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"My humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up in yours. I am human because I belong." -Desmond Tutu

To whom it may concern,

Pedalling for Papua is a 12,000 kilometer international cycling and performance tour which aims to raise awareness of the ongoing human rights and environmental abuse in the underreported region of West Papua.

Campaigner Jeremy Bally will be riding a bicycle loaded with everything from a projector to a ukulele through 6 countries over 6 months, touring a multimedia performance and engaging with citizens the world over about this story. This is Bally's second tour, having rode 7,500 km from Victoria, BC to St. John's, Newfoundland last year while telling a story built around his own time spent in West Papua.

"It's home to the bird of paradise, the second largest jungle remaining in the world, and our planet's most bio-diverse marine zone", says Bally, "As many as 500,000 Indigenous West Papuans have died as a result of the military presence and lack of development in their homeland throughout. That number is impossible to confirm, though, as media organizations have never really been allowed access without close government supervision".

The performance brings the voices of Papuans to the international stage through a projected animation which brings to life 9 recorded conversations with exiles, refugees and activists from West Papua. Bally narrates this film live on stage using original spoken word poetry and ukulele based hip-hop.

"I love riding my bicycle. I love telling stories. I feel like just because something is important doesn't mean people will care," says Bally, "I'm using this artistic approach because it's a more open way to engage people. I want the audience to come because they're expecting a great show. I want them to leave knowing how to make the world a more peaceful place".

The campaign also aims to raise funds for Pacific Peoples' Partnership, Canada's only NGO currently working with grassroots organizations in West Papua, as well as advocate for the release of the roughly 73 political prisoners in West Papua, all of whom have been imprisoned for peaceful dissent.

Sincerely,

The **Pedalling for Papua** team

PEDALLING FOR PAPUA - BACKGROUNDER

Campaign Overview

Stories allow us to know each other. They build empathy by simultaneously teaching and engaging. They lay the foundation for action.

Pedalling for Papua is Canada's contribution to the global effort to broadcast the story of West Papua. After 50 years of human rights and environmental abuses hidden behind a media blackout, West Papua is being slowly and relentlessly exposed to the world. A long oppressed indigenous population committed to non-violent reform and a growing base of international allies committed to a partnership for peace fuel this movement.

West Papua is home to Asia's largest jungle, the world's greatest underwater biodiversity, and some of our planet's oldest cultures. It is a rare and threatened treasure which Pedalling for Papua is dedicated to uncovering for the world to see. We ask that you join us in telling this great story.

About West Papua

West Papua is an extraordinary place, and it's damn important that we know about it. It occupies the western half of the world's second largest island, and is home to ancient cultures whose livelihood is bound to the rainforest - the largest in Asia. Its reefs belong to the coral triangle, the most bio-diverse marine ecosystem in the world.

Official estimates range from 100,000 to 500,000 West Papuans having died as a result of the Indonesian government's policies in this illegally annexed region (an ongoing media ban makes this figure impossible to verify). The slow-burning conflict is fueled by one of the highest military to civilian ratios in the world, while legal and illegal logging, mining and fishing uproot one of the world's most diverse and valuable ecosystems. Profits from resource extraction trickle down in meagre amounts to West Papuans, whose home regularly ranks last out of Indonesia's 33 provinces on markers for development like access to healthcare and education. Poverty is rampant.

It has been over 50 years since the occupation of West Papua by Indonesia began. This colonial era has been defined by long term imprisonment of peaceful activists, an undisciplined and abusive military presence, and the pouring out of tens of thousands of West Papuans as refugees. The story behind the conflict which has created these conditions is one of the greatest-ever gaps in reporting by the international media, as barriers set up through an intentionally entangled bureaucracy prevent international journalists from entering the region. In spite of this, the story has become widely available. 50 years of determined West Papuans have pushed it through the cracks. All the story needs is to be found, and told.

About Jeremy Bally - The Rider

Jeremy Bally was born and raised on the West Coast of Canada. A cyclist and musician, he first heard about West Papua through a concerned friend who'd just stumbled upon the story her- self. Over two years of engaging more deeply with the issue, the vision for Pedalling for Papua began to take shape, and in 2011 he flew to Indonesia to see first hand what the situation on the ground. Inspired by a new language and a journal full of sobering accounts from interviews conducted over a 5 week period, he arrived back home and began preparations for the first campaign.

Jeremy transformed his experience in West Papua into a multimedia presentation, and cycled it 7500 kilometres across Canada, educating thousands of Canadians about the human rights, environmental and political situation there. Enthralled by the experience and bound to the cause, he has decided to put the lessons of the first tour to good use by...how else? Doing another one! Just bigger. And more effective.

When not cycling, Jeremy plays his ukulele while walking through the forest, occasionally stopping to climb a tree.

**** Additional resources materials, footage and digital media are available upon request. ****

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