

JACOB RUMBIAK, Debate-speech, Yarra Room, Melbourne Town Hall, 30 October 2022
(video-recording 1:11:11—1:17:06)

Sarah Muyunga: Finally I ask Dr Jacob Rumbiak, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government of West Papua, to come forward for a few minutes.

Jacob Rumbiak

Good afternoon everybody. Thank you Sarah.

On behalf of the people of West Papua, and also the West Papua Provisional Government, I would like to thank the Melbourne City Council, and especially Rikki Bonnicci who made it possible for our wonderful Womens Office to organise this very important event today in this beautiful building.

On behalf of the people of West Papua, I congratulate all the wonderful debaters for presenting your cases so strongly. And Dr Jonathan Benney for your continued support of debate and of all things about West Papua. And also beautiful Sarah, daughter of the daughter of the great Mr Clovis Mwamba from the Democratic Republic of Congo. And also Ms Bernie Goulding for stepping up at such short notice to open this beautiful event.

I also want to acknowledge the Gillies-Lekakis family. Papuans love families doing things together, so you can imagine how we feel when we hear Julian and his mum playing our West Papuan national anthem. Lots of Papuans inside and outside West Papua today have joined us to follow this event.

Of course our five-star-energy office in Docklands wouldn't exist without the West Papua Rent Collective, who believe in our future, and are here today with us. My full thank you for managing to keep paying our rent during Covid lockdown, when so many other businesses failed.

I would also like to thank politicians, civil activists, women, youth, students and our international supporters from around the world. I would also like to thank our brothers and sisters from the Pacific Island countries, the African Caribbean Group, and also we have lots of support from 27 European countries based in the European Parliament in Brussels. And of course we have some in the Middle East and South Latino America.

I would also like to thank the people of West Papua inside today who have joined us today on zoom. And before I finish I would also like to thank the President of the West Papua Provisional Government, Mr Benny Wenda, who is based in the United Kingdom. And Prime Minister Edison Waromi, and the Chairman of the Parliament, Mr Buchtar Tabuni, who are based in West Papua and who are on zoom today.

I believe that all of us in here come from different nations and different backgrounds. We are here because we have one mission, as a world family to look after the world and make it a better place. For a peace and justice place, we must start with ourselves, in this small area here, and then the Pacific.

I would like to borrow the language used by the late Professor Jacob Elfinus Sahetapy (1932-2021). He was from Moluccas and was a senior lawyer in Indonesia. He said "Even if the lies run as fast as lightening, one time they will be defeated by the truth". I hope that what we talk today we will prove tomorrow.