



EDISON K WAROMI (1964—)

Lawyer

Cenderawasih University

Pastor

Ebenhaeser Sowek Pentecostal Church

Political Prisoner

1989-1999 (Kalisosok, Surabaya, Indonesia)

2001 (Kerobokan, Bali, Indonesia)

2002-2004 (Abepura, West Papua)

2011-2014 (Abepura, West Papua)

Politician

Prime Minister, *West Papua
Transitional Government* (2020)

Founder, *United Liberation
Movement of West Papua* (2014)

Prime Minister, *Federal Republic
of West Papua* (2011)

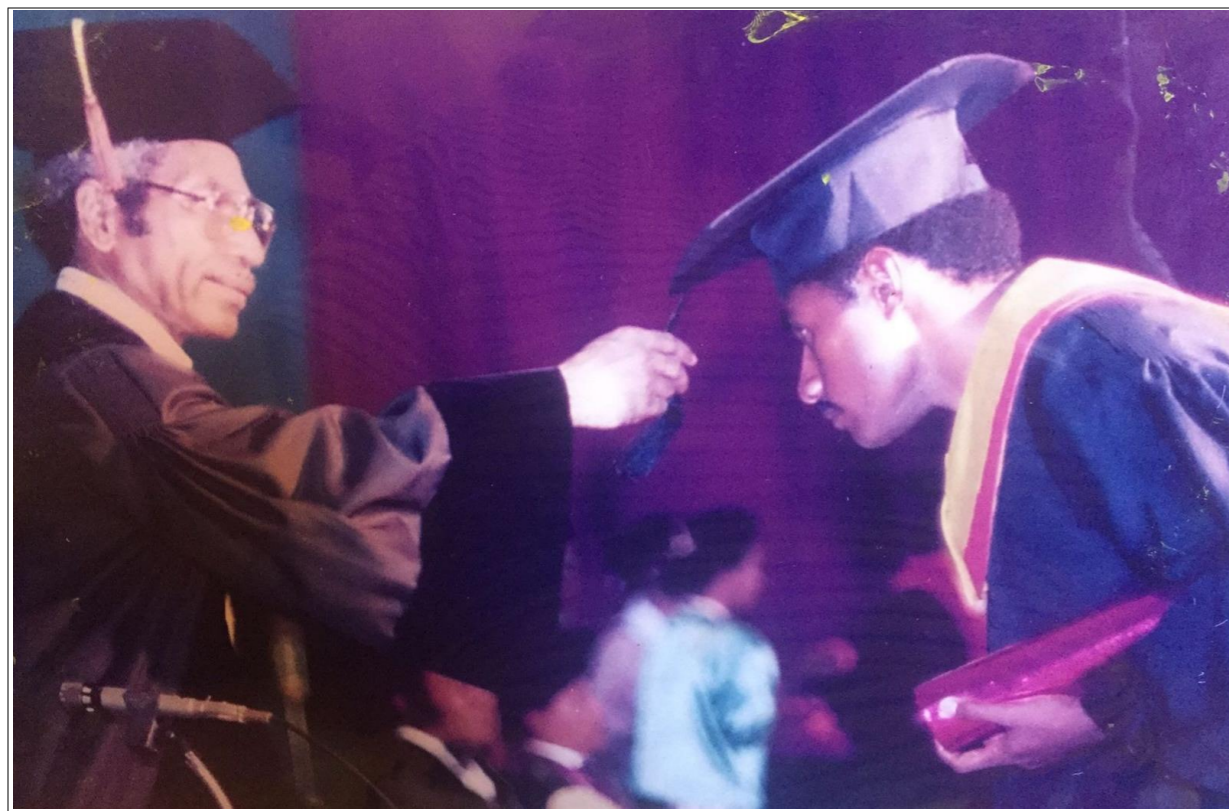
President, *West Papua
National Authority* (2004)

President, *United West Papua
National Council for Independence* (2002)

**Son, Brother, Husband
Father and Grand-father**

Waromi family village in Serui Island, Cenderawasih Bay





Edison Waromi in 1988, receiving his law degree from Dr August Kafiar—the first West Papuan chancellor of Cenderawasih University (UNCEN).

It needs to be noted that during West Papua's term as a UN Non-Self-Governing Territory (1950-1962) the Dutch Administration sent students to the Medical School in Fiji and to theological, educational and administrative colleges in Papua New Guinea (Crocombe, Meleisea, 1988)

CENDERAWASIH UNIVERSITY (UNCEN) was established in 1962 with United Nations' funds after a proposal by the visionary West Papuan Herman Wajoy (a member of the political party *Partei Nationaal/PARNA*) to educate Papuans about their history and to develop their skills for debate in international fora.

However when the university opened in 1964 “most of the students were flown in from Java, and the standards achieved were far below those elsewhere in the Pacific in 1988, only 1,100 of the 3,300 students—and only 157 of the 356 law students—were West Papuan Control was strictly (i.e. militarily) from Jakarta Attempts by the Papua New Guinea universities to invite fellow Melanesians from Irian Jaya [West Papua] have had very limited success, and no outsiders are allowed to visit UNCEN without a military security clearance which is difficult to obtain” (Crocombe, Meleisea, 1988).

Jakarta increased its control over the university via the chancellors it appointed. The first chancellor, Professor Poerbakawatja, spoke eloquently *in front of United Nations personnel* on 10 November 1962—about “the sons of West Papua as human beings with full rights to their freedom to speak, think and act according to their nature”, the next two chancellors were from the military—Major-General Raden Banter (1967-68) and Major-General August Marpaung (1969-70). The descent into the politicisation of education continued with Chancellors Professor Rudy Taurumingkeng (1979-1987) and Dr August Kafiar (1988-1996) concurrently, both chancellors *and* politicians in the People's Consultative Assembly of Indonesia.

At the end of his term, Dr Kafiar, the first West Papua Chancellor, disappointed and angered many when he became Vice-President of PT Freeport Indonesia, the notorious gold-and-copper mine in West Papua.

Musim Penyiksaan/**Torture Season**

By Fahri Salam, an Indonesian Journalist
<https://indoprogress.com>, 1 December 2013

Bagaimana memandang rakyat biasa Papua dibunuh pelan-pelan di bawah pemerintahan Indonesia Bagaimana meretas upaya jalan 'Papua Baru' bila kekerasan-kekerasan tetap terjadi, bila postur keamanan terus bertambah?

English translation **How do you view ordinary Papuans being slowly killed under Indonesian rule? How to hack the road to 'New Papua' if violence continues, if the security continues to grow?**

Translation of paragraph 2 "I met Edison Waromi at Abepura Prison, a month into his three year sentence after the 3rd Papua Congress in 2012 His daughter was kidnapped and tortured in 2007, due to her father's political activities ... According to his wife, when Edison gets out he will have spent nineteen years in prison: "*Apa yang dipilih Papua, dong pilih maut satu keluarga*" she said ('dong' meaning Indonesian military and police who frequently commit violence and murder against Papuan civilians)".

Apa yang dipilih Papua, dong pilih maut satu keluarga is difficult to translate but it is what Edison often said when he was in prison, by which he meant "**Even though I am in the shadow of death I am not afraid to die**"

Within Cenderawasih University's compromised milieu Edison studied law between 1982 and 1988. However it was the following year, 1989, that was transformative for the young idealistic graduate:

1. In 1989, the Jakarta government sent Edison a letter of appointment as lecturer in the Law Department at Cenderawasih University (UNCEN).
2. In 1989, Edison helped represent Dr Thomas Waingai in the Jayapura District Court who was on trial for 'questioning the Indonesian occupation' and 'proclaiming the state of West Melanesia'.

Dr Waingai's trial was "marked by the irregularity that characterized all Indonesian political trials, including restricted access by lawyers to their client, insufficient materials to prepare the defense, failure to call defense witnesses and limited time for cross examination" (*Injustice, Persecution, Eviction* Asia Watch USA, 1 Jan 1990: pp. 20–22).

3. In 1989, Edison joined Jacob Rumbiak (UNCEN Head of Physical Science), Martinus Kambu (agricultural engineer) and Jacob Matui (government official) in the Papua New Guinea Consulate in Jayapura, hoping to negotiate protection for participants in the non-violent assemblies on campus in December 1989. The consulate stand-off lasted two weeks. The Japanese and Australian Ambassadors flew from Jakarta to meet the Papuans. PNG Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu offered them 30,000 kina to leave his consulate. Indonesia's Minister for Foreign Affairs (Ali Alerts), Minister for Defence (Benny Murdani) and Chief of the Armed Forces (General Try Sutriso) arrived on Christmas Eve with cigarettes and whiskey and promises that the security forces wouldn't become involved. Within hours of the Indonesians' visit, the PNG Consul handed the Papuans to the Indonesian authority and they were charged with subversion.



EDISON WAROMI (centre) PAPUAN CULTURAL PERFORMANCE, KALISOSOK PRISON IN SURABAYA

Edison's trial for treason resulted in a twelve-year sentence in Kalisosok Prison in Surabaya (Java). The Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) built the fortress in 1750, and converted it to a maximum security prison with an underground torture centre in 1808. The prison was closed in 2000, just months after Edison was released. Since then women working in a nearby mall have been (informally) renting the cold dark smelly cells for Rp130,000 (\$9.16 USD) a month.

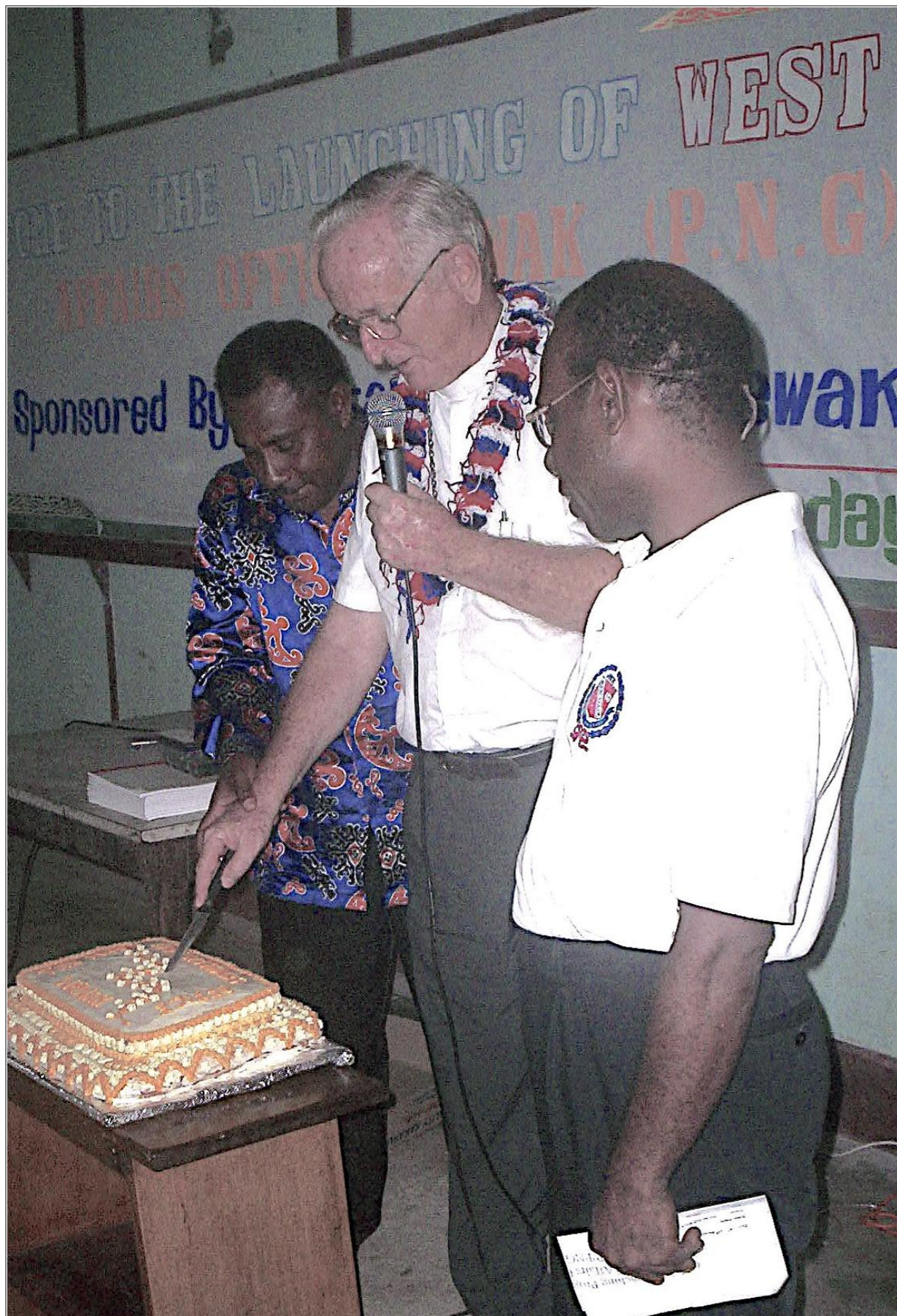


WEST PAPUAN GOSPEL SINGING GROUP, KALISOSOK PRISON IN SURABAYA (JAVA) 1991—1999

In 1991 there were 86 Papuan political prisoners in Kalisosok Prison, all inspired by Dr Thomas Wainggai's thesis of West Papua as the 'stolen border of West Melanesia', many of them West Papuan lecturers at Cenderawasih University who had introduced Melanesian non-violent resistance and nation-making education on campus. The political prisoners were incarcerated in different blocks, but encouraged to gather for singing and cultural performances, which the administrators regarded as entertainment for visitors but which the Papuans regarded as educating Indonesians about West Papua.

This gospel-singing group completed theology degrees under the tutelage of Bethany Church missionaries. The prison-study project was sparked by a Bethany Church missionary from Galilee in Israel who heard the word 'kalisosok' for four years during his prayers and fasts, but couldn't work out what it meant until a pastor from the Bethany Church in Surabaya (Indonesia) mentioned his work with prisoners in Kalisosok Prison during a Bethel Church Conference in Israel.

Of the 18 men in this photograph, only four in 2021 are still alive: Edison Waromi—*5th from right*; Jacob Rumbiak—*far right*; Jonah Wenda—*2nd from right*; John Arrongear—*7th from right*. Edison, Jonah and Jacob are key personnel in the WP Transitional Government and John Arrongear is a pastor in Jayapura.



EDISON THE YOUNG POLITICIAN

Under Edison, the WEST PAPUA NATIONAL COUNCIL and WEST PAPUA NATIONAL AUTHORITY (fore-runners of Federal Republic of West Papua) lobbied the Melanesian states, which were still colonies in 1962 when the UN gave West Papua to Indonesia. *(left)* Boat trips to Wewak in Papua New Guinea were difficult but possible, but to get to Vanuatu required visa entries in Port Moresby and Honiara, where Indonesia bullied and bribed airline and immigration staff into disrupting the Papuans diplomatic missions.

Edison didn't make it to Vanuatu in November 2007 *(below)*. In October his daughter was abducted, drugged and abused for eighteen hours before she was found semi-conscious alongside a dirty drain. His son was kidnapped, but managed to fight off his assailants. His brother, Luther, was kidnapped and executed, his broken body found dumped on the wharf in Jayapura.



2002 After completing his prison term in Bali Edison set up the new West Papua office in Wewak on the north coast of Papua New Guinea (and was charged with treason, again).

2007 Praying over the Unity Declaration negotiated by the West Papua National Authority with the Maraki Vanuariki Council of Chiefs and Port Vila Council of Chiefs on 29 Nov 2007 (Photo—Tom Latupeirissa)

PANIAI, HIGHLANDS, 16 OCTOBER 2008

Edison is particularly skilled in negotiating across the historic divide between the coastal-island peoples and the highland Papuans.





EDISON, US CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON WEST PAPUA, WASHINGTON, 22 SEPTEMBER 2010

Salmon Yumame, Forkorus Yaboisembut, US Congressman Eni Faleomavaega, Edison Waromi, Herman Waingai.

On 22 September 2010, Representative Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (Democrat, American Samoa), the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, hosted the first hearing on West Papua, entitled *Crimes Against Humanity: When Will Indonesia's Military Be Held Accountable for Deliberate and Systematic Abuses in West Papua?*



Edison Waromi in 2011 during the 3rd Papuan Congress, Zaccheus Field, Padang Bulan, West Papua

During the 3rd Congress, the Federal Republic of West Papua was established and Edison was elected Prime Minister.
Charcoal portrait by Peter Woods (2012), bought in 2013 by the Australian Greens for Senator Richard di Natale's Canberra office.



Edison, 3rd Papuan Congress, responding to the Voice of the People (Photo: Peter Woods, 2011)

3rd PAPUAN CONGRESS
Zaccheus Field, Padang Bulan
West Papua, 16-19 October 2011



left—Opening day of prayer on 16 October 2011

below—Conclusion on 19 October: Arrests, Beatings, Torture, and three murders



West Papuans attacked by Indonesian army



Edison Waromi—Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of West Papua—convicted of treason, conspiracy, public incitement to violence after the 3rd Papuan Congress in 2011

Others incarcerated on the same charges included:

Forkorus Yaboisembut (President, Federal Republic of West Papua)

Dominikus Sorabut (*Dewan Adat*/Tribal Council)

Selpius Bobii (Chairman of the Congress)

August Makbrawen (Congress Organiser)

Sananay Kraar (Congress Organiser)

Gat Wenda (possession of a sharp weapon)

top—Lateline, Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC)
27 October 2011

bottom—Edison In Abepura Prison for another three years
(with Forkorus Yaboisembut)





SARALANA DECLARATION, WEST PAPUA RECONCILIATION & UNITY SUMMIT, FORMATION OF UNITED LIBERATION MOVEMENT FOR WEST PAPUA (ULMWP), VANUATU, 6 DECEMBER 2014

Edison Waromi signing Saralana Declaration for Federal Republic of West Papua; Buchtar Tabuni for West Papua National Parliament; Rex Rumakiek for West Papua National Coalition for Liberation (Photo: Tommy Latupeirissa)



SARALANA DECLARATION, VANUATU, 6 DECEMBER 2014: WEST PAPUA RECONCILIATION & UNITY SUMMIT

Formation of United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP): Edison Waromi for Federal Republic of West Papua; Rex Rumakiek for West Papua National Coalition for Liberation; Buchtar Tabuni for West Papua National Parliament.

Also (l-r) Alfonse Adaikam, Elizier Awom, Jacob Rumbiak, Leonie Tangahma, Benny Wenda, Mumu Yusefa, Sabi Sambon, Jack Waingai, Teri Yaram (Photo—Tommy Latupeirissa)



EDISON, THANKSGIVING AFTER FORMATION OF UNITED LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF WEST PAPUA

The United Liberation Movement OF West Papua (ULMWP) is an 'inclusive, representative, united, co-ordinating body', elected from and accountable to the Federal Republic of West Papua, West Papua National Parliament, and West Papua National Coalition for Liberation.

The ULMWP was formed in 2014 during a ten-day Reconciliation and Unity Summit in Vanuatu that itself was a broad-based regional initiative generated by church and women's organizations across Melanesia sparked by the 2013 World Council of Churches Assembly in South Korea. The Summit was supported by West Papua's *Gereja Kristen Injili (GKI)* Church; sponsored by Vanuatu Government and Pacific Conference of Churches; and mediated by the Vanuatu Christian Council and Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs.



PRIME MINISTER WAROMI WITH SOLOMON ISLANDS PRIME MINISTER SOGAVARE, 2015 MSG SUMMIT, HONIARA

Sogavare's inspiring speech at the opening of the 2015 Melanesian Spearhead Group Summit propelled the inter-government regional block to accept West Papua's application for membership. This was the first formal recognition by any government of West Papua's political struggle, and for Papuans it represented a shift "from darkness to the light" (Photo: Tommy Latupeirissa, 24 June 2015).



EDISON IN NEW YORK FOR 2019 UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

above—Interview with Amy Goodman on
Democracy Now! 27 September 2019

right—Edison Waromi and Herman Wainggai in
front of UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld
Memorial in the UN Building in New York.

*In 2020-21 the Federal Republic of West Papua
organised the planting of 60 Hammarskjöld-West
Papua Living Memorials (trees) around the world to
remind UN member-states of the Secretary-General's
Decolonisation Program for the Non-Self-Governing
Territory of Netherlands New Guinea (West Papua)
in 1961. Hammarskjöld had prepared a motion for
the 1961 UN General Assembly, but was assassinated
three days before it opened. Without his influential
presence the motion was thwarted, mostly by covert
CIA manoeuvring. The UN's failure to uphold its
founding principle created a vacuum within which
the New York Agreement—transferring the
administration of West Papua from the Netherlands
to Indonesia—was concocted.*



*The UN was not created to
take mankind to heaven, but
to save humanity from hell.*

Dag Hammarskjöld,
Second UN Secretary-General





FORMATION, WEST PAPUA TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, JAYAPURA, 22 OCTOBER 2020

Buchtar Tabuni (Chairman of the Parliament), Edison Waromi (Prime Minister), Jonah Wenda (Spokesperson, West Papua Army)

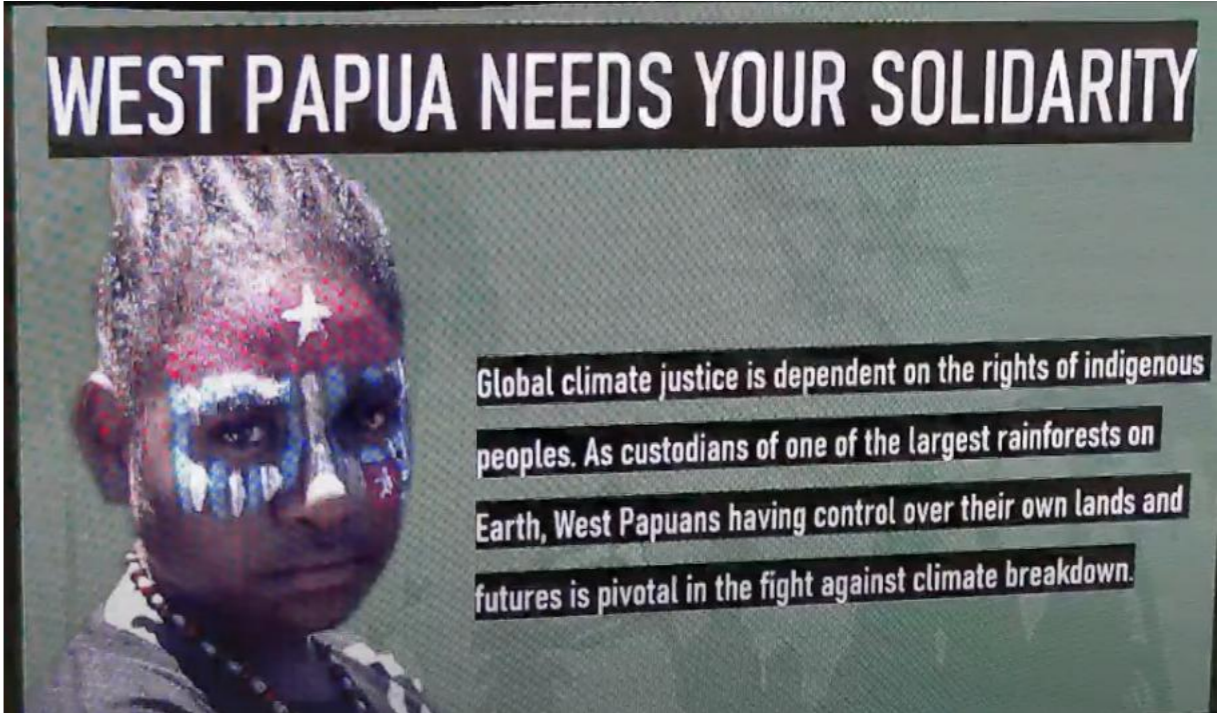
“During the third annual session of the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) Legislative Council in Jayapura, the ULMWP upgraded its [2015] by-laws to provisional constitutional status ... which then permitted the ULMWP to pass a bill and establish a government guided by the rules and norms of democracy, human rights and self-determination ... including those of Indonesian migrants and the West Papua National Army” (Radio New Zealand, 22 Oct 2020 *West Papua Liberation Movement adopts provisional constitution*).

On 1 December 2020, the West Papua Transitional Government was raised. Twelve months later, at the 2021 UN Climate Summit in Glasgow, the WP Transitional Government announced it was pursuing ‘Green State’ policies.



LAUNCH, WEST PAPUA'S GREEN STATE

Prime Minister Waromi and Parliamentary Chair Buchtar Tabuni with Jonah Wenda (Spokesperson, West Papua Army) signing their government's Green State Policy in Jayapura before its launch at the 2021 UN Climate Summit in Glasgow on 4 November (*below*).



Free West Papua Campaign International Live Stream

12,065 views • Streamed live on 4 Nov 2021

457

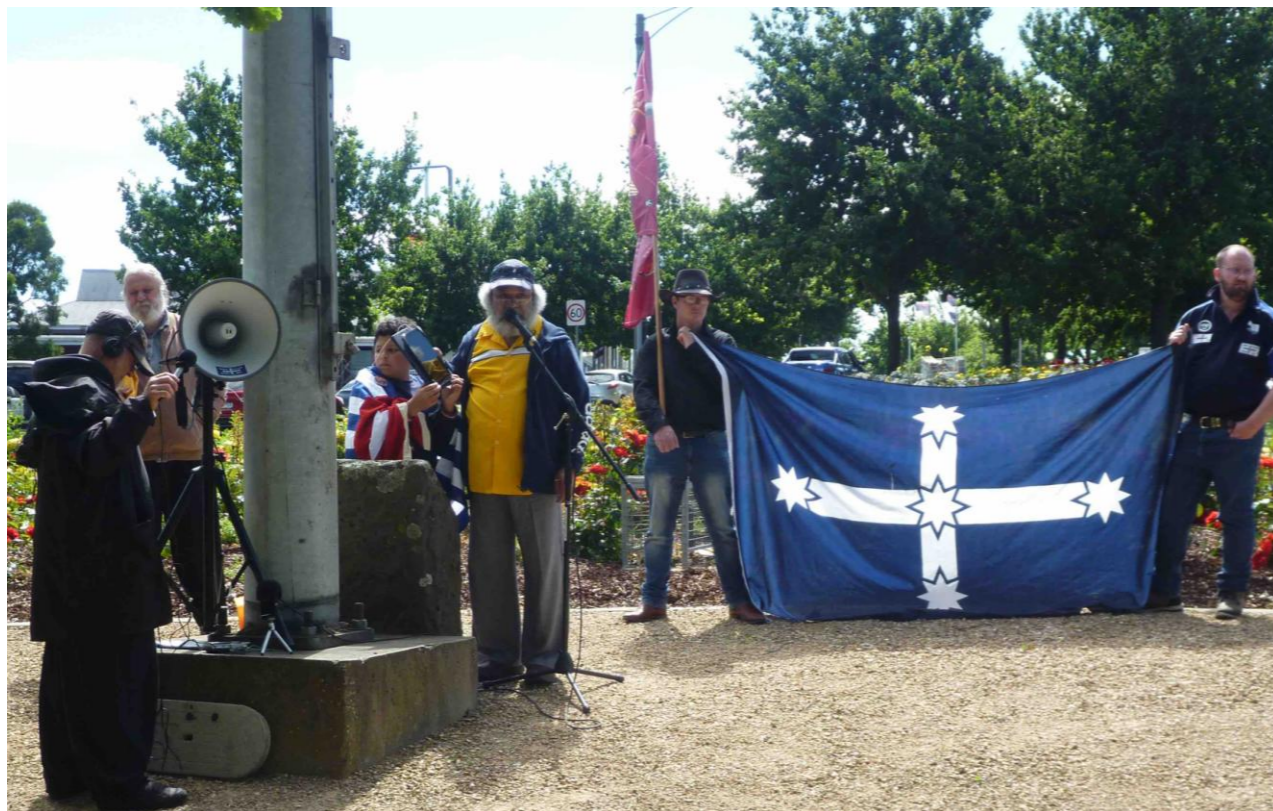
2021 EUREKA AUSTRALIA DAY MEDAL AWARD CEREMONY, BALLARAT, 3 DECEMBER 2021

On 3 December 2021, during a moving ceremony on Bakery Hill in Ballarat (Victoria, Australia), **Edison Waromi**, Prime Minister of West Papua's Transitional Government, and Parliamentary Chair **Buchtar Tabuni**, were each awarded the 2021 Eureka Australia Medal.

The annual Eureka Australia Medal is awarded by the Anarchist Media Institute to “activists who have demonstrated, through their activities, the universal qualities outlined in the Eureka Oath taken by diggers (gold-miners) in the British colony of Victoria in December 1854 as they prepared for battle against government military, militia, and police: *We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties.*”

Electronic links were established with the two West Papuans in Jayapura, but were disrupted when Indonesian police and military surrounded Buchtar Tabuni's home, forcing him to find a place to hide and take the call.

Both men addressed the appreciative crowd on Bakery Hill in Indonesian, their speeches translated by Jacob Rumbiak.



BAKERY HILL, BALLARAT, 3 DECEMBER 2021

Dr Joe Toscano presents Eureka Australia Medal to Edison Waromi in front of the Eureka flag; Jacob Rumbiak (translating), Kamesan Woirei (holding the tablet).
Photos: Linda Duckham, FRWP West Papua Womens Office in Docklands



Eureka Stockade 1854, George Browning (Australia's WWII artist)

The successful rebellion of gold-miners in 1854 at Ballarat in Victoria (then a British colony) was instrumental in the development of Australia's representational structures and attitudes towards democracy and egalitarianism. Many of the diggers were politically engaged – some had participated in the Chartist movement for political reform in Britain during the 1830s and 1840, others in the anti-authoritarian revolutions that spread across Europe in 1848.

The Victorian Governor refused to listen to the miners' complaints about the police extorting money, accepting bribes and imprisoning people without due process. Eventually, on 29 November 1854, 1,500 miners gathered on Bakery Hill and swore "by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other, and fight to defend our rights and liberties". "No taxation without representation" they cried as they raised an 'Australian' flag that women had made from their petticoats and their husbands' blue woollen work-shirts.

Governor Hotham immediately despatched 150 British soldiers of the 40th Regiment of Foot to reinforce the police and soldiers stationed in Ballarat, and on 3 December 300 they attacked the miners' stockade. Twenty-two diggers (including one woman) and six soldiers lost their lives in the government orgy of looting, murder and arson. Thirteen of the miners' leaders were charged with treason and transported to Melbourne for trial-by-jury—but all were found not guilty, including the African-American John Joseph. However, Henry Seekamp, the owner-editor of the Ballarat Times newspaper, was convicted of seditious libel and sentenced to six months goal. During his time in custody, Clara, his Irish wife, wrote, editorialised and published the newspaper.

In March 1855, the gold-miners licence fee was replaced by an export duty, and diggers were only required to pay an annual 'miner's right' fee of £1. Half the police on the goldfields were sacked. One warden replaced the multitude of corrupt gold commissioners (who had formerly issued the licences). Twelve were added to the Victorian Legislative Council, four appointed by the Queen and eight elected by those who held a miner's right. In 1857 male suffrage (voting rights) was instituted for men (female suffrage was not introduced until 1908).

The annual Eureka Australia Medal is awarded by the Anarchist Media Institute to "activists who have demonstrated, through their activities, the universal qualities outlined in the Eureka oath taken by the gold-miners in Ballarat in 1854.





PASTOR EDISON WAROMI

In addition to striving for the political liberation of West Papua, Edison is involved in deep spiritual matters and pastoral care at the Ebenhaeser Soweek Church in Jayapura.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

On Edison Waromi [https://en.everybodywiki.com/Edison Kladius Waromi](https://en.everybodywiki.com/Edison_Kladius_Waromi)

Camellia Webb-Gannon and Jim Elmslie, *MSG Headache, West Papuan Heartache? Indonesia's Melanesian Foray* *The Asia-Pacific Journal* November 16, 2014, Vol. 12 | Issue 47 | No. 3
<https://apjif.org/2014/12/47/Jim-Elmslie/4225.html>

Policy miscalculations on Papua Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), 31 Oct 2017, Report No. 40
https://www.academia.edu/35030520/POLICY_MISCALCULATIONS_ON_PAPUA.

Renewing, Revising or Rejecting Special Autonomy in Papua
Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC), July 2020
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep25411?refreqid=pub-view%3Ab29da712ce17efb398c377ee71f739dc>

West Papua Liberation Movement adopts provisional constitution
Radio New Zealand, 22 October 2020
<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/428922/west-papua-liberation-movement-adopts-provisional-constitution>

Launch of West Papua's Green State Vision during 2021 UN Climate Summit (55-min video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_wocZfge3E

Pacific Universities: Achievements, Problems and Prospects Editors: R. G. Crocombe, Malama Meleisea
Institute of Pacific Studies, University of South Pacific, Suva, 1988

More on West Papuans in Indonesian prisons

Asia Watch, Human Rights Watch, August 1990
<https://www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/i/indonesia/indonesi908.pdf>

Bravo the cat by Jacob Rumbiak with Louise Byrne, Inside Indonesia. 30 July 2007
<https://www.insideindonesia.org/bravo-the-cat-3>

Papuans Behind Bars <https://www.papuansbehindbars.org>