



United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP)
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**West Papuans mourn the passing of The Reverend Dr Neles Kedadaby Tebay—
Catholic priest, prolific author and journalist, peace facilitator, and indigenous
champion of Peace, Truth, and Justice.**

All West Papuans were saddened by the passing of West Papua's indigenous champion of Truth, Peace and Justice in St Carolus Borromeus Catholic hospital in Jakarta.

Fr Tebay was born in 1964 in the Me village of Godide midst the spectacular cliffs, rivers and waterfalls of the Kamu Valley west of Lake Paniai, and ordained in 1992 after studies at the Fajar Timur School of Philosophy and Theology in Abepura.

He was one of the few highlanders of his generation to study overseas, graduating in 1997 from the Jesuit's Ateano University in Quezon (Philippines) with a Master's Degree, and in 2006 from the Pontifical Urban University in Rome as a Doctor of Philosophy. His doctoral thesis *The Reconciling Mission of the Church in West Papua in the Light of Reconciliation and Repentance* formed the basis of his important mediation work between Indonesian authorities and the West Papuan independence movement.

As Co-ordinator of the *Papuan Peace Network* Fr Tebay advocated the necessity of a dialogue rather than security-driven approach to the West Papuan independence movement's long-standing concerns. His fifty-page proposal to the Indonesian government advocating a course of action around the issues of Melanesian sovereignty, dignity and liberty was eventually recognised by Indonesian intellectuals, parliamentarians, military generals, NGOs, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), and West Papuan freedom fighters. At the same time the prolific peace warrior was advocating Papuan understandings of human rights, justice, peace, and multiculturalism in forums across Java, in newspapers like *The Jakarta Post* and *Suara Pembaharuan*, television, and in the numerous books he authored, including:

West Papua: The struggle for peace with justice Catholic Institute for International Relations/CIIR, London, 2005;

Interfaith endeavours for Peace in West Papua Missio Aachen, Germany, 2006

Papua: Its Problems and possibilities for a peaceful solution Secretariat, Justice and Peace, Jayapura Diocese, 2008

Dialog Jakarta-Papua : sebuah perspektif Papua /a Papuan perspective Secretariat, Justice and Peace, Jayapura Diocese, 2009

Papua Road Map with Muridan Widjojo, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), 2009

Reconciliation and peace : interfaith endeavours for peace in West Papua Melanesian Institute, Goroka, Eastern Highlands, Papua New Guinea, 2012

Fr Tebay was on the International Board of Pax Christi (Catholic Peace Movement), and worked closely with the Centre Pour Le Dialogue humanitaire (HD), the Swiss-based private diplomacy organisation also known as Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

The United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) leads the people of West Papua in thanking Fr Tebay for his important work on consulting all Papuans on the need for peaceful dialogue with the government in Jakarta.

God gives, and now God has taken you home to join our other freedom heroes and heroines.

Jacob Rumbiak
ULMWP Spokesperson