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PBI Colombia volunteer Eric Schwartz accompanies marchers in Bogotá. Astrid Manrique (front left) is president of the ASFADDES chapter in Popayán, Colombia.

photo by Anat Aharoni

**PBI Regional Gatherings**

Reconnect with old PBI friends! Hear more about our work in-person! Offer your input into PBI's strategic directions over the next five to seven years! Plan on participating in one of the PBI Regional Gatherings going on around the United States this fall. For information, please visit: <http://www.peacebrigades.org/usa/regionalgatherings04.html>

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# PBI/USA REPORT

The Newsletter of Peace Brigades International/USA

SUMMER 2004

## PBI Expands into Papua, Indonesia

by Ben Lischner, recent U.S. volunteer in Indonesia

**ASSESSMENT MISSION:** Earlier this year, a group of PBI volunteers was sent to assess the need and appropriateness of establishing a PBI field presence in the eastern Indonesian province of Papua. This was in response to several requests from local organizations that we had received starting in 2002. Finally, the stars had aligned for the Indonesia Project to be able to field an assessment team and respond to these invitations.

The assessment team consisted of myself, Lucy from England, Paola, the Italian, and Stina from Sweden. I was the 'young' one on the team with only six months experience on the Indonesia Project, while Stina was actually a former volunteer

brought back just for this assessment. Our plan was to spend four weeks in and around Jayapura, the capital of Papua. We would talk to as many important and diverse actors as we could, gathering information about the security situation in Papua in relationship to the kind of role that PBI could possibly play there. Additionally, we also wanted to gather information and insight about the effectiveness of any work we might carry out there. In part, this required attempting to meet with the police and military forces responsible for security in Papua. Such contact would help us gauge their general attitude towards an international presence like ours.

Papua is the easternmost province in Indonesia and shares a border with Papua New Guinea (the eastern half of this huge island). Papua is home to over 1 million ethnic Papuans from over 250 different indigenous tribes as well as

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Photo by Jorge Mata

*PBI volunteer with a member of CSPP (Committee to Support Political Prisoners) in Comuna Three in Medellín, Colombia. This fall, the Colombia Project will be commemorating its tenth year. See page 4 for PBI Field Project Updates.*



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