



Statement on the decolonisation of French Polynesia

September 2011

French Polynesia's struggle for freedom and sovereignty continues with ongoing significant violation of the rights of its indigenous populations. Violations and abuses must stop and freedom must be realized. Decolonization must mean restoration of the principles of the Declaration of the Indigenous Rights, and must restore the Polynesian Triangle as a Nation.

French Polynesia includes several States, which have been annexed by France under military power, and in these once independent States (now under one State with the status as a French 'overseas collectivity'), France continues to exert influence on domestic affairs. Despite a Parliament, Territorial Assembly and an Executive Government in French Polynesia, leaders hold little authority over many essential domestic and international affairs. For example, France administers the justice system, health, emigration, land rights, education system, defence, currency, environment, atmosphere and international maritime borders without the consent or participation of the Polynesian people. Also, France controls the media and selectively removes references to colonization or the history of colonization. This oppresses freedom of expression and limits indigenous populations from discussing colonization and instilling in their children a comprehensive knowledge of their history. Militarization and nuclear testing continue to negatively impact the lives of communities and there is a lack of recognition of the diseases caused by radioactivity.

The indigenous populations ask that the history of the colonization be taught in our schools and are awarded the freedom to openly discuss the topic of colonization in all media sources. This history includes our lands prior to European settlement where people travelled freely throughout the Polynesian triangle, and the brutal history of the period of colonization, where many indigenous populations were killed and exploited by colonial powers. This history includes the impact the military and armed law enforcement had and continues to have on indigenous peoples where we were forced to abdication our rights.

French Polynesia was listed as a non-autonomous territory by the United Nations but was then incorporated into the administration of France. Although France officially recognises French Polynesia as a de-colonized country, it remains by definition of the General Assembly Resolution 1514, a colonized state through "alien subjugation, domination and exploitation". In August 2011, the French Polynesian Assembly voted for the restoration and relisting of French Polynesia to the United Nations decolonisation list. However, French representatives do not wish to recognize this resolution adopted by the majority in the Territorial Assembly of French Polynesia. We recall the WILPF 2005 resolution on Rapa calling for Rapa to be recognize as a nation and listed as independent country on the UN and associate to French Polynesia. (see www.wilpfinternational.org/statements/2005.htm).

We, the women of the French Polynesian WILPF section and WILPF sections around the world, call on France, Member States, the United Nations, and the international community to:

- *Support* the full and immediate decolonisation of French Polynesia; and the re-registration of French Polynesia on the UN list of countries to be decolonised, in accordance with the example of New Caledonia.
- *Ensure* decolonization means restoration of the Polynesian Triangle as a Nation.
- *Recognise and promote* the universal human rights of all peoples and in particular the Declaration on the Rights of the Native Indigenous Peoples (June 29, 2006), adopted by the United Nations, to help all peoples and citizens of the world. Among these rights, freedom of expression is most crucial for the indigenous populations of French Polynesia.
- *Respect* the principle of self-determination and political independency of oppressed, colonized, native indigenous people in the world.
- *Request* that France fulfil its obligations and provide financial support for the economic, social and cultural development of the French Polynesian people.
- *Provide* international assistance to implement the application of the principles of decolonisation to promote the economic, social and cultural development, education, health and the development in French Polynesia of alternative energy based on the Human Rights and of the Declaration of the right of indigenous peoples.
- *Provide* compensation and justice for those affected by nuclear testing and radioactivity.
- *Ensure* the full inclusion and participation of women in the decolonization and state building process and *protect and promote* gender equality as a priority and ensure the full realization of women's rights.

Contact:

French Polynesian WILPF

President of French Polynesian Section, Roti Make - Picot d'Aligny d'Assignies

Tahiti - French Polynesia

Email: wilpf.polynesie@gmail.com