

A West Papuan replies...

I am very upset with this man (Jared Diamond).

What he has written about my people is misleading, I am a Dani man. People are always talking about me and my people to make themselves famous. He is not writing about what the Indonesian military are doing - that is the real violence that is happening in West Papua.

Tribal war for the Dani was not every day or every year as he describes in this book. Tribal war only happened when something happened like a land dispute or someone was attacked. This is what happens in all societies.

Indonesia illegally occupied our country in 1963 and that is when the massacres really started everywhere in West Papua. The Indonesian government did not rescue us from a cycle of violence like Jared Diamond says – they brought violence to us like we had never known before – they have murdered, raped and imprisoned my people and they have stolen our land to make themselves rich. I remember in 1977 when Indonesia started a war in the Central Highlands of West Papua, which is where I come from. They killed thousands of people, I saw my people being murdered by Indonesian soldiers and my own Auntie was raped in front of my eyes. Indonesia told the world that this was 'tribal war' – they tried to pretend that it was us that was violent and not them - this book is doing the same.

Indonesia has been killing my people every day, every month and every year – how could Jared Diamond ignore what happening in West Papua in his book? The Indonesian military are committing Genocide in West Papua. By talking only about tribal war in West Papua and ignoring what the Indonesians are doing to my people your book is supporting Indonesia's illegal occupation of West Papua.

Please leave us alone with our mother-land.

Please leave us alone with our nature.

Please leave us alone and respect our custom and our way of live.

Please leave us alone and do not destroy our culture and our identity.

Benny Wenda

Tribal leader from Dani/Lani tribe