
[The PSN Project of Development of Wanam Defense Industry, South Papua, Violates the Indigenous People's Rights](#)

On Sunday, July 5, 2026, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Army (Wakasad) Lt. Gen. Muhammad Saleh Mustafa and the ranks of high-ranking TNI officers, as well as PT Pindad, carried out the Stone Laying for construction of the headquarters of Development Territorial Infantry Battalion (Yonif TP) 861/Maleo Kamur and the Stone Laying for the construction of the Red and White Propellant Factory.

Based on news reports and [social media](#), the representative of [PT Pindad](#) said that the Phase 3 Red and White Propellant and Munitions Factory of PT Pindad, will be built with a capacity of 1,250 tons per year and 170 million pcs per year, located in Wanam (Ilwayab District) Km 58, Merauke Regency, South Papua Province, with an area of 226 ha. This seems to be related to the efforts to support Indonesia's self-reliance in terms of producing munitions for small-caliber needs in [the next two to three years](#).

The plan to allocate land in Wanam for the propellant industry had actually been stated by the Coordinating Minister for Food Affairs, Zulkifli Hasan, in September last year. To be precise, four days (29/9/2025) after the issuance of Regulation of the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Number 16 Year 2025 regarding Eighth Amendment to the PSN List. According to [Zulkifli](#), the forest area release of 481 thousand hectares in addition to food crops field allocation, is also intended for the construction of a propellant factory. Since then, there have been no public documents on detailed planning related to the construction of the factory. Based on field monitoring, the surrounding community is also unaware of this construction plan.

The government is developing the Wanam, Merauke, and surrounding areas, as a National Strategic Project (PSN) for the national food, energy and water self-sufficiency area (KSPEAN) of South Papua Province, namely the development of large-scale and modern rice field creation project, the development of sugarcane and oil palm plantation agro-industries, the biodiesel and bioethanol energy industry, up to the strengthening of the defense industry, the construction of propellant (explosives) factory. By 2025, the government has released 486,939 ha of forest areas to support the projects and KSPEAN in South Papua Province.

The national strategic project and KSPEAN areas in South Papua Province are entirely located in the area of the indigenous peoples of Papua and are customary lands belonging to the local indigenous peoples. The KSPEAN development project will have impacts and effects on the socio-economic, cultural, spiritual and environmental life, particularly the safety of indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups around the areas.

The practice and experience of the development of extractive industries and military infrastructure in the Land of Papua have always led to social, economic and political shocks, which disrupt the peace and harmony of the lives of indigenous peoples, as a result of arbitrary and cruel actions, violence, silencing, arbitrary arrest and detention, displacement of residents and even casualties, [with](#)

[increasing escalations and victims](#). The militarization is also accompanied with the practice of economic crimes and environmental destruction through security businesses and involvement in the extraction of natural resources, the act of allowing the entry of extractive industries and projects which damage the environment; this has resulted in displacement of the people from their land and traditional livelihoods, thus depriving the people of their rights to land and natural resources.

The policies and projects of development of the food and energy industry, as well as militarization, which led to injustice, pillaging of the nature, social rifts and destruction of the lives of indigenous peoples, must end immediately as they are contrary to the principles of sustainable development and democracy, violate the constitution and the laws and regulations, as well as international instruments on human rights and the environment.

The policies and projects for the development of KSPEAN and the defense industry, the construction of propellant factory and military bases in customary territories, are contrary to and in violation of the rights of indigenous peoples, as Article 18B paragraph (2) and Article 28I paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution clearly affirm the rights of indigenous peoples which are recognized and respected by the state; the right to freedom, the right to life, as set out in Article 2, article 4, article 9, of Law Number 39 Year 1999 regarding Human Rights; environmental destruction and natural resources extraction violate the people's right to the environment as guaranteed by Article 28H paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution and Law Number 32 Year 2009 regarding Environmental Protection and Management; disregard for the indigenous peoples' right to meaningful participation in determining the development is in violation of the principle of participation in Law Number 2 Year 2012 regarding Land Procurement for Public Interest.

Under international human rights instruments such as Article 30 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007) and ILO Convention No. 169 Year 1989 on the rights of indigenous peoples, the construction of military defense industries, including propellant factories, military bases and other military infrastructure, should not take place in customary territories, unless there are reasons related to public interest, and the state must consult with the indigenous peoples through the correct customary deliberation procedures, applying the FPIC (Free Prior Informed Consent) principle, before using customary land or territory for military activities.

In addition to the above, the plan to build a propellant factory in Merauke is also contrary to the principle of humanitarian distancing as known in the principles of International Humanitarian Law, especially related to the assessment of risks to the civilian population. From the perspective of humanitarian law, weapons or munitions production facilities can be categorized as military objectives which constitute legitimate military targets in situations of armed conflict. Therefore, its existence should be placed in a location that is safely distanced from residential areas so as not to increase the risk of civilian casualties or damage to civilian objects (collateral damage) if at any time it is targeted by an attack.

Outside the context of armed conflict, experience has also shown that risks to civilians can arise due to accidents, negligence, or failure of ammunition management procedures, as reflected in the explosion incident during the destruction of expired ammunition in Garut which resulted in civilian casualties. Therefore, the construction of such strategic facilities must be based on a comprehensive risk assessment, the selection of locations that meet safety standards and the principles of humanitarian distancing, and ensure maximum protection for civilians.

Therefore, we, a coalition of civil society organizations, human rights and environmental defenders, and leaders of the indigenous people affected by the PSN KSPEAN policy, who are joined in

Solidaritas Merauke, request the President to immediately review the project and development of KSPEAN, as well as to stop the construction of defense industrial area and propellant factory in South Papua Province.

Given the risk that the project will lead to serious human rights violations and environmental destruction, as well as intensified conflicts, we call on the state to implement the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs, 2011), namely to assess and oversee project development companies (state and private) to identify, prevent and mitigate the risks related to human rights violations which arise as soon and as early as possible. The state should no longer provide access to licensing support and public services for the business entities involved and whose businesses have the potential of causing serious human rights violations and who refuse to cooperate in dealing with the situation.

We call on the corporations involved as investors and developers of the defense industry business, PT PINDAD, and including the energy, food and supporting infrastructure business companies in the KSPEAN project in South Papua Province, to comply with and conduct due diligence based on Human Rights standards and to apply the principles of FPIC, before undertaking investment and project development.

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Readings:

- <https://pindad.com/pindad-bangun-infrastruktur-pendukung-industri-pertahanan-di-kalimantan-selatan-dan-papua-selatan>

- <https://tirto.id/pemerintah-akan-bangun-pabrik-bahan-peledak-di-wanam-papua-hiyc>

- <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/id/laporan/laporan-triwulanan-papua-triwulan-iv-2025-memaksakan-pembangunan-dengan-kekuatan-jumlah-korban-melonjak-seiring-meluasnya-operasi-militer-di-seluruh-tanah-papua/>

Photo link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mKYxbNXgTJFQf2gPX3h2eeT7AfVaph8C?usp=sharing>