed out by 10 UN Special Rapporteurs. PNG is also the world’s largest tropic timber exporter. However, 70% of its logging activity is illegal, unsustainable and greatly affects local indigenous communities.

Therefore, we recommend to proceed with immediate and effective implementation of relevant UPR recommendations in PNG.¹

Thank you.

¹ Several relevant recommendations were addressed to PNG during its last UPR in November 2021. In particular we highlight the following: recommendations n. 144.133 (Australia), 144.139 (Canada), 144.148 (Ireland), 144.124 (Mexico) on women’s rights; recommendations n. 144.111 (Canada), 144.115 (China), 144.118 (India), 144.114 (Malaysia), 144.116 (Maldives), 144.117 (Spain), 144.119 (Thailand) on children’s rights; recommendations n. 144.159 (Bahamas), 144.155 (Japan) on the rights of people with disabilities; and recommendations n. 144.64 (France), 144.61 (Algeria), 144.66 (Japan) on environmental protection. See Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review – Papua New Guinea, 30 December 2021, UN Doc A/HRC/49/11.