

# Human Rights Violations: The Entry Point for International Troops into Papua

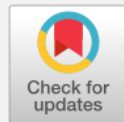
Aris Sarjito \*, 

Department of Defense Management, Faculty of Defense Management, Indonesia Defense University, Bogor, 16810, West Java Province, Indonesia

\* Corresponding Author: [arissarjito@gmail.com](mailto:arissarjito@gmail.com)

## ARTICLE INFO

**Publication Info:**  
Research Article



### How to cite:

Sarjito, A. (2024). Human Rights Violations: The Entry Point for International Troops into Papua. *Society*, 12(1), 111-128.

DOI: [10.33019/society.v12i1.665](https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v12i1.665)

Copyright © 2024. Owned by author (s), published by Society.

OPEN  ACCESS



This is an open-access article.

License: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA)

Received: April 16, 2024;

Accepted: October 30, 2024;

Published: November 4, 2024;

## ABSTRACT

This research explores human rights violations in Papua, focusing on the feasibility of international troop deployment as an intervention strategy against a backdrop of severe abuses such as extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests documented by organizations such as Amnesty International. The study aims to assess the potential role of international troops in safeguarding human rights and maintaining peace, using a qualitative methodology to analyze secondary data from human rights organizations and governmental sources to identify trends and challenges. The main contributions include highlighting gaps in existing interventions, proposing a conceptual framework for international troop deployment that considers legal, political, and ethical dimensions, and contextualizing issues of state sovereignty and regional diplomacy within the ASEAN framework. Specific findings indicate that while international troop deployment could enhance civilian protection and accountability, it faces significant barriers, including legal constraints related to international law, political resistance from local authorities and neighboring states, and ethical concerns such as the risk of escalating violence and undermining local governance. The study concludes by suggesting a balanced approach emphasizing dialogue, sustainable development, and cooperation within ASEAN to address human rights issues in Papua effectively.

**Keywords:** Human Rights Violations; Indigenous Rights; International Intervention; Papua Conflict; State Sovereignty

### 1. Introduction

The discourse on human rights violations in Papua has increasingly highlighted the potential role of international troops as a mechanism for intervention. This study examines the current research on these violations, assessing the feasibility and implications of deploying international troops to address severe abuses documented by reputable organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. These organizations report extensive human rights abuses against indigenous Papuans, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, and severe restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly (Amnesty International, 2022). These grave violations underscore the pressing need for effective interventions to safeguard the rights and dignity of Papuans.

**Table 1. Compilation of Reports on Human Rights Violations in Papua**

Report Title	Organization/Source	Date
"Indonesia: Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review: 40th session of the UPR Working Group"	Amnesty International	2022
"Indonesia: Events of 2021"	Human Rights Watch	2022
"Indonesia: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices"	U.S. Department of State	Various
"Breaking the Silence: Weapons Use and Torture in Papua"	TAPOL	2019
"Indonesia: Country Profile"	Amnesty International	Various
"Papua: Indonesian Security Forces Kill, Torture"	Human Rights Watch	2021
"Human Rights and Indigenous Issues in West Papua"	West Papua Project, TAPOL	2020
"Clearing a Path: Human Rights Abuses and Indonesia's Oil Palm Industry in Papua"	Environmental Investigation Agency	2019

Source: Compiled by Author, 2024

Table 1 presents various reports documenting human rights violations in Papua, with sources providing detailed accounts of abuses such as extrajudicial killings and restrictions on freedom of expression. By including publication dates, readers gain insight into trends and patterns in human rights abuses over time, allowing policymakers and advocates to draw on credible sources of information for informed interventions.

The deteriorating human rights situation in Papua has spurred discussions on the potential deployment of international troops. Advocates for intervention argue that international forces could deter further violations and enhance security for vulnerable populations in the region (Tandamat, 2022). However, the feasibility of international intervention remains complex and challenged by legal, political, and ethical considerations. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle, endorsed by the United Nations, asserts the obligation of states to protect populations from atrocities like genocide and war crimes. Although R2P provides a moral foundation for intervention in cases of severe violations, applying it to Papua is fraught with challenges (Bellamy, 2014; Lawson, 2016).

Legally, Indonesia's sovereignty presents a significant obstacle to external intervention, as the government staunchly opposes infringements on territorial integrity. Political dynamics

within the region, including diplomatic relations and regional alliances, further complicate efforts to mobilize support for international troop deployment (Sutter et al., 2013). Indonesia's sovereignty is central, with strong opposition to foreign military presence viewed as an infringement on territorial integrity (Butcher et al., 2017). Many states share this stance, perceiving such interventions as threats to national authority. These diplomatic concerns make it difficult to justify troop deployment under international norms like R2P (Mardiyanto & Hidayatulloh, 2023). Additionally, regional alliances and ASEAN dynamics often discourage external intervention in member states' internal affairs (Kristensen, 2019), thereby affecting the feasibility of effective intervention in Papua.

Ethically, international intervention raises dilemmas regarding the balance between the duty to protect civilians and respect for state sovereignty. Critics argue that external intervention may intensify tensions and undermine long-term stability (Blades, 2020). Ethical considerations further complicate the debate. Although the moral imperative to protect civilians from severe violations is clear, military intervention risks unintended consequences (Paris, 2014). Critics warn that international troop deployments could escalate violence, increase local tensions, and hinder peace efforts (Bramsen et al., 2019). This ethical dilemma underscores the need for a nuanced approach, emphasizing dialogue with the Indonesian government, strengthening civil society, and ensuring alignment between ethical principles and the complex political landscape.

The challenges surrounding intervention in Papua, including Indonesia's resistance to external interference, are exacerbated by diplomatic relations and ASEAN dynamics, shaping the feasibility of intervention by international forces (Capie, 2016). Advocates argue that international deployment could address human rights abuses, but the approach must carefully balance sovereignty and human rights protection. Future efforts should focus on constructive engagement with the Indonesian government, supporting civil society initiatives, and sustained international advocacy (Homerang-Saunders et al., 2024).

Persistent human rights abuses in Papua have raised significant concerns within the international community, prompting debates about effective entry points for intervention. Despite documented cases of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and restrictions on freedom of expression, comprehensive strategies to address these violations remain limited. This study, therefore, explores the feasibility and implications of deploying international troops to address human rights abuses in Papua, evaluating this intervention approach while respecting state sovereignty and ensuring human rights protections. The primary purpose of this study is to assess the potential of international troop deployment as a viable intervention mechanism, addressing gaps in current interventions and exploring practical solutions that respect state sovereignty while protecting human rights. This research distinguishes itself from previous studies focused solely on documenting human rights abuses by offering a comprehensive analysis that combines legal, political, and ethical perspectives. Proposing a framework for intervention, this study aligns with broader debates on international responses to human rights crises and sets a precedent for addressing similar issues globally.

To guide the study, three research questions are explored: What is the magnitude and nature of human rights violations in Papua, and how do these impact the indigenous population? This question addresses specific forms of abuse, such as extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests, underscoring the urgent need for intervention to protect the rights of Papuans. What are the potential benefits and challenges of deploying international troops in Papua to address human rights violations? This question examines the feasibility and potential effectiveness of deploying international troops, weighing benefits and challenges. Finally, what

are the legal, political, and ethical implications of international intervention in Papua to address human rights violations? This question evaluates issues related to state sovereignty, international law, diplomatic relations, and ethical responsibilities, contributing to policy discussions on international interventions. Through these research questions, this study aims to bridge the gap between advocacy and practical intervention strategies by considering the complexities of international law, state sovereignty, and ethical concerns. By providing insights for policymakers, human rights advocates, and future efforts to address similar global crises, this study offers a foundational reference for navigating international involvement in human rights protection.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Magnitude and Nature of Human Rights Violations**

The first research question delves into understanding the scope and severity of human rights abuses in Papua and their impact on the indigenous Papuan population. Drawing upon the R2P principle, which asserts that states have a responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, this question highlights the urgent need for intervention to safeguard the rights and dignity of Papuans (United Nations General Assembly, 2005). By applying R2P, the research can analyze the gravity of human rights violations in Papua and emphasize the moral imperative for international action to prevent further atrocities.

### **2.2. Benefits and Challenges of International Troop Deployment**

The second research question focuses on assessing the feasibility and effectiveness of deploying international troops to address human rights abuses in Papua. The study can weigh the potential benefits and drawbacks of humanitarian intervention, such as better civilian protection and increased accountability for criminals, against the challenges, such as legal issues and political opposition (Paskins & Walzer, 1981). Additionally, the research can draw upon the Just War Theory to analyze the ethical considerations of intervention, including the principles of proportionality and last resort (Orend, 2006).

### **2.3. Legal, Political, and Ethical Implications of Intervention**

The third research question explores the broader implications of international intervention in Papua from legal, political, and ethical perspectives. Legal theories such as international humanitarian law and state sovereignty provide a framework for analyzing the legal dimensions of intervention, including the legality of using force in self-defense or with Security Council authorization (Henckaerts & Alvermann, 2005). Ethical theories, like cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, help us talk about our moral duties to people far away and the rights of sovereign states (Beitz, 1999; Schumann, 2016). Political theories, like realism and liberalism, help us understand how power works and how diplomatic concerns affect how people feel about getting involved.

## **3. Research Methodology**

The second research question focuses on assessing the feasibility and effectiveness of deploying international troops to address human rights abuses in Papua. The study can weigh the potential benefits and drawbacks of humanitarian intervention, such as better civilian protection and increased accountability for criminals, against the challenges, such as legal issues and political opposition (Paskins & Walzer, 1981). Additionally, the research can draw upon the



Just War Theory to analyze the ethical considerations of intervention, including the principles of proportionality and last resort (Orend, 2006).

### 3.1. Data Selection

The selection of secondary data sources was guided by their relevance, credibility, and ability to provide comprehensive information on human rights violations in Papua. The process began with a systematic review of reports from reputable organizations, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S. Department of State, alongside government documents and academic publications. As Creswell suggests, selecting a wide range of sources enhances the robustness of qualitative research by incorporating diverse perspectives and insights (Creswell, 2018).

The inclusion criteria for the data were based on several factors:

- **Credibility and Authority**  
Reports from established human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, were prioritized, as they are recognized for their rigorous investigative methodologies.
- **Relevance to Human Rights Violations in Papua**  
Only documents that specifically address human rights issues in Papua, such as extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, and restrictions on civil liberties, were included.
- **Timeframe**  
The data were selected from reports published over the last decade (2010–2023) to ensure a contemporary analysis, capturing historical trends and recent human rights issues.
- **Diverse Perspectives**  
Data sources included international and local reports to offer a comprehensive view of the situation, aligning with Creswell’s principle of achieving data triangulation through varied perspectives (Creswell, 2014).

### 3.2. Data Analysis

The analysis followed Creswell’s qualitative content analysis methodology, beginning with organizing and familiarizing selected secondary data (Creswell, 2018). The initial step involved open coding, where text segments related to human rights abuses, international intervention strategies, and the potential role of international troops were labeled with descriptive codes. These codes represented various aspects of the phenomena, such as “extrajudicial killings,” “state sovereignty,” “ASEAN diplomacy,” and “ethical dilemmas.”

Next, axial coding was conducted to refine and connect these initial codes into broader themes. This stage involved grouping related codes under core categories such as “political feasibility,” “legal barriers,” “ethical considerations,” and “strategic frameworks for intervention.” The axial coding helped establish relationships between themes, offering a deeper understanding of how various factors influence the feasibility of international troop deployment in Papua (Creswell, 2014).

To ensure rigor and validity, the study applied Creswell’s strategies for qualitative validation (Creswell, 2018), including:

- **Triangulation**  
By comparing multiple data sources, including reports from human rights organizations, government statements, and legal documents, the study cross-verified findings to reduce bias and enhance reliability.

- **Thick Description**  
Detailed descriptions of human rights violations, international responses, and political dynamics were provided to convey a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the situation in Papua.
- **Reflexivity**  
Reflexive notes were maintained throughout the analysis to document the researcher’s interpretations, biases, and assumptions, ensuring transparency in the research process (Creswell, 2014).

### 3.3. Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitive nature of human rights research, ethical considerations were central to the methodology. As Creswell emphasizes, handling sensitive data requires a commitment to transparency and accuracy (Creswell, 2018). The research maintained ethical integrity by faithfully representing secondary sources, ensuring that interpretations were contextually accurate and aligned with the original reports. Additionally, ethical approval for the use of secondary data was secured by adhering to guidelines for research on sensitive topics, ensuring that data handling did not compromise the privacy or security of individuals mentioned in the reports.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results

The findings of this study exhibit the opportunities and constraints to promote policies, Interventions, or advocacy related to human rights in Papua. The implications are diverse, from state-driven development projects to the possible introduction of international forces. The specific impacts of these interventions are tabulated, and their influence on the legal, political, ethical, socio-economic, or cultural dimensions is discussed in different tables.

**Table 2. Specific Impacts of Policies and Interventions in Papua**

Aspect	Policy/Intervention	Specific Impacts	Potential Benefits	Challenges and Risks
Legal	International Troop Deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May breach Indonesia’s sovereignty, leading to diplomatic protests and potential legal disputes (Henckaerts &amp; Alvermann, 2005).</li> <li>▪ Requires UN authorization or Indonesia’s consent for legitimacy (Wangge &amp; Lawson, 2023).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhances compliance with international humanitarian law by ensuring civilian protection.</li> <li>▪ Sets legal precedents for handling internal conflicts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Risk of undermining international law if deployed without clear authorization.</li> <li>▪ Potential to delegitimize international norms and intervention principles.</li> </ul>
Political	Diplomatic Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strains Indonesia’s relations with ASEAN and other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotes regional cooperation and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It may create diplomatic standoffs and</li> </ul>

Aspect	Policy/Intervention	Specific Impacts	Potential Benefits	Challenges and Risks
		<p>states, impacting regional stability (Cook &amp; Nair, 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Could shift regional power dynamics (Roberts &amp; Widyaningsih, 2015).</li> </ul>	<p>dialogue for peaceful conflict resolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthens ASEAN's role in human rights protection.</li> </ul>	<p>alter strategic alignments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Political resistance could weaken ASEAN's non-interventionist stance.</li> </ul>
Ethical	Humanitarian Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Balances cosmopolitan imperatives to protect civilians with communitarian principles of respecting sovereignty (Beitz, 1999; Schmidt, 2022).</li> <li>▪ A potential escalation of violence if not carefully executed (Orend, 2006).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prevents severe human rights violations and civilian harm.</li> <li>▪ Promotes universal human rights protection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May provoke anti-foreign sentiment, worsening the conflict.</li> <li>▪ It could empower extremist factions opposing external intervention.</li> </ul>
Socio-Economic	Sustainable Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The mixed effects of infrastructure projects improve living standards but may lack local consultation (Huwae, 2019).</li> <li>▪ Fails to address deeper economic disparities and land rights issues (Connolly &amp; Mincieli, 2019).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creates employment opportunities and improves access to services.</li> <li>▪ Enhances local economic development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Risks further marginalization if indigenous communities are not actively involved.</li> <li>▪ May perpetuate resource exploitation and land disputes.</li> </ul>
Cultural	Cultural Empowerment Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotes Indigenous participation in governance and decision-making (Tiu, 2016).</li> <li>▪ Addresses cultural suppression and supports traditional practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthens local identities and reduces resentment.</li> <li>▪ Facilitates reconciliation through culturally sensitive approaches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May not resolve historical grievances that drive the conflict.</li> <li>▪ Requires long-term commitment to sustain impact and trust.</li> </ul>

Source: compiled by author, 2024

**Table 2** shows the various effects of different policies and interventions in Papua, along with their advantages and characteristics (challenges). It emphasizes the need to include legal, political, ethical, and socio-economic/cultural considerations when appraising whether an intervention will work realistically or practically.

This suggests that, in principle, international intervention can improve the protection of human rights but requires careful management to avoid exacerbating tensions and destabilizing a region. It is only in sustainable development, cultural empowerment, and diplomatic engagement that there seems to be any hope for true peace. But, it must do so through mechanisms that address the historical grievances and fully engage indigenous communities. In conclusion, the findings emphasize the need for a holistic approach that integrates legal compliance, diplomatic efforts, ethical considerations, economic development, and cultural preservation. Such an integrated strategy can achieve sustainable peace and human rights protection in Papua.

## 4.2. Discussion

### 4.2.1. Understanding Human Rights Violations in Papua: Implications for the Indigenous Papuan Population

The human rights situation in Papua has reached critical levels, marked by a series of severe violations that disproportionately affect the indigenous Papuan population. Reports from organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch detail numerous cases of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, and severe restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly (Amnesty International, 2022; Human Rights Watch, 2024). These violations reflect systemic issues that require urgent attention and a more nuanced understanding of their scope and impact on the local communities.

However, while the scale of the crisis is alarming, a rapid, large-scale intervention may not be the most appropriate response. The international community should ensure ongoing monitoring, foster accountability for perpetrators, and support gradual, well-coordinated measures to protect human rights in Papua. Hastily implemented interventions could jeopardize regional stability and hinder ongoing dialogue between the Indonesian government and local stakeholders (Soetjipto, 2022).

Instead, a more sustainable approach focuses on diplomacy and local institution-building, emphasizing conflict prevention rather than intervention. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, obligates states to protect populations from atrocities such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity (Gagro, 2014). In Papua's context, R2P should be applied cautiously, prioritizing diplomatic efforts to strengthen local governance and prevent further escalation of violence (Guo & Han, 2021).

To address the root causes of conflict, efforts must target broader socio-economic disparities, political marginalization, and cultural suppression that continue to fuel regional tensions. An inclusive approach is needed, fostering dialogue between the Indonesian government, Papuan leaders, and civil society organizations. Promoting economic development, enhancing political representation, and supporting cultural identity are crucial steps toward a more peaceful and equitable future for Papua (Christawan et al., 2023).

For example, sustainable development projects focused on economic empowerment, infrastructure, and education can help reduce local grievances and promote reconciliation. However, these efforts may be insufficient without addressing issues like land rights and environmental degradation. Equal representation of Papuan leaders and civil society in



negotiations is vital to prevent the conflict from persisting or intensifying (Connolly & Mincieli, 2019; Nurfi, 2023). Addressing historical grievances and ensuring meaningful stakeholder participation is key to achieving lasting reconciliation.

Politically, the challenges of addressing human rights violations in Papua are rooted in internal power dynamics and international diplomatic constraints. The Indonesian government's strong emphasis on sovereignty often prioritizes territorial integrity over external intervention, complicating international efforts to protect human rights. This stance aligns with ASEAN's non-interference principle, which challenges regional collaboration on human rights issues (Acharya, 2021). Such political sensitivities can limit the effectiveness of international initiatives, delay conflict resolution, and undermine efforts to achieve accountability.

Ethically, the debate over intervention in Papua involves balancing the moral imperative to protect civilians and the need to respect state sovereignty. While humanitarian intervention theories advocate for protecting individuals from serious human rights abuses, they must also consider potential consequences such as increased violence or resistance from local populations. In Papua, external forces could be perceived as foreign interference, potentially exacerbating tensions rather than alleviating them (Beitz, 1999; Orend, 2006). A culturally sensitive approach that acknowledges historical grievances and respects local governance structures is essential to avoid deepening existing inequalities and mistrust.

Engaging all relevant stakeholders, including the Indonesian government, security forces, local community leaders, and civil society organizations, is crucial to develop a sustainable solution. A collaborative approach can foster transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights (Christawan et al., 2023). Addressing socio-economic disparities, such as limited access to resources, education, and employment, is also necessary to promote lasting peace and protect the rights of the indigenous Papuan population (Sarjito, 2023).

For instance, a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy could involve joint efforts between local leaders, government officials, and NGOs to establish reconciliation frameworks. These could include truth and reconciliation commissions, community development projects, and educational programs promoting intercultural understanding (Boege et al., 2017).

The Indonesian government has tried to address human rights concerns in Papua, albeit with mixed results. Legislative measures, such as establishing the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) in 1993, have aimed to investigate and prevent abuses across Indonesia, including in Papua. Komnas HAM has played a critical role in documenting violations, advocating for justice, and recommending policy reforms. Furthermore, Indonesia's ratification of international human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention against Torture (CAT), reflects its commitment to uphold international standards (Rathgeber, 2014; Setiawan, 2018).

However, despite these measures, significant challenges persist, including impunity for perpetrators, restrictions on civil liberties, and ongoing militarization of the region (Baird, 2024). While the government has initiated dialogue processes with Papuan leaders and civil society, progress has been slow due to mistrust, historical grievances, and security concerns (Widjojo et al., 2009). To strengthen accountability and ensure sustainable peace, the government must continue to enhance governance, promote dialogue, and address socio-economic inequalities (Ramcharan, 2018).

**Table 3. Indonesian Government's Efforts to Address Human Rights Violations in Papua**

Effort	Date
Establishment of the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM)	1993
Ratification of international human rights treaties (ICCPR, CAT)	Various
Implementation of development programs in Papua	Ongoing
Initiation of dialogue processes with Papuan leaders	Ongoing

Source: proceed by author, 2024

**Table 3** summarizes the Indonesian government's efforts to address human rights issues in Papua. Despite these initiatives, sustained challenges hinder progress, including impunity, limited freedoms, and socio-economic disparities.

In conclusion, addressing human rights violations in Papua requires a multifaceted and inclusive strategy that involves all relevant stakeholders. Efforts must focus on improving governance, promoting dialogue, and addressing underlying socio-economic disparities to create lasting peace and protect the rights of the indigenous Papuan population.

#### 4.2.2. Assessing the Potential Benefits and Challenges of International Troop Deployment in Papua

The potential deployment of international troops in Papua is a contentious strategy aimed at addressing ongoing human rights violations. This discussion evaluates the feasibility, potential benefits, and associated challenges of such an intervention through the lenses of humanitarian intervention theory and ethical considerations.

##### 1) Potential Benefits

International troops can provide crucial civilian protection in regions experiencing persistent violence. Their visible presence can act as a deterrent, reducing further abuses and fostering a sense of security among vulnerable populations. By serving as a neutral entity, these troops can facilitate conflict mediation and peace negotiations, creating an environment conducive to dialogue and reconciliation (Pamungkas, 2017).

For instance, historical precedents such as Timor-Leste and South Sudan demonstrate the positive impact of international troop deployments. In Timor-Leste, international troops were instrumental in quelling violence and enabling a peaceful transition to independence in 2002. Similarly, UN peacekeepers in South Sudan have contributed to civilian protection and the enforcement of peace agreements (Fujikawa, 2020). These examples suggest that a similar strategy in Papua could potentially lead to improved human rights protection, increased accountability, and greater political stability.

Deploying troops could also facilitate impartial investigations into human rights abuses, supporting judicial processes that hold perpetrators accountable. This intervention can break cycles of impunity and foster respect for human rights and the rule of law. For example, post-genocide Rwanda saw UN peacekeepers support community dialogues and national justice efforts, promoting reconciliation and stability (Jones & Murray, 2018).

##### 2) Key Challenges

However, the feasibility of deploying international troops in Papua is fraught with significant political and ethical challenges:

- **Legal and Sovereignty Barriers**

International intervention must adhere to international law, requiring explicit consent from the Indonesian government or UN Security Council authorization. The Indonesian government perceives such deployments as a direct challenge to its sovereignty, complicating diplomatic negotiations (United Nations, 1945). This perspective aligns with ASEAN’s non-interference principle, which discourages member states from supporting interventions in domestic affairs, further complicating regional collaboration efforts (Acharya, 2021).

- **Political Resistance**

The deployment of international troops in Papua could face resistance from the Indonesian government and local populations. The government’s strong stance on sovereignty views external troops as interference rather than support, potentially undermining diplomatic relations. Additionally, regional dynamics within ASEAN, including strategic alliances and geopolitical interests, may prevent collective action and weaken efforts to achieve international consensus (Caballero-Anthony, 2022).

- **Ethical Considerations**

Ethically, the deployment raises questions about balancing humanitarian duties with respect for state sovereignty. According to the Just War Theory, military interventions should be a proportionate last resort capable of minimizing harm (Orend, 2006). In Papua, foreign troops might be seen as occupiers rather than protectors, potentially escalating conflict rather than reducing it (Mousavian & Shahidsaless, 2014). Interventions can also exacerbate anti-foreign sentiments, empower extremist factions, and complicate peacebuilding efforts, as seen in Afghanistan, where the presence of US-led troops led to civilian casualties, increased resentment, and a resurgence of extremist groups (Rogers, 2013).

- **Local Resistance and Cultural Sensitivities**

The presence of international troops could be perceived as foreign interference by local populations, further fueling resentment and resistance. Troop deployment risks undermining trust and reinforcing existing grievances without broad local support. Effective intervention in Papua requires culturally sensitive approaches that respect local governance structures, acknowledge historical grievances, and involve local leaders and communities in decision-making processes (Boege, 2018).

### 3) Strategic Considerations

A comprehensive and coordinated approach is essential for any international troop deployment to be effective. This approach should involve diplomatic engagement, regional consensus-building, and strategic alignment with local needs and aspirations. Engaging ASEAN members in joint peacekeeping initiatives could create a more unified and regionally accepted front, enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of interventions (Borchers, 2014). However, creating a joint peacekeeping force is challenging due to differing agendas among ASEAN countries and Indonesia’s strong opposition to international involvement (Capie, 2016).

**Table 4. Benefits and Challenges of International Troop Deployment in Papua**

Aspect	Potential Benefits	Challenges
Enhanced Protection	The visible presence of troops can deter violence and protect	Viewed as foreign interference, potentially increasing tensions and

Aspect	Potential Benefits	Challenges
	civilians.	resistance.
Increased Accountability	Supports impartial investigations and judicial processes, fostering the rule of law.	Legal barriers, including sovereignty concerns, hinder authorization and deployment.
Conflict Mediation	Facilitates negotiations and peace agreements among conflicting factions.	Political resistance from Indonesia and ASEAN complicates diplomatic support and consensus-building.
Ethical Dilemmas	Seen as fulfilling the moral duty to protect civilians from severe abuses.	Raises ethical questions about respecting sovereignty and minimizing unintended consequences.

Source: proceed by author, 2024

While deploying international troops in Papua could enhance civilian protection and accountability, it is not a straightforward solution. The strategy’s success hinges on carefully navigating legal, political, and ethical barriers and strong diplomatic efforts to secure broad support and local cooperation. Building regional consensus through ASEAN and emphasizing diplomatic engagement rather than military solutions may offer a more sustainable path forward.

Ultimately, a holistic approach that prioritizes dialogue, respects local governance and addresses socio-economic disparities would be more effective in achieving lasting peace and human rights protection in Papua (Cook & Yogendran, 2020).

#### 4.2.3. Exploring the Legal, Political, and Ethical Implications of International Intervention in Papua

The prospect of international intervention in Papua to address human rights violations is complex and multifaceted. It raises significant legal, political, and ethical challenges that require careful examination. This discussion explores the broader implications of such intervention, focusing on how these dimensions impact policy discussions and decision-making regarding potential interventions in Papua.

##### 1) Legal Implications

Legal considerations are crucial in determining the feasibility and legitimacy of international intervention in Papua. International humanitarian law sets the conditions under which force can be used, primarily in self-defense or with explicit authorization from the UN Security Council (Henckaerts & Alvermann, 2005). However, the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs complicate external intervention efforts (United Nations, 1945).

A key legal challenge is determining whether the situation in Papua threatens international peace and security. According to the UN Charter, the Security Council can authorize interventions in cases where such threats are evident. In Papua, ongoing human rights abuses could be argued as a threat to both the local population and regional stability. For example, Indonesia’s military operations in Papua have drawn criticism for alleged human rights abuses, prompting calls for international intervention (Syailendra, 2016).

Navigating the legal dimensions of intervention requires ensuring compliance with international law while respecting Indonesia’s sovereignty. Failure to secure legal authorization



or the consent of the Indonesian government could undermine the legitimacy of any intervention and risk violating international norms (Wangge & Lawson, 2023).

### 2) Political Implications

Political dynamics play a significant role in shaping the feasibility and effectiveness of international intervention in Papua. Intervention is often driven by geopolitical interests rather than purely humanitarian concerns. Realist theories emphasize that powerful states prioritize national security and strategic interests, which can overshadow humanitarian motivations. In Papua, international support for intervention may be influenced more by strategic calculations than by genuine concern for human rights (Waltz, 2010).

Indonesia’s influence within ASEAN further complicates the political landscape. ASEAN’s non-interference policy aligns with Jakarta’s resistance to foreign intervention, making it difficult to achieve regional consensus on collective action in Papua (Acharya, 2021). This diplomatic barrier weakens international consensus and limits the scope and effectiveness of any potential intervention.

Potential diplomatic fallout with key partners could also hinder Indonesia’s broader regional ambitions, making intervention politically sensitive. The need to maintain strong bilateral and multilateral relations with Indonesia often discourages external actors from supporting interventions that could be perceived as infringing on Indonesia’s sovereignty (Keohane & Nye, 2015).

### 3) Ethical Implications

Ethical considerations are central to discussions on international intervention in Papua. Cosmopolitan theories emphasize that the international community has a moral obligation to protect individuals from severe human rights abuses, even if this involves intervening in sovereign states (Beitz, 1999). Conversely, communitarian theories prioritize respect for cultural and political autonomy, suggesting that external norms should not be imposed on states, especially in complex socio-political contexts like Papua (Schmidt, 2022).

This ethical dilemma is particularly pronounced in Papua, where balancing the humanitarian duty to protect civilians against the principles of state sovereignty is complex. Cosmopolitan ethics argue that intervention is justified when states fail to protect their citizens, as in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, or other crimes against humanity. However, communitarian perspectives caution that such interventions could lead to unintended consequences, such as increased violence, deepened mistrust, or weakened local governance (Beitz, 1999; Orend, 2006).

Additionally, ethical assessments must consider the risk of perpetuating neo-colonial narratives, disempowering indigenous leadership, and complicating post-conflict reconciliation efforts. The international community must ensure that any intervention is culturally sensitive and aligned with the values and needs of the affected population to avoid exacerbating existing inequalities (Schmidt, 2022).

**Table 5. Legal, Political, and Ethical Implications of International Intervention in Papua**

Aspect	Description
<b>Legal Implications</b>	
Sovereignty Concerns	Intervention may violate Indonesia's sovereignty over Papua, requiring careful legal authorization.



Aspect	Description
International Law	It requires compliance with international law, including Security Council authorization or Indonesia's consent.
<b>Political Implications</b>	
Diplomatic Relations	Intervention could strain relations between Indonesia and other nations, impacting broader diplomatic ties.
Regional Stability	Political tensions resulting from intervention may destabilize the Asia-Pacific region.
<b>Ethical Implications</b>	
Humanitarian Duty	Intervention may be viewed as a moral obligation to protect civilians from severe abuses.
Respect for Sovereignty	Balancing civilian protection with respect for sovereignty raises ethical dilemmas and risks unintended consequences.

Source: proceed by author, 2024

A comprehensive analysis of legal, political, and ethical implications must inform the decision to intervene in Papua. Legally, interventions must comply with international law while respecting Indonesia’s sovereignty. Politically, interventions must navigate complex power dynamics, strategic interests, and regional diplomacy. Ethically, interventions must balance humanitarian imperatives with respect for local governance and cultural autonomy.

Given these complexities, international intervention in Papua should prioritize diplomatic engagement, regional consensus-building, and local participation. A well-coordinated approach involving all relevant stakeholders, including the Indonesian government, local leaders, and civil society, can help ensure that interventions are effective and respectful of Papua’s unique context. Ultimately, any response must align with international norms while also addressing the socio-political realities of the region (Weiss, 2016).

## 5. Conclusion

The alleged human rights violations in Papua are severe, with reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and other abuses that require a deeper understanding. While urgent intervention is not yet necessary, the international community must continue to undertake gradual monitoring and accountability efforts. Addressing underlying issues such as economic disparity political marginalization, and addressing culture through inclusive dialogue are critical to achieving sustainable peace in Papua. The Indonesian government has made some efforts through legislative reforms and development programs, but challenges such as impunity and socio-economic inequality persist. Sustainable peace requires a holistic and collaborative approach involving all stakeholders.

Promote meaningful dialogue involving the Indonesian government, Papuan leaders, and civil society to ensure equal representation and effectively address grievances. Implement economic programs focusing on marginalized communities, land rights, and environmental protection to foster reconciliation and reduce tensions. Strengthen accountability by supporting judicial reforms, monitoring violations, and ensuring perpetrators face justice while respecting Indonesia's sovereignty. Maintain international monitoring and assistance emphasizing diplomatic efforts, avoiding abrupt interventions that could disrupt peace processes. Explore a coordinated ASEAN approach to promote human rights in Papua, balancing sovereignty concerns with regional commitments to peace and stability.

## 6. Acknowledgment

The author thanks those who are willing to cooperate profusely during this research.

## 7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author has declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

## References

- Acharya, A. (2021). *ASEAN and Regional Order*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003122333>
- Amnesty International. (2022). *Indonesia: Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review: 40th session of the UPR Working Group*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa21/5112/2022/en/>
- Baird, N. (2024). The Universal Periodic Review and West Papua: Beyond Invisibility? *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, 1(aop), 1–37. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718115-bja10158>
- Beitz, C. R. (1999). *Political theory and international relations*. Princeton University Press.
- Bellamy, A. J. (2014). *Responsibility to protect: a defense*. OUP Oxford.
- Blades, J. (2020). *West Papua: the issue that won't go away for Melanesia*. Lowy Institute.
- Boege, V. (2018). Bougainville. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 30(2), 482–492. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26776160>
- Boege, V., Rinck, P., & Debiel, T. (2017). Local-International Relations and the Recalibration of Peacebuilding Interventions. *Insights from the "Laboratory" of Bougainville and Beyond*. *Inef Report*, 112, 2017.
- Borchers, H. (2014). ASEAN's Environmental Challenges and Non-Traditional Security Cooperation: Towards a Regional Peacekeeping Force? *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 5–20. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14764/10.ASEAS-2014.1-2>
- Bramsen, I., Poder, P., & Wæver, O. (2019). Resolving International Conflict. In I. Bramsen, P. Poder, & O. Wæver (Eds.), *Resolving International Conflict: Dynamics of Escalation, Continuation and Transformation*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315102009>
- Butcher, J. G., Elson, R. E., & Bernard, L. (2017). Sovereignty and the Sea: How Indonesia Became an Archipelagic State. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 39(3), 594–596. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs39-3o>
- Caballero-Anthony, M. (2022). The ASEAN way and the changing security environment: navigating challenges to informality and centrality. *International Politics*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-022-00400-0>
- Capie, D. (2016). Indonesia as an Emerging Peacekeeping Power: Norm Revisionist or Pragmatic Provider? *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 38(1), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs38-1a>
- Christawan, E., Ariadi, S., Thalib, P., Astika, D., & Suyanto, B. (2023). Enhancement of Polri's Role in Dealing with Disinformation and Radicalism Extremism Terrorism and Separatism Propaganda in Cyberspace. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1991.06.02.423>
- Connolly, L., & Mincieli, L. (2019). *Sustaining Peace in Papua New Guinea: Prevention in Practice*

- (Issue September). International Peace Institute.
- Cook, A. D. B., & Nair, T. (2021). *Non-traditional Security In The Asia-pacific: A Decade Of Perspectives*. WORLD SCIENTIFIC. <https://doi.org/10.1142/11941>
- Cook, A. D. B., & Yogendran, S. (2020). Conceptualising humanitarian civil-military partnerships in the Asia-Pacific: (Re-)ordering cooperation. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 74(1), 35–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2019.1693498>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Fujikawa, K. (2020). *Serving Peace and Democracy? The Rationales and Impact of Post-conflict Self-determination Referendums in Eritrea , East Timor , and South Sudan* [London School of Economics and Political Science]. <http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/4244/>
- Gagro, S. F. (2014). The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) Doctrine. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(1), 61–77. [https://www.iises.net/download/Soubory/soubory-puvodni/pp061-077\\_ijoss\\_2014v3n1.pdf](https://www.iises.net/download/Soubory/soubory-puvodni/pp061-077_ijoss_2014v3n1.pdf)
- Guo, Y., & Han, Z. (2021). *Achieving Sustaining Peace Through Preventive Diplomacy* (Vol. 6). World Scientific.
- Henckaerts, J.-M., & Alvermann, C. (2005). *Customary international humanitarian law* (Vol. 1). Cambridge University Press.
- Homerang-Saunders, S., Sherwood, A., & Whyte, D. (2024). Independence, Anti-Capitalism and the Struggle for Our Future: Seeking an End to State-Corporate Violence in West Papua. *Queen Mary Law Research Paper No. 425/2024*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4784225>
- Human Rights Watch. (2024). *Indonesia: Racism, Discrimination Against Indigenous Papuans*. Human Rights Watch. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/18/indonesia-racism-discrimination-against-indigenous-papuans>
- Huwae, M. A. (2019). *Push and pull driven development in West Papua, Indonesia*. Macquarie University.
- Jones, W., & Murray, S. (2018). Consolidating peace and legitimacy in Rwanda. In *Government and Professor of Global Economic Governance* (p. 247). Oxford University.
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (2015). Power and Interdependence. In *Conflict After the Cold War* (Vol. 15, Issue 4, pp. 174–181). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315664484-23>
- Kristensen, R. A. (2019). Does ASEAN matter? A view from within. *International Affairs*, 95(3), 745–746. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiz075>
- Lawson, S. (2016). West Papua, Indonesia and the Melanesian Spearhead Group: competing logics in regional and international politics. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 70(5), 506–524. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2015.1119231>
- Mardiyanto, I., & Hidayatulloh, H. (2023). The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) Concept as an Attempt for Protection of Human Rights in International Humanitarian Law Context. *Volkgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi*, 6(1), 103–118. <https://doi.org/10.24090/volkgeist.v6i1.7229>
- Mousavian, S. H., & Shahidsaless, S. (2014). *Iran and the United States: an insider's view on the failed past and the road to peace*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Nurfi, H. S. (2023). *Deforestation as Violence Toward the Environment and Wider Community of Papua 2015-2019* [Universitas Islam Indonesia]. <https://dspace.uui.ac.id/handle/123456789/45617%0Ahttps://dspace.uui.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/45617/19323204.pdf?sequence=1>

- Orend, B. (2006). *War and International Justice: A Kantian Perspective*. Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press.
- Pamungkas, C. (2017). The Campaign of Papua Peace Network for Papua Peace Land. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 21(2), 147. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.30440>
- Paris, R. (2014). The 'Responsibility to Protect' and the Structural Problems of Preventive Humanitarian Intervention. *International Peacekeeping*, 21(5), 569–603. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2014.963322>
- Paskins, B., & Walzer, M. (1981). Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 31(124), 285. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2219125>
- Ramcharan, R. (2018). Human rights and conflict prevention in Southeast Asia. In *Routledge Handbook of Human Rights in Asia* (pp. 143–157). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315720180-11>
- Rathgeber, T. (2014). Documentation: International Legal Human Rights Framework. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 33(3), 131–165. <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810341403300306>
- Roberts, C. B., & Widyaningsih, E. (2015). Indonesian Leadership in ASEAN: Mediation, Agency and Extra-Regional Diplomacy. In *Indonesia's Ascent* (pp. 264–286). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137397416\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137397416_13)
- Rogers, P. (2013). Lost cause: consequences and implications of the war on terror. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 6(1), 13–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2013.765698>
- Sarjito, A. (2023). Towards the Achievement of Papua's Independence in the Framework of Statehood. *Society*, 11(2), 343–358. <https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v11i2.542>
- Schmidt, J. P. (2022). The State and the Good Society: Elements of the Liberal Communitarianism's Political Conception. In *Local Self-Governance in Antiquity and in the Global South* (Vol. 15, pp. 21–46). De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110798098-003>
- Schumann, C. (2016). Which Love of Country? Tensions, Questions and Contexts for Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism in Education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 50(2), 261–271. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12205>
- Setiawan, K. (2018). Between Law, Politics and Memory: The Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) and Justice for Past Human Rights Crimes. *Australian Journal of Asian Law*, 19, 117–130. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.20211005054497>
- Soetjipto, A. W. (2022). Journey to Justice: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the Context of West Papua. *JAS (Journal of ASEAN Studies)*, 10(1), 129–149. <https://doi.org/10.21512/jas.v10i1.8491>
- Sutter, R. G., Brown, M. E., Adamson, T. J. A., Mochizuki, M. M., & Ollapally, D. (2013). *Balancing Acts: The U.S. Rebalance and Asia-Pacific Stability* (Vol. 117, Issue 3). Sigur Center for Asian Studies Washington, DC. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0092867404003435>
- Syailendra, E. A. (2016). Inside Papua: The Police Force as Counterinsurgents in Post-Reformasi Indonesia. *Indonesia*, 2016(102), 57. <https://doi.org/10.5728/indonesia.102.0057>
- Tandamat, N. (2022). *Application of the United Nations Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: The Case of West Papua*. Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). <https://openaccess.uoc.edu/handle/10609/147643%0Ahttps://openaccess.uoc.edu/bitstream/10609/147643/4/ntandamat0FMDP022report.pdf>
- Tiu, S. A. (2016). *Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Sustainable Resource Management in Papua New Guinea: The Role of Education and Implications for Policy* (Vol. 1994) [University of



- Waikato]. <https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/10704>
- United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/index.html>
- United Nations General Assembly. (2005). "World Summit Outcome." A/RES/60/1. [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_60\\_1.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_60_1.pdf)
- Waltz, K. N. (2010). *Theory of International Politics*. Waveland Press.
- Wangge, H. R., & Lawson, S. (2023). The West Papua issue in Pacific regional politics: explaining Indonesia's foreign policy failure. *The Pacific Review*, 36(1), 61–89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2021.1931417>
- Widjojo, M. S., Amiruddin, A. E., Pamungkas, C., & Dewi, R. (2009). Papua Road Map Negotiating the Past, Improving the Present and Securing the Future. In *The Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI)*. Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.

---

### About the Author

**Aris Sarjito** obtained his Doctoral degree from Brawijaya University, Indonesia, in 2017. The author is an Associate Professor at the Department of Defense Management, Faculty of Defense Management, Indonesia Defense University, Indonesia.

E-Mail: [arissarjito@gmail.com](mailto:arissarjito@gmail.com)