

### PAPUA & ISSUES OF DEMOCRACY WITHIN THE "NOKEN" SYSTEM

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To speak on Papua, it is best if we start with the story of Papua's integration into the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), which remains a contested issue today. Papua became a part of Indonesia through PEPERA, which was facilitated by the United Nations according to the New York agreement on August 15, 1961 between the Dutch colonial government and the Indonesian government. Since the incorporation of Papua into the NKRI, there have been many real developments but also various problems that continue to occur in Papua to this day. To reduce these problems, the Central Government has provided various policies such as the Special Autonomy Law No. 21 of 2001, and later updated it in the Special Autonomy Law volume 2 of Special Autonomy, No. 2 of 2021, and additionally various other rules in the process of running the wheels of government. As a result of the evaluation of special autonomy, the special autonomy policy and the large amount of funds provided also did not cause a significant change, with problems continuing to occur everywhere and both conflicts and instability of justice and security in Papua. It is with these considerations that the central government has made a new policy, namely the New Autonomous Regional Policy, which has added three New Provinces to Papua. Although it has not been implemented yet, this is the final policy of the central government which will be carried out in the near future by the president. There is hope that the latest Special Autonomy Law will create new hope for Papuans. Affirmation and protection for indigenous Papuans is key so that the implementation of the latest Papua Special Autonomy Law can improve the standard of living and rights of the Papuan people, equitable development, and form good local governance, although in Papua the idea of the New Autonomous Regional Policy is still controversial in many circles.



Another aspect is the implementation of elections that are upcoming, with the electoral system in Papua. This is because unlike other regions in Indonesia, Papua election utilize the “Noken” system, which tends for voters to be represented by tribal/customary heads and voters do not attend the polling place, their voting rights already being represented. These are things that need to be studied and discussed comprehensively to create peace in the Land of Papua.

**Dr. Vince Tebay** was born in Paniai August 23, 1969, and since March 15, 1996 has been a permanent lecturer and researcher at the Postgraduate program at Universitas Cenderawasih, serving as Chair of the Center for Gender & Child Studies (PSGA). She has both participated and served as a speaker at various seminars on both national & international levels and has published academic works such as textbooks and in national & international journals. See [www.VinceTebaySinta](http://www.VinceTebaySinta) for more information.

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**WLH** (William L. Harkness Hall) **Room 115**  
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