

# SOLIDARITY IN AN AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: THE TRANSNATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR EAST TIMOR AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

by *Brad Simpson*

The history of transnational activism in support of East Timor offers valuable insights for scholars seeking to understand the growing importance of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in international relations. This activism proved crucial in maintaining East Timor's visibility internationally from 1975–1991 and in pressuring Indonesia to allow a referendum on the territory's independence in 1999. This article examines the emergence and growth of an East Timor solidarity movement in the United States: the strategies activists pursued; the nature of the opposition; the successes, failures, and limits of this activism; their dynamic interaction with a transnational movement for East Timor; and the lessons these hold for justice movements focusing on U.S. foreign policy and for social movement and foreign relations historians.

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On May 20, 2003, on a dry, dusty plain on the outskirts of Dili, East Timor, hundreds of thousands of East Timorese celebrated their independence after more than twenty-four years of Indonesian occupation and three years of United Nations administration. The next day produced an equally remarkable event, as the president, foreign minister, and prime minister met with scores of international activists to acknowledge their contribution to East Timor's struggle for self-determination. On this day, however, President Xanana Gusmao (himself a former guerrilla commander) and his colleagues wanted to discuss the role of a transnational solidarity network in supporting a now-independent nation.<sup>1</sup>

The moment was extraordinary, because in few other contemporary struggles for international justice have such networks played as prominent a role in bringing about meaningful political change as in East Timor. It was also ironic, because contemporary news accounts ignored the work of international activists and focused almost wholly on the role of states, especially Australia and the United States, in

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explaining East Timor's long journey to independence. These accounts typically ignored Canberra's and Washington, D.C.'s support for Indonesia's 1975 invasion and occupation of East Timor and Western refusal to act for over two weeks as Indonesia deliberately destroyed the territory in 1999, following its United Nations (UN)-sponsored vote for independence.<sup>2</sup> Historians and political scientists rarely have acknowledged the existence of the international solidarity network that exerted pressure on national governments to support Timorese self-determination from 1975 to 1999, much less offered sustained analysis of the goals, tactics, or effectiveness of this movement in challenging and redirecting state policies toward Indonesia during this period.<sup>3</sup>

The history of transnational activism in support of East Timor, however, offers valuable insights for scholars seeking to understand the growing importance of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in international relations. This history highlights the role that locally based—but internationally linked—movements can play in forcing governments to account for human rights and other values in the making of foreign policy.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, East Timor's experience also underlines the limits of transnational activism in an international system lacking institutionalized legal mechanisms for the prevention or punishment of atrocities committed and abetted by powerful states.

Transnational activism proved crucial in maintaining East Timor's visibility in the Western media from 1975 to 1991 and in pressuring Indonesia to allow a referendum on the territory's independence in 1999. Activists also amplified and complemented East Timorese civil resistance, primarily by breaking the Indonesian military's monopoly on information about the territory and, in some cases, by severing the international sources of Indonesia's diplomatic, economic, and military support. But transnational activism was also the product of numerous local struggles. This article thus will examine the growth of East Timor activism in the United States: the strategies activists pursued; the nature of the opposition; the successes, failures, and limits of this activism; and the lessons these hold for other justice movements focusing on U.S. foreign policy.

#### THE INDONESIAN INVASION OF EAST TIMOR AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

The island of Timor is located 400 miles north of Australia in the southeastern end of the Indonesian archipelago. For more than 400 years the

eastern half of Timor languished as a backwater of the Portuguese empire, while the western half became part of The Netherlands East Indies and later Indonesia.<sup>5</sup> Following the fall of Portugal's quasi-fascist government in 1974, political parties formed in the colony and spurred a vigorous independence movement. The Indonesian armed forces launched a campaign to annex the territory, coveting its potentially valuable resources and fearing that an independent East Timor might spark separatist tendencies elsewhere in the archipelago. In August 1975 Indonesian intelligence operatives provoked a brief civil war from which the progressive, pro-independence party Fretilin emerged victorious. This failure prompted the Armed Forces (ABRI) to initiate full-scale military operations.

Facing the prospect of an imminent invasion, Fretilin declared East Timor's independence on November 28, 1975. Two days later Indonesia invaded. On the eve of the invasion, U.S. president Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited Indonesian president Suharto in Jakarta, where they offered explicit American approval.<sup>6</sup> The U.S. defeat in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia had reinforced the Ford Administration's determination to shore up anti-communist regimes around the world, no matter how odious, and Kissinger hardly was inclined to challenge Indonesia over a place seemingly as insignificant as Timor.<sup>7</sup> The State Department later conceded that the United States had provided about 90 percent of the weapons Indonesia used in the invasion. An estimated 60,000 Timorese were killed by Indonesian forces or died of forced starvation and disease in the months following the invasion. However, fierce East Timorese guerrilla resistance persisted for another six years, during which time an estimated 200,000 Timorese died from massacre, starvation, and disease—roughly one-third of the population.

International reaction to the invasion of East Timor was muted. The UN Security Council condemned the invasion and called for East Timorese self-determination, but the U.S. prevented the UN from enforcing this and subsequent resolutions.<sup>8</sup> The State Department wrote President Ford that the United States "has no interests in Portuguese Timor" and should "follow Indonesia's lead on the issue."<sup>9</sup> The American press apparently agreed, and coverage of East Timor quickly evaporated.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast, Australia's tacit support for Indonesia's invasion and annexation of East Timor presented its government with major problems due to "the keen interest of ... public opinion" in the plight of the Timorese.<sup>11</sup> Canberra's position was deeply unpopular with the Australian public, and Indonesia's invasion immediately sparked a vocal and

well-organized solidarity movement. Here geography and history trumped anti-communism. "Simple proximity, together with a historical memory of the sacrifice paid by East Timorese protecting Australian soldiers against Japanese attacks in World War II, played their role" in sparking this movement, observed one scholar, "as did the presence in Australia of a growing East Timorese refugee community."<sup>12</sup> Several European nations also witnessed the rise of East Timor solidarity groups: Portugal, due to its colonial ties and refugee population; The Netherlands, due to its historic ties to Indonesia; and Britain, which served as headquarters for human rights groups such as Amnesty International, the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR), and TAPOL, an Indonesian human rights campaign started by a former Indonesian political prisoner.<sup>13</sup>

In the United States, East Timor remained the concern of a tiny coterie of scholars, journalists, Catholic Church activists, Portuguese Americans, human rights activists, and progressives.<sup>14</sup> The relative silence in the United States on East Timor contrasts starkly with what one historian aptly has called the "phenomenal burst of human rights activism in the United States" in the mid-1970s. Jeremi Suri accurately has observed that following the global upheavals of the late 1960s many countries witnessed widespread social fragmentation and political withdrawal. But public disillusionment with state power also created political space for the international human rights movement and for Congress to criticize the internal practices of repressive governments without regard for ideology, subjecting both the Soviet Union and its clients and U.S.-backed dictatorships to the same harsh gaze.<sup>15</sup>

If human rights activism was "preeminently a politics of the information age," then the handful of Americans knowledgeable about East Timor faced a formidable challenge.<sup>16</sup> Following its invasion, Indonesia effectively closed East Timor to the outside world, barring journalists and aid workers from the territory. East Timorese refugees and church activists periodically smuggled out letters and messages.<sup>17</sup> However, the U.S. government could and did ignore this trickle of information, aided by a pliant media that generally refused to cover East Timor and accepted Indonesian government propaganda at face value when it did. The State Department's human rights report for 1976, for example, did not even mention East Timor, while the next year's report dismissed charges of Indonesian atrocities and attributed the 60,000–80,000 reported deaths in the territory to the brief civil war of August 1975.<sup>18</sup> Without consistent and reliable sources of information, mobilized

constituencies, or organized pressure on Congress and other institutions, however, the small and scattered community of East Timor supporters was unable to staunch the flow of U.S. military aid to Indonesia, which totaled nearly a billion dollars from 1975 to 1990.<sup>19</sup>

Western governments quickly accommodated Indonesia's invasion and occupation, treating the 1976 annexation of East Timor as a fait accompli although Indonesian forces struggled until 1980 simply to establish military control over the territory. In 1986 Australia became the first (and only) government to recognize legally the annexation in spite of considerable public opposition, while Washington continued to "accept the de facto incorporation of East Timor without maintaining that a valid act of self-determination has taken place." Solidarity groups, facing hostile governments, struggled to keep the issue of East Timor alive, often working through international forums such as the UN Decolonization Committee.<sup>20</sup> The defeat of Falintil guerrilla forces in the early 1980s made the territory's chances for independence appear extremely remote. Through the decade international commentary generally focused on the narrow issue of human rights under Indonesian occupation rather than on the broader question of self-determination. By the late 1980s East Timor seemed "the quintessential lost cause, followed only by a tiny fringe of hard core activists." Western support for Jakarta, the predictable result of Cold War politics and Indonesia's strategic and economic importance, continued unquestioned throughout the period.<sup>21</sup>

#### THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND THE RISE OF TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVISM

Nearly fifteen years after Indonesia's invasion and annexation of East Timor a combination of factors in the international system, in Indonesia, and in East Timor fostered a resurgence of activism both within the territory and internationally. In 1989 the Suharto regime concluded that East Timor sufficiently was pacified to open up the territory to journalists and foreign tourists, going so far as to allow a visit from Pope John Paul II marked by highly visible protests by East Timorese youth. These youth formed the backbone of an emerging mass nonviolent resistance movement that paralleled the guerrilla forces continuing their symbolic stand against the Indonesian Army.<sup>22</sup> The partial opening of East Timor allowed for a freer flow of information to international supporters, a development that coincided with the rise of the internet. In 1990 U.S.

human rights activists started an Internet newsgroup (reg.easttimor), which facilitated far more rapid communication and distribution of information among the scattered international network of East Timor activists than had been possible previously.

Shifts in the international system also created new space for challenging both the Indonesian occupation and Western support for Jakarta. The end of the Cold War in 1989 offered the possibility of divorcing Indonesia's invasion and occupation of East Timor from Jakarta's role as a bastion of anti-communism in Southeast Asia, especially among Indonesia's erstwhile supporters in the U.S. Congress. Moreover, the emergence of the Baltic States from Soviet control contrasted sharply with East Timor's continued subjugation, a point made with repeated frequency at the time.<sup>23</sup>

The second shift occurred with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. President Saddam Hussein expressed his surprise at the international community's reaction to his aggression against Kuwait, commenting that the world had turned a blind eye to Indonesia's invasion of East Timor. Hussein's remarks prompted more than half the members of the U.S. Congress to sign a letter to President George Bush pushing for greater action on behalf of the Timorese.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, Australian labor prime minister Bob Hawke's remark that "big countries cannot invade little countries and get away with it" was seized upon by activists who pointed out the contradiction between Canberra's stance on Kuwait and its position on East Timor. Australian solidarity groups proposed an international campaign to promote talks between the East Timorese resistance and Indonesia under UN auspices.<sup>25</sup> But although East Timor gained more attention between 1989 and 1991, this visibility did not translate into policy changes on the part of Indonesia's chief supporters, Britain, Australia, and the United States.

Like many modern movements for self-determination and independence, colonial violence decisively transformed East Timor's trajectory. In late October 1991 Indonesia launched a major crackdown in East Timor and cancelled a planned Portuguese Parliamentary delegation for which Timorese youth had been preparing substantial protests. In response, on November 12, 1991, activists transformed the funeral procession for a slain student into a historic independence protest involving thousands of residents of the capital city of Dili. When the crowd reached the Santa Cruz cemetery on the edge of town, Indonesian troops using U.S.-supplied M-16 rifles opened fire, killing at least 270 Timorese on the spot and hundreds more in the days that followed.<sup>26</sup>

The massacre might have passed unnoticed but for the presence of a British cameraman and two American journalists.<sup>27</sup> They quickly broadcast news of the massacre around the world, momentarily transforming East Timor into a front-page story and offering “an unprecedented and probably one-time chance to change U.S. policy.” In the wake of the Dili massacre a tiny handful of U.S. activists began to work full time on East Timor. Just as the Central America solidarity movement benefited from the decline of the nuclear freeze movement, many of these early East Timor activists “had been working on Nicaragua, Palestine, or South Africa [and] were, for different reasons, shifting their focus.”<sup>28</sup>

In December 1991 these activists formed the East Timor Action Network (ETAN). This organization sought to end U.S. military assistance and training to Indonesia as a means of pressuring Jakarta to end human rights abuses and to permit a meaningful act of self-determination in East Timor. In order to achieve these goals ETAN faced enormous challenges. The first was to make East Timor and human rights more generally a priority in the U.S.–Indonesian bilateral relationship, a task requiring increased media coverage and awareness of the U.S. role in supporting Indonesia’s occupation.

Secondly, activists needed to convince Congress that Washington could and should sanction Indonesia to achieve change in East Timor, something it had not done since Suharto’s rise to power in 1966.<sup>29</sup> Following Indonesia’s invasion in 1975 a number of Congressmen, led by Tony Hall (D-Ohio) and Donald Fraser (D-MN), attempted to convince the Jimmy Carter administration to take up the issue with Jakarta, but to no avail. In fact, military aid and weapons sales to Indonesia during the Carter administration nearly doubled to more than \$200 million in fiscal year (FY) 1979, when the killings in East Timor peaked. Congress continued to produce letters raising the issue of East Timor, but successive U.S. administrations easily dismissed such efforts since they never faced Congressional sanction for their policies.<sup>30</sup>

More importantly, East Timor supporters faced the challenge of shifting the discursive framework surrounding the territory to include not only human rights but also self-determination. Practically this meant challenging Indonesia’s monopoly on information, the virtual blackout of East Timor in the Western media, and the public positions of Indonesia’s allies, who had offered *de facto* or *de jure* acceptance of the invasion and occupation and who continued to provide military and economic assistance to Jakarta. James Dunn, a former Australian consul

to Portuguese Timor and a leading international activist on behalf of the Timorese, observed in 1995 that "it is much easier to persuade the major powers to raise individual human rights questions," but "when it comes to mustering support for a comprehensive UN solution, incorporating East Timor's yet unexpressed right to self-determination, the Portuguese are finding it difficult to get support from major powers with influence in Jakarta."<sup>31</sup>

In February 1992, ETAN initiated a campaign to cut U.S. military training for Indonesia through the International Military Educational and Training (IMET) program, which brought 150 Indonesian officers to the United States each year. United States officials and Congressional supporters claimed that IMET imparted democratic values and respect for human rights to recipients, although scant evidence existed that thirty-five years of U.S. military training for Indonesia had accomplished either goal. Activists in Rhode Island convinced a local Congress member to introduce a resolution banning IMET training. Jakarta's corporate allies (notably General Electric, McDonnell-Douglas, Freeport-MacMoRan, and AT&T) lobbied Congress heavily to defeat the bill. In October 1992, however, the bill passed, thanks to a phone-banking effort conducted mostly by Brown University students, who called tens of thousands of people in key Senate and Congressional districts. It was a landmark victory and was one of the first instances in which U.S. activists had succeeded in blocking American military assistance to a human rights-abusing regime against the wishes of the executive branch.

Over the next two years, the East Timor Action Network held public meetings, established a handful of local chapters around the country, and organized its first speaking tour with East Timorese activist Contancio Pinto, who at the time was the only Timorese living in the United States. Though a tiny organization with scant funding, ETAN quickly carved out a niche and began to have a discernable impact on U.S. policy. In July 1993 grassroots pressure generated by ETAN forced the State Department to block the transfer of U.S. F-5 fighter planes to Indonesia. The *Jakarta Post* observed that cancellation of the weapons deal "resounded like [a] sonic boom" in Indonesia. In November Indonesian president Suharto faced public protest in the United States over East Timor for the first time when he attended an Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Seattle, Washington. The expanded and persistent pressure from East Timor activists, joining the older chorus of church and human rights NGOs, prompted the Bill Clinton administration in 1993 to cosponsor a resolution criticizing Indonesia at the UN



Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva—the first time the United States had done so. In early 1994 the State Department announced a ban on small arms sales to Indonesia again in response to Congressional and grassroots pressure. Not since Indonesia's invasion of East Timor in 1975 had the U.S. government suspended weapons transfers to Jakarta.<sup>32</sup>

The emergence of a grassroots East Timor network in the United States paralleled the reemergence of an effective transnational network. Following the Santa Cruz massacre, East Timor support groups formed the International Federation for East Timor (IFET) to coordinate their efforts, especially at international bodies such as the UN Human Rights Commission. This organization spawned regional groupings such as the Asia Pacific Coalition for East Timor (APCET), which worked to pressure Indonesia's neighbors to support self-determination for East Timor. By 1995 East Timor solidarity groups existed in more than twenty countries—Japan alone had fifty local organizations. A similarly large network in Australia made East Timor the most important bilateral issue between Canberra and Jakarta in spite of the government's aggressively pro-Indonesia stance.<sup>33</sup> Across Europe a revived East Timor solidarity movement pressured Sweden, The Netherlands, Ireland, Britain, Germany, and other governments to halt weapons sales to Indonesia and organized parliamentarians in support of self-determination for East Timor. In the single most spectacular episode of the solidarity movement, four British women broke into the grounds of British Aerospace in 1996 and—using household hammers—destroyed a Hawk ground attack fighter jet bound for Indonesia. The result proved even more extraordinary: All four were acquitted by a British judge after basing their defense in international law.<sup>34</sup>

The transnational East Timor activist network also benefited greatly and worked in concert with emergent Indonesian civil society organizations, the most important of which were the Indonesian Legal Aid Society (LBH) and the human rights NGOs *Solidamor* and the Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy (ELSHAM). These groups supported East Timorese activists living in Jakarta, Jogjakarta, and other major cities; investigated human rights abuses; and relayed information to news media and international NGOs. They also countered Indonesian propaganda on East Timor by providing an analytical perspective that linked the ongoing occupation and abuses in the territory with human rights abuses elsewhere in the archipelago, challenging Indonesian authoritarianism in the process.<sup>35</sup> When the Suharto regime hosted the APEC conference in Jakarta in November 1994, Indonesian activists

helped a group of Timorese students scale the fence of the U.S. Embassy and occupy the grounds in protest, generating sympathetic worldwide media coverage.<sup>36</sup> According to journalists covering APEC, the protest by Timorese youth caused “acute embarrassment for Indonesia,” which had “worked hard to keep human rights off the agenda at the ... forum.”<sup>37</sup>

#### CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR EAST TIMOR ACTIVISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Following the Santa Cruz massacre, ETAN enjoyed remarkable success in helping to make East Timor in particular and human rights more generally a major issue in U.S.–Indonesian bilateral relations. In doing so, ETAN became a model node in what Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink have called a transnational advocacy network—a network of activists “distinguished by the centrality of principled ideas or values in motivating their formation; belief that individuals can make a difference; creative use of information; and employment of sophisticated political strategies in targeting their campaigns.”<sup>38</sup> More than just an international federation of local solidarity groups, the East Timor solidarity network fused local initiatives with coordinated international campaigns aimed at pressuring national governments on a broad set of common objectives, primarily an end to military assistance to Indonesia and support for Timorese self-determination.

In a few short years, ETAN developed a flexible yet effective strategy for building support, for generating and shaping public discourse on East Timor, and for affecting U.S. policy. ETAN mobilized activists using East Timorese voices and stories, raised powerful arguments about U.S. responsibility for past and ongoing atrocities there, served as a source of reliable information, directed local activists into effective Congressional lobbying campaigns, and used direct action to shame U.S. and Indonesian officials.

As a loosely structured and scantily funded organization, ETAN faced a daunting challenge—creating and sustaining awareness of East Timor in the face of insignificant media coverage and near-universal ignorance of the territory. It is useful in this respect to compare the East Timor network with the far larger Central America solidarity movement, which numbered some 2,000 local or national organizations by the late 1980s. These groups benefited from geographic proximity to Central America, relatively high public awareness, a large refugee

population living in the United States, a long history of travel by U.S. citizens, and extensive religious and missionary connections.<sup>39</sup>

East Timor supporters in the United States lacked the advantages of geographic proximity, a history of immigration and other relations, or extensive public awareness, but they did have an unusually compelling story “of right and wrong whose causes [could] be assigned to deliberate actions of identifiable individuals or institutions”—in this case the U.S. government.<sup>40</sup> Dramatic evidence of Washington’s support for Indonesia’s invasion and occupation drew a direct link among U.S. policy, Indonesian actions, and atrocities in East Timor and raised the clear prospect that a change in U.S. policy (such as a halt to weapons sales or training) could alleviate Timorese suffering and could help its people achieve self-determination. Inexperienced activists consistently cited the clear nature of U.S. complicity in explaining their decision to become involved in East Timor-related activism, while those who had worked, often with only partial success, on other issues expressed hope that their individual actions could contribute to changing U.S. policy.<sup>41</sup>

In 1993 East Timor supporters organized their first speaking tour, bringing a Timorese voice to many Americans who barely had heard of the territory. Activists used speaking tours and other media to reach out to progressive, religious, and academic communities and to raise East Timor’s profile among other human rights and peace and justice organizations that previously had devoted scant attention to the issue. Between 1991 and 1995 the East Timor Action Network expanded from a tiny handful of people dispersed around the country to a dozen local chapters, doubling again in size over the next four years to include more than 10,000 supporters and a core of several dozen committed activists.

In addition to establishing credibility in the progressive and human rights community, ETAN established a reputation as a reliable source of information for journalists, scholars, policymakers, and NGO activists. The partial opening of East Timor to the outside world, moreover, coincided with the rapid spread of the Internet. These developments enabled a relatively small network to disperse news and information quickly about East Timor, to mobilize supporters in the United States, and to maintain contact with international partner organizations and activists inside the territory.<sup>42</sup> When East Timorese students occupied the grounds of the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta during the November 1994 APEC summit, ETAN quickly mobilized grassroots activists via the Internet to flood the White House, State Department, and Congressional offices

with phone calls demanding that the United States guarantee the students' safety. (The Timorese eventually were offered asylum in Portugal.) Activists in London, Amsterdam, Washington, and San Francisco engaged in coordinated acts of civil disobedience at Indonesian embassies and consulates in solidarity with the students.<sup>43</sup> As a single-issue organization, ETAN also served as a resource for multi-issue peace and justice groups such as Peace Action, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, Pax Christi, and the D.C.-based Arms Transfer Working Group as they lobbied for a reduction in U.S. military assistance to human rights abusing regimes.

ETAN's success in Washington depended on its ability to establish credibility with Congress and among executive branch agencies.<sup>44</sup> Given the network's limited size, reach, and activist base, it only could hope to affect U.S. policy by establishing relationships with sympathetic senators and representatives who were in a position to restrict military aid, training, and weapons sales to Indonesia. Beginning in 1994, ETAN organized annual lobby days that brought scores of activists to Washington from around the country to press for an end to U.S. military aid to Indonesia, cultivating a critical mass of Congressional allies in the process. Since East Timor was initially a relatively unknown issue facing no active counterlobby, activists persuaded many Congressional offices with just a few visits, phone calls, or constituent letters. As a result, between 1992 and 1999 ETAN and its allies succeeded in halting most types of military aid and training for Indonesia.<sup>45</sup>

Finally, East Timor activists in the United States, as in other countries, used legal action, public protest, and direct action to shame U.S. officials and Indonesian governmental targets publicly. The Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and consulates around the country became frequent targets of protest, of nonviolent civil disobedience, and of political theater. When President Suharto visited the United States in 1995 (to receive an award from the humanitarian group CARE for his population control policies), he faced protests on every leg of his visit. Similar protests accompanied Foreign Minister Ali Alatas and high-ranking military officials when they traveled in the United States and Europe.<sup>46</sup> In addition, human rights lawyers used the Alien Tort Claims Act to file charges in U.S. courts against Indonesian officials implicated in atrocities in East Timor. In the most celebrated case, a Boston court found Indonesian general Sintong Panjaitan responsible for the death of New Zealand citizen Kemal Todd, who was killed in 1991 at the Santa Cruz cemetery massacre. The judge awarded the family a \$12 million

dollar judgment, effectively preventing the politically connected Panjaitan ever from returning to the United States.

The East Timor Action Network's political goals and strategy differed in important ways from the work of more mainstream human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI). Through the 1980s and 1990s both groups documented and publicized Indonesian human rights abuses in East Timor, served as advocates on East Timor's behalf at international forums such as the UNHCR, and brought Indonesian and Timorese activists to Washington to meet with officials and to testify before Congress.<sup>47</sup> But neither group ever called for an Indonesian withdrawal from East Timor, took an explicit position on Timorese self-determination, or called for an end to U.S. military training and aid despite the clear link among lethal assistance, the military's perception of international support for its actions, and ongoing atrocities. While effective in documenting and publicizing a particular category of human rights abuses, AI and HRW generally failed to challenge the policies of the United States and other governments that facilitated Jakarta's behavior.<sup>48</sup>

#### HUMAN RIGHTS OPPONENTS MOBILIZE

By 1994 Indonesian officials and their political and corporate supporters in Washington justifiably were frustrated. The "growing concern in Washington," according to James Dunn, was "fueled by growing NGO interest in the East Timor question." Indonesian officials repeatedly claimed that the East Timor issue was "not important." However, at a meeting of the Asia Society in New York, Indonesian foreign minister Alatas and other attendees complained about East Timor's disproportionate visibility in the U.S.–Indonesian bilateral relationship, a reality reflected by growing international press coverage of the Timorese.<sup>49</sup> "Jakarta had all the right connections and was spending tens of millions of dollars on the most prestigious public relations firms in the world but could not get Congress to listen," observes Charlie Scheiner, one of ETAN's founders, "and were [sic] now being outmaneuvered by a grassroots campaign with no money, no corporate backing, [and] virtually no institutionalized political support." Indonesian military officers described East Timor as a "pebble in Indonesia's shoe" and frankly admitted that "we have not got the sympathy of the people."<sup>50</sup> One State Department official privately complained that activists were pressuring Indonesia in "a really unconstructive manner."<sup>51</sup>

Indonesian officials and their supporters realized that the struggle over East Timor, and human rights more generally, was a “fight over images.” Like other repressive governments, the Suharto regime employed public relations firms such as the Washington-based Hill and Knowlton and Burston Marsteller to soften its image.<sup>52</sup> The stories and pictures coming out of East Timor, however, were not dismissed easily. Concerned about the growing and successful grassroots opposition to U.S. support for the Indonesian military, Jakarta’s political and corporate supporters went on the offensive. In 1994 a group of former U.S. ambassadors to Indonesia, former military officials, corporate executives, and prominent Indonesians created the U.S.–Indonesia Society (USINDO). While ostensibly a private organization that aimed only to promote and improve U.S.–Indonesian ties, the group emerged as the *de facto* pro-Indonesia lobby in Washington to counter ETAN and other critics of Jakarta.<sup>53</sup> In 1994 and 1995 USINDO, working with the Asia Society and the U.S.–Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) Business Council, organized a series of day-long seminars around the country with prominent U.S. and Indonesian officials, corporate executives, and sympathetic academics in an attempt to repair the country’s battered international image. These and other supporters of U.S.–Indonesian military ties also lobbied Congress and argued for a version of the “constructive engagement” policy that the Reagan administration had practiced toward South Africa and that the Clinton administration was practicing toward China.<sup>54</sup>

As part of this effort to improve ties with Jakarta, Indonesian businessman James Riady (head of the Lippo group) in the spring of 1994 invited Arkansas businessman and Clinton associate Webster Hubbell to visit East Timor. An Indonesian official explained that “letting a friend of Clinton’s see Timor might help change U.S. policy. So naturally we thought it was a good idea.” Two years later, the “Lippo-Gate” scandal unfolded after investigative reporters revealed that Indonesian businessmen tied to President Suharto had funneled funds directly to the Clinton presidential campaign in an effort to influence U.S. policy toward Jakarta, prompting Republican Senator Bob Dole to raise questions about U.S. support for the Indonesian occupation of East Timor.<sup>55</sup>

It would be a mistake, however, to overestimate the leverage that the tiny East Timor solidarity network had in Washington. Throughout the 1990s the Clinton administration resisted pressure from East Timor activists and Congressional critics to restrict military ties with Jakarta. When Congress banned IMET training for Indonesia in 1992, the

Pentagon simply continued the training under the Joint Combined Exchange Program (JCET) until its circumvention of Congressional intent was exposed by journalists in 1998. In late 1995 Jakarta's Congressional supporters successfully resumed Expanded IMET (E-IMET)—military training ostensibly limited to civilian courses and human rights instruction—for Indonesia after coming under strong pressure from the State Department and Pentagon. Although grassroots campaigns succeeded in forcing the State Department to ban small weapons sales and other forms of military assistance, the Clinton White House pushed through more than 250 commercial weapons sales to Indonesia during this period. And although ETAN helped to shift the terms of debate in the media and in Washington regarding Indonesia and East Timor, it failed to overcome long-standing opposition in the White House, State Department, and Pentagon to tying military aid to human rights.<sup>56</sup>

#### SHIFTING THE DEBATE: THE NOBEL PRIZE AND THE FALL OF SUHARTO

By 1996 the East Timor solidarity movement in the United States, working with church activists and more mainstream human rights and peace NGOs, had inserted East Timor successfully at the center of the U.S.–Indonesian bilateral relationship. This success in turn was made possible by the work of thousands of ordinary Timorese who rebuilt the civilian resistance to Indonesian occupation in the 1990s, continuing to organize and protest in the face of terror and intimidation and attracting increased press coverage as a result. In 1996 the first East Timorese human rights NGO, *Yayasan HAK*, formed in Dili, complementing the work of Catholic Bishop Carlos Belo's office in compiling and disseminating information about human rights abuses to the outside world.<sup>57</sup> What the transnational East Timor solidarity network had not yet done was shift public discourse in many countries from the narrow terrain of human rights to the broader terrain of self-determination.<sup>58</sup>

This shift took place when the Nobel Committee awarded the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize to Bishop Belo and de facto foreign minister Jose Ramos Horta for their efforts to bring about a peaceful end to the Indonesian occupation.<sup>59</sup> For several years activists discreetly had lobbied former prize winners, religious leaders, and parliamentarians to recognize East Timor's struggle. The Nobel Peace Prize conferred international legitimacy on the efforts of the Timorese and their international supporters to demand not just human rights but also genuine

self determination as called for by UN resolutions.<sup>60</sup> Accordingly, Belo and Horta immediately called for the international community to support a referendum on East Timor's political future. Major media outlets in countries that previously had supported Indonesia soon began raising the possibility of Timorese self-determination in addition to criticism of Indonesia's human rights record.<sup>61</sup>

In the United States the Nobel Prize raised East Timor's profile among peace and justice organizations, in the mass media, and on Capitol Hill, enabling the network to hire full-time staff to coordinate media and outreach activity, grassroots organizing, and legislative work.<sup>62</sup> Reflecting the changed political dynamic in Washington, Representative Tony Hall (D-OH), a long-time supporter of East Timor, introduced a Congressional resolution explicitly calling for a diplomatic solution to the conflict in East Timor based on "the people's right to self-determination." Senator Feingold (D-WI) wrote a similar letter to President Clinton which for the first time elicited the president's "interest" in "a UN-sponsored self-determination referendum in East Timor," while Representatives Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Frank Wolf (R-VA), both of whom had been lobbied heavily by local activists, traveled to East Timor.<sup>63</sup>

The prize announcement came as the Clinton administration moved ahead with plans for a \$250 million sale of F-16 fighter jets to the Indonesian military and on the heels of revelations about Indonesian businessman Riady's contributions to Clinton's presidential campaign.<sup>64</sup> ETAN and other groups lobbied Congress heavily during the winter of 1996 and spring of 1997, forcing the White House repeatedly to delay the weapons sale until President Suharto finally rejected both the F-16s and all military training. In May 1997 President Clinton even met with Bishop Belo, an act that outraged authorities in Jakarta.<sup>65</sup>

In the wake of the Nobel Prize, public discourse in the United States regarding East Timor slowly shifted to include self-determination as well as human rights, a shift that arguably would never have taken place without years of grassroots activism and Congressional lobbying by ETAN and other groups.<sup>66</sup> Canada, Australia, Japan, Britain, and other European countries with active East Timor solidarity networks witnessed similar shifts. The Indonesian government, however, continued to dismiss calls for a referendum.<sup>67</sup>

Again, international forces intervened. The Asian economic crisis in 1997 increased international pressure on Jakarta to seek a negotiated solution to its occupation of East Timor. Even observers sympathetic to Indonesia now viewed the East Timor issue as both a major drain on



vital national resources and as a major obstacle to international support for Indonesian economic recovery.<sup>68</sup> On the eve of the annual APEC summit in Vancouver, British Columbia, where President Clinton and Defense Secretary William Cohen were scheduled to meet with President Suharto, Congress voted for the first time to bar the use of U.S.-supplied weapons in East Timor. The Congressional vote—the product of a five-month ETAN grassroots lobbying campaign—came on the heels of a White House offer of a \$3 billion bailout loan for Jakarta, implicitly tying relief money for the Suharto regime to policy changes on East Timor.<sup>69</sup>

Five months later on May 21, 1998, President Suharto was swept from power by the forces of economic collapse and popular mobilization as hundreds of thousands of Indonesians braved the threat of army repression and poured into the streets demanding his resignation. While the transnational East Timor solidarity network played no role in these remarkable events, heightened international scrutiny and the prospects of further aid reductions made it difficult for the army and police simply to crush anti-Suharto demonstrations by force as they did in years past. Moreover, progressive Indonesian NGOs continued publicly to link East Timor's struggle for self-determination to their own struggle against Indonesia's authoritarian regime.<sup>70</sup>

Suharto's resignation sparked immediate calls by East Timorese leaders for a referendum on the territory's future and spurred a massive mobilization among Timorese youth who demanded a referendum as well as the release of jailed independence leader Xanana Gusmao. Indonesian military and intelligence officials responded by organizing paramilitary militias to terrorize independence supporters. United States officials seeking to restore political and economic stability in Jakarta now faced an emboldened Timorese resistance, the escalation of Indonesian military terror, and an effective grassroots opposition in the United States demanding strict conditions on the provision of any assistance to Jakarta. Correspondingly, the Clinton administration began signaling to interim Indonesian President B. J. Habibie the need for a resolution of the East Timor conflict, in part because stiff Congressional and activist opposition was frustrating its efforts to maintain ties to the Indonesian Armed Forces, still viewed by U.S. officials as guarantors of domestic order. On May 22, 1998, the day after Suharto resigned, the U.S. Senate unanimously called on President Habibie to support democratic and economic reforms in Indonesia and East Timor and to "support an internationally supervised referendum on self-determination."<sup>71</sup>

## OBSERVING EAST TIMOR'S INDEPENDENCE AND DESTRUCTION

Following Suharto's overthrow, interim president Habibie announced that Jakarta might support increased autonomy for East Timor and that he was intensifying negotiations with Portugal, under UN auspices, aimed at a political settlement. On May 5 Indonesia and Portugal reached an agreement to hold a popular ballot at the end of August on East Timor's future. Voters would choose to accept or to reject an Indonesian proposal for increased autonomy, with rejection of autonomy seen as a *de facto* vote for independence. Shortly after UN officials announced the vote, Indonesian military forces and paramilitary proxies accelerated a campaign of terror against independence supporters.<sup>72</sup> The deeply flawed agreement left Indonesia in charge of security during the preballot period. Jakarta's allies in Washington and elsewhere, meanwhile, refused to press for the introduction of UN security forces to insure a fair vote, believing that pressure on Indonesia might destabilize the fragile government.

With the agreement signed, activists who had worked for years in support of East Timor's right to self-determination "pondered how to make the best of a bad situation."<sup>73</sup> Some East Timor supporters joined the United Nations Assistance Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) charged with conducting the referendum. The East Timor Action Network worked with the International Federation for East Timor to organize an observer project (IFET-OP), which recruited and trained 125 observers from twenty countries.<sup>74</sup> The infrastructure of the transnational East Timor solidarity network—the strong connections among diverse national organizations, reliable means of communication, and the relationships groups had developed with East Timorese activists and NGOs (especially from Australia)—enabled IFET-OP and others to establish an effective presence quickly on the ground in East Timor. The observers deployed throughout East Timor, maintaining a visible presence in the hopes of deterring Indonesian violence and increasing the chances for a fair vote.

Beginning in June and continuing through the August 30 vote, IFET-OP observers monitored the performance of UNAMET's meager staff; documented Indonesian efforts to undermine the voting through terror and intimidation; published reports and recommendations on the referendum process; and acted as "global eyes, voices, and hands—a direct link between the East Timorese people and grassroots people around the world, unmediated by governments and journalists."<sup>75</sup> In the United States, ETAN continued to put pressure on Congress, the

Clinton administration, and the Indonesian government, and on June 30, 1999, the Senate adopted by a 98–0 margin a resolution calling for a tougher policy in support of a free and fair ballot in East Timor, warning that the success of the vote would “influence future decisions on loans and financial assistance to Indonesia.”<sup>76</sup>

The presence of international observers, UN workers, and international media bolstered the courage of the East Timorese, who defied Indonesia’s terror campaign and turned out in world historic numbers (more than 98 percent of registered voters) to decide their future. But the Indonesian Army had no intention of recognizing the will of the Timorese. Immediately after the results of the vote were announced, with 78.5 percent of Timorese rejecting Indonesia’s autonomy proposal, the army and its paramilitary proxies carried out a scorched earth campaign of terror and destruction and literally razed the country to the ground, forcing nearly 300,000 across the border into neighboring West Timor and killing perhaps 2,000 people.<sup>77</sup>

To the outrage of observers around the world, the U.S. government rejected international demands for Indonesia to allow a UN peacekeeping force to enter the territory.<sup>78</sup> Horrified solidarity activists held demonstrations in more than twenty countries, including a massive demonstration of hundreds of thousands in Lisbon, Portugal. In the United States, ETAN and allied organizations mobilized grassroots activists to bombard the White House and Congress with tens of thousands of phone calls demanding an immediate severing of military ties with Jakarta, prompting Senator Feingold and others to introduce a bill suspending U.S. aid to Indonesia.<sup>79</sup> One organizer recalls that “the well-established activist internet networks provided a powerful infrastructure for the dissemination of up-to-the-minute information on unfolding events.” Finally, on September 9, amid growing fears that the crisis in East Timor would destabilize Indonesia and reverberate throughout the region, the Clinton administration suspended military ties with Jakarta and demanded that it accept an international peacekeeping force led by Australia. Indonesian Armed Forces chief general Wironto conceded less than twenty-four hours later.<sup>80</sup>

#### CONCLUSION: EAST TIMOR SOLIDARITY IN AN AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

The entry of an international peacekeeping force into East Timor in late September 1999 marked the end of Indonesia’s brutal twenty-four

year occupation of the territory. The transnational East Timor solidarity network undoubtedly contributed to the international pressure on Jakarta that led President Habibie to support a referendum in 1999.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, Indonesia's destruction of East Timor in 1999 starkly exposed the limited power of transnational advocacy networks in an international system lacking effective institutional mechanisms for preventing mass atrocities. United States ambassador to Indonesia Stapleton Roy explained Washington's reluctance to sanction Jakarta even as its troops and militia proxies were burning East Timor to the ground in full view of the world, pointing out "the dilemma" faced by the great powers: "Indonesia matters and East Timor doesn't."<sup>82</sup>

In spite of these limitations, ETAN and other groups in the United States from 1991 to 1999 succeeded in disproving Roy's formulation. Solidarity activists did make East Timor matter to thousands of people around the country and to tens of thousands of supporters who came to view it not only as a crucial bilateral issue with Jakarta but as a symbol of the United States' failure to stand for democracy and human rights in the post-Cold War era. In part, the organization's success built on the lessons of earlier movements. First, while functioning in many ways as a solidarity organization, ETAN acted in a nonpartisan fashion and deliberately refused to publicly align itself with any party or faction in East Timor.<sup>83</sup> Second, ETAN maintained a sharp focus on U.S. military assistance to Indonesia as the tactical lever for achieving its strategic goals, working incrementally to build a consistent record of policy victories, which in turn kept grassroots activists motivated. Third, the network effectively pursued an inside-out strategy that wedded Washington lobbying with grassroots outreach and extensive media work and creative political protest. Finally, ETAN utilized emerging communication technologies such as the Internet, enabling it to create a decentralized network dispersed around the country and to mobilize a relatively limited pool of likely supporters, working with larger allied organizations when circumstances warranted and amplifying its organizational voice.

Ultimately, the East Timor solidarity network in the United States succeeded because it was able to combine persuasive moral arguments about American responsibility for Timorese suffering with material pressure that acted as a lever on Indonesian behavior. Moreover, ETAN and other groups convinced many American policymakers that pressuring Jakarta on East Timor need not damage the overall

bilateral relationship.<sup>84</sup> Congressional support for East Timor was thus relatively bipartisan, in part because there were no deeply defined ideological or political stakes involved, unlike many Cold War conflicts where Washington viewed human rights concerns through the lens of anti-communism.

Historians of U.S. foreign relations and political scientists have been slow to account for the role of NGOs and social movements in shaping international relations.<sup>85</sup> Much of contemporary international relations theory, especially work informed by rational choice models, fails to predict the emergence of values-based transnational movements around issues such as East Timor, and fails utterly to explain how such movements succeed. Moreover, existing transnational theory tends to lump voluntary, grassroots-based advocacy networks in with multinational corporations, international regulatory bodies, and other highly complex bureaucratic institutions whose goals, calculations of interest, and strategies are vastly different.<sup>86</sup> The myopia of academic discourse concerning social movements and U.S. foreign policy parallels public and media discourse, which seems incapable of examining such movements on their own terms rather than in comparison to the anti-Vietnam war movement. United States policy toward Indonesia and East Timor during the 1990s makes little sense, however, without examining the impact of East Timor advocacy groups on the policymaking process and upon public discourse.

In the wake of Indonesia's departure from East Timor in 1999, the leverage of the transnational solidarity movement has declined sharply. In 2000 a special UN investigatory team issued a strongly worded report calling on Jakarta to hold accountable perpetrators of crimes against humanity in East Timor, laying responsibility for the destruction of the territory in 1999 squarely at the feet of some of the Indonesian military's highest-ranking officers. Jakarta's response was to set up an Ad Hoc Human Rights Court, which proceeded to acquit virtually all of the officers brought before it. The failure of the Ad Hoc Human Rights Courts to ensure justice and accountability for Indonesian crimes in East Timor has bolstered the demands of East Timorese and transnational activists for an international tribunal, but so far they have proven unable to overcome opposition in Jakarta and from the United States and other powerful governments.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, many governments have used the events of September 11, 2001, and the Bush administration's so-called "war on terror" to restrict civil liberties and to downplay human rights in the name of fighting terrorism. In 2002 Secretary of

State General Colin Powell announced plans to spend \$50 million over three years to “assist Indonesia in the antiterrorism struggle,” a decision the Senate ratified in January 2003 by voting to resume military training ties with Jakarta despite its unwillingness to bring a single high-ranking Indonesian official to justice for the crimes of 1999.<sup>88</sup> More ominously, in late 2003 former Indonesian defense minister general Wironto, indicted by the UN for crimes against humanity for his role in the destruction of East Timor in 1999, announced plans to run for president under the banner of Golkar, the party of the former dictator Suharto.<sup>89</sup> The transnational East Timor solidarity movement undoubtedly played an important role in helping the people of East Timor achieve their freedom. It is clear, however, that such movements face distinct limits in their ability to challenge countries that commit atrocities, especially in an international system that privileges state sovereignty over internationally recognized human rights and where substantive justice depends on the support of powerful states.

#### ENDNOTES

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12 (2000): 47–62. On the U.S. role, see James Dunn, *Timor: A People Betrayed* (Sydney, Australia: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 312–321.

3. Even sympathetic histories, such as Arnold Kohen's *From the Place of the Dead: The Epic Struggle of Bishop Belo of East Timor* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1999), while attentive to the important role of church activism in the international solidarity movement, largely ignore other nonstate actors, with the result that Congress and the U.S. government seem to change policy independent of grassroots pressure.

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6. William Burr and Michael Allen, eds., "East Timor Revisited: Ford, Kissinger and the Indonesian Invasion, 1975–1976," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB62/>, accessed March 15, 2003.

7. For recent accounts, see Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (New York: New Press, 2003); Carlos Osorio, ed., assisted Kathleen Costar, "State Department Opens Files on Argentina's Dirty War," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB104/index.htm>, accessed December 29, 2003.

8. Roger S. Clark, "The 'Decolonization' of East Timor and the United Nations Norms on Self-Determination and Aggression," in *International Law and the Question of East Timor*, ed. Catholic Institute for International Relations (London, UK: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1995), 65–103.

9. Telegram 286596 from the State Department to U.S. Delegation Secretary's Aircraft, December 7, 1975, NSA Country Files, East Asia and the Pacific, Indonesia Box 6, Gerald Ford Library.

10. Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights: Vol. I* (Boston, MA: Pantheon, 1979), 129–205.

11. Cable from Canberra to Jakarta, October 7, 1975, cited in *Australia and the Indonesian Incorporation*, 447; see also Nancy Viviani, "Australians and the Timor Issue," *Australian Outlook* (Sydney) 30 (August 1976): 197–226.

12. David Hill, "East Timor and the Internet: Global Political Leverage in/ on Indonesia," unpublished manuscript, Asia Research Centre at Murdoch University (Western Australia, 2002), 4.

13. Dunn, *Timor*, 311, 333; Leite, *The East Timor Problem*, passim.

14. See, for example, Ben Anderson testimony before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations, *U.S. Policy on Human Rights Assistance: Overview and Indonesia* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 15, 1978); Chomsky and Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, 129–205; Arnold Kohen, “Human Rights in Indonesia,” *The Nation*, November 26, 1977; Richard Franke, *East Timor: The Hidden War* (New York: East Timor Defense Committee, 1976).

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16. Cmiel, “The Emergence of Human Rights Politics,” 1235.

17. Hill, “East Timor and the Internet,” 5; Sharon Scharfe, “Human Rights and the Internet in Asia: Promoting the Case of East Timor,” in *Human Rights and the Internet*, ed. Stephen Hick, Edward F. Halpin, and Eric Hoskins (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 129–137.

18. Chomsky and Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, 201–202.

19. William Hartung and Jennifer Washburn, *U.S. Arms Transfers to Indonesia, 1975–1997: Who’s Influencing Whom?* (New York: World Policy Institute, 1997).

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40. Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, 28.

41. Personal communication with Susan Mackley (ETAN Chicago member), February 25, 2003; Personal communication with Erik Piotrowski (ETAN Florida coordinator), February 24, 2003; Personal communication with Chris Lundry (ETAN Arizona coordinator), February 18, 2003; Personal communication with John Miller (ETAN founder and current outreach coordinator), February 18, 2003. The experience of ETAN activists confirms the observation of Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 165, who argues that “usually the drive to mobilize activism is limited to a small minority of people. Generation of insurgent consciousness is always socially located and heavily conditioned by people’s social-structural positioning. Specifically, we find that insurgent consciousness forms among people who are ‘cognitively accessible’ to information that violates their moral sensibilities, and who are subjectively engagable, that is, culturally and socially situated so that these violations are likely to become high priorities in their personal relevance structures.”

42. Hill, “East Timor and the Internet,” 7, 9.

43. East Timor Action Network Action Alert, November 13, 1994, topic 4823 posted on [reg.easttimor](http://reg.easttimor), November 13, 1994; ETAN Canada Alert, November 16, 1994, topic 4900 posted on [reg.easttimor](http://reg.easttimor), November 16, 1994; Hill, “East Timor and the Internet,” *passim*.

44. This task was made easier in 1996 when ETAN hired full-time staff to coordinate media and outreach activity, grassroots organizing, and legislative work.

45. In the states with the most active chapters (for example California, New York, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Illinois), a majority of Congressional representatives consistently signed dear-colleague letters and sponsored or cosponsored ETAN-friendly legislation.

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73. Scheiner, "Grassroots in the Field," 113–114.

74. See <http://etan.org/ifet/>; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, 28.

75. See for example "IFET-OP Report #5: Campaign Period Begins amidst Widespread Intimidation by Militia and Indonesian Security Forces Follows Generally Successful Voter Registration," August 17, 1999, <http://etan.org/ifet/>, accessed January 20, 2004.

76. ETAN Press Release, "U.S. Senate Votes 98–0 to Step Up U.S. Pressure on Indonesia for Peaceful East Timor Ballot," July 1, 1999, topic 20583 on [reg.easttimor](http://reg.easttimor), July 2, 1999.

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78. Alex Keto, "White House Talks Loudly With No Stick on E. Timor," *Dow Jones Newswire*, September 7, 1999. Elizabeth Becker and Philip Shenon, "U.S. Priority Is to Maintain Good Ties with Indonesia, Officials Indicate," *New York Times*, September 8, 1999; Gay Alcorn, "Media Critics Have Administration 'Bastards' on the Defensive," *Sydney Morning Herald*, September 9, 1999.

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80. Hill, "East Timor and the Internet," 21. Hill also concluded that "part of the reason for the turn of events in September 1999 when President Clinton and Prime Minister Howard relented to armed peacekeepers going to East Timor

was the level of Internet outrage on embassy systems at the White House, in Portugal, and the Australian Parliament"; "Clinton demands Indonesia accept international force," *Agence France Press*, September 9, 1999; Randall Mikkelsen, "U.S. Cuts Military Ties with Indonesia," *Reuters*, September 9, 1999.

81. Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 165.

82. Jardine, "East Timor, the United Nations, and the International Community," 47; Sander Thoenes, "What Made Jakarta Accept Peacekeepers," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 14, 1999. Shortly after writing this article, Thoenes was murdered by Indonesian soldiers in East Timor's capitol city of Dili.

83. This dynamic posed particular problems for activists in the Central American solidarity movement during the 1980s, some of whom aligned themselves with partisan guerrilla groups in El Salvador (the FMLN) and Guatemala (the URNG) that the U.S. government accused of Soviet backing or human rights abuses.

84. The tragic events of 1999, on the other hand, are a blunt reminder of the lengths to which the United States went to avoid sanctioning Indonesia when it concluded that pressuring Jakarta would damage the overall U.S.-Indonesian relationship; again, see Thoenes, "What Made Jakarta Accept Peacekeepers."

85. Exceptions include Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002); Lawrence Wittner, *Resisting The Bomb, Vol. II: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997); Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

86. Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, 118-119, make this point; for examples see David Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Bringing Transnational Actors Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures, and International Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

87. M. Taufiqurrahman, "Human Rights Tribunal Fails to Uphold Justice," *Jakarta Post*, January 29, 2003.

88. "Rights Groups Blast U.S. Vote On Military Ties with Indonesia," *Associated Press*, January 24, 2003.

89. "Ex-General to Make Run for President of Indonesia," *New York Times*, January 16, 2004.