

PO Box 21873
Brooklyn, NY 11202-1873
781-596-7668; etan@etan.org; www.etan.org

We the undersigned organizations call upon the U.S. government to strictly prohibit any U.S. cooperation with or assistance to the Indonesian Special Forces (Kopassus). This force, more than any other in the Indonesian military, stands accused by the Indonesian people of some of the most egregious human rights violations. The annual human rights report of the U.S. Department of State, the East Timor's (Timor-Leste) truth commission (CAVR), United Nations human rights monitors, and the full range of Indonesian and international human rights have reported in detail the many crimes of Kopassus. Those responsible for these violations continue to enjoy broad impunity for their actions, even in a democratizing Indonesia.

The history of Kopassus human rights violations, its criminality and its unaccountability before Indonesian courts extends back decades and includes human rights and other crimes in East Timor, Aceh, West Papua and elsewhere. In 1998, a program -- organized and led by then Kopassus commander (and recent vice-presidential candidate) General Prabowo Subianto -- kidnapped, tortured and killed pro-democracy activists. Prabowo told reporters he is unrepentant over these crimes saying, "we could say it was preventative detention." Other well-documented Kopassus crimes include organizing anti-Chinese rioting in Jakarta in 1998 and the 1984 massacre at Tanjung Priok in Java.

Throughout 24 years of brutal Indonesian occupation of East Timor, Kopassus personnel, tortured and killed civilians in an attempt to intimidate and terrorize the population. Kopassus personnel played a key role, including organizing militia proxies, in the violence and destruction during 1999, the occupation's final year.

The crimes of Kopassus are not only in the past. A recently published Human Rights Watch report details ongoing Kopassus human right violations in West Papua. The report documents how Kopassus soldiers "arrest Papuans without legal authority, and beat and mistreat those they take back to their barracks."

Those who favor engagement argue that U.S. training could lead to reform of Kopassus. This argument is clearly refuted by history. For decades, the U.S. trained and gave other assistance to Kopassus personnel, including General Prabowo and other leading officers. This relationship had no ameliorative affect, rather, it provided the equipment and skills used for repression.

U.S. law prohibits the training of military units with a history of involvement in human rights violations. This provision has been long been interpreted as narrowly as possible. However, in 2008, the State Department ruled that the ban, known as the Leahy law, applies to Kopassus as a whole. We believe that this ruling should apply and the U.S. must continue to refuse to train Kopassus.

John M. Miller, National Coordinator
East Timor and Indonesia *Action* Network

Mark C. Johnson, Ph.D., Executive Director
The Fellowship of Reconciliation

Dave Robinson, Executive Director
Pax Christi USA

Mubarak Awad, President
Nonviolence International

Jim Winkler, General Secretary
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church
and Society

Kevin Martin, Executive Director
Peace Action and Peace Action Education Fund

Land is Life

SOA Watch

West Papua Advocacy Team

Marie Dennis, Director
(Rev.) James Kofski, M.M., Asia/Pacific
and Middle East Issues
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mary Anne Mercer, DrPH, Deputy Director
Director of Timor-Leste Operations
Health Alliance International

Marie Lucey, OSF, Associate Director,
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Sharon Silber, Chair, U.S. Section
Society for Threatened Peoples

Carol Jahnkow, Executive Director
Peace Resource Center of San Diego

Rosemarie Pace, Director
Pax Christi Metro New York

Mary Beaudoin, Director
Women Against Military Madness

Eileen B. Weiss, Co-Founder
Jews Against Genocide

Ecumenical Peace Institute/CALC

Elaine Donovan
Concerned Citizens for Peace, Honeoye, NY

Jeffrey Ballinger, Executive Director
Press for Change

Diana Bohn
Nicaragua Center for Community Action (NICCA)
Berkeley, CA

Bruce K. Gagnon, Coordinator
Global Network Against Weapons
& Nuclear Power in Space

Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace
Olympia, WA

Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service
Oakland, CA

Mary T. Whittlinger, Treasurer
GOMA (Ecumenical Moluccan Church).

Ben Manski, Executive Director
Liberty Tree

Blase Bonpane, Ph.D., Director
Office of the Americas

Pierre Labossiere,
Haiti Action Committee

David Swanson
After Downing Street

Joanne Landy and Thomas Harrison, Co-Directors
Campaign for Peace and Democracy
New York City

Diane Farsetta, Coordinator
Madison (Wis.)-Ainaro (East Timor) Sister-City
Alliance

Joan Kirby, UN Representative
Temple of Understanding

Rev. John Chamberlin, National Coordinator
East Timor Religious Outreach

Zelia Cordeiro and Felix Jones, Executive Team
Members
VIVAT International

The Greater Boston United for Justice with Peace
Coalition

Michael Eisenscher, Coordinator
Bay Area Labor Committee for Peace & Justice
(LC4PJ)

Mass Peace Action

Daniel LeBlanc, DPI/NGO Representative at the UN
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Roger S. Clark
Board of Trustees
International League for Human Rights.

Alan Muller, Executive Director
Green Delaware

WESPAC Foundation

Mariza Costa Cabral
ETAN/Seattle

Bill Ramsey
Human Rights Action Service, St. Louis, MO

Peaceful Response Coalition
Portland, OR

East Timor *Action* Network/Portland (OR)

Seattle International Human Rights Coalition

John J. Witeck, Coordinator
Philippine Workers Support Committee
Honolulu, Hawaii

Ben Gordon
Pax Christi New Orleans

Jim Haber
War Resisters League/West

Ellen E Barfield
former national Vice-President, co-founder
Baltimore Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter
Veterans for Peace

David McReynolds, former chair
War Resisters International

Leslie Cagan
Former co-chair
United for Peace and Justice*

Sam Diener, Co-Editor
Peacework Magazine, AFSC*

Robert Hanson, Past Chair,
Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center*
Walnut Creek, CA

Dr. Brad Simpson
Asst. Professor of History and International Affairs,
Princeton University
Director, Indonesia and East Timor Documentation
Project*

S. Eben Kirksey, Ph.D.
Center for Cultural Studies, University of California,
WPAT

Peter Bohmer, faculty in economics and political
economy
The Evergreen State College. Olympia, WA

* organization for identification purposes only