

**10th Session of the Human Rights Council  
2-27 March 2009  
Item 4**

**Joint Oral Statement on behalf of Franciscans International and Pax Romana on the Human Rights situation in Madagascar, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.**

Mr. President,

Franciscans International and Pax Romana are extremely concerned about the human rights situation and the instability in Madagascar. The political tension and a series of violent incidents have led to the death of more than 130 people.

The last months have seen:

- The closure of and attacks on radio and TV stations;
- The looting and burning of shopping centers;
- Episodes of violent repression, including the shooting of 28 demonstrators by security forces;
- Other violent incidents.

We call all actors to respect democratic principles and international human rights obligations.

FI and Pax Romana would also like to mention the lease of 1.3 million hectares of arable land to a foreign company. The government of Madagascar has leased almost half of the arable land in the country to Daewoo Logistics. Even if this operation could generate resources for the development of the country, it brings several questions regarding its food security. The country is in need of an effective agricultural policy that guarantees the full enjoyment of the right to food of its population.

**Sri Lanka**

The situation in **Sri Lanka** continues to deteriorate and the number of victims increases. According to local sources, the condition of civilians in Vanni is desperate; and the situation inside government controlled camps is also worrying, particularly in Vavuniya. Local groups have reported that a number of civilians have disappeared after entering the camps.

FI and Pax Romana call on all parties to treat civilians humanely, and to adhere to international humanitarian and human rights standards.

We also call upon the Human Rights Council to hold a Special Session on Sri Lanka.

### **Indonesia**

The two provinces of **West Papua and Papua**, remain areas in need of the Human Rights Council's attention. Intimidation of human rights defenders continues. Curtails on freedom of expression are on the rise, with a number of students arbitrarily detained and charged with 'treason'. Cases of torture, ill-treatment at the hands of security services, continue to be reported.

Furthermore, the health conditions of indigenous Papuans continue to be a cause for concern. The government of Indonesia must ensure that funds destined for health and HIV and AIDS programs are indeed used for these purposes, with a clear obligation of accountability and transparency on the use of funds.

Thank you Mr. President