

Estafeta

Voice of the East Timor Action Network/U.S.

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Accomplishments and Challenges After One Year of Independence

by Charles Scheiner

East Timor has been independent for one year – too little time to overcome three years of United Nations transitional government, a quarter-century of Indonesian military occupation and a half-millennium of Portuguese colonial rule. But anniversaries are milestones, and this article attempts a brief

overview of the accomplishments and challenges facing the world's newest nation, one of the poorest, smallest and most traumatized countries on the globe.

From the devastation of 1999 until mid-2002, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) ruled as a benevolent dictatorship. In 2001, elections were held for a

Constituent Assembly, which wrote a constitution. Resistance leader Xanana Gusmão was elected President in April 2002, and the Constituent Assembly, with an absolute Fretilin majority, became East Timor's Parliament. Although some progress was made in reconstruction, economic development and creating administrative structures during UNTAET, huge tasks were left to the new government.

East Timor achieved political independence on May 20, 2002, but achieving real independence is a long-term struggle. The country remains dependent on foreign donors for 80% of public sector spending, including 40% of the government budget. Unemployment stands at more than 75%; many of the buildings and homes destroyed in 1999 have not yet been rebuilt; the judicial, educational and other government systems are barely functioning.

Hundreds of international

staff "advise" every government service; some services (police, security, serious crimes prosecution) remain under international control. Foreign companies control the electronic media, the oil industry, telecommunications and other key sectors. East Timorese capacity and responsibility is growing, but it takes time to learn how to manage a country.

East Timor lives with a legacy of pervasive poverty, trauma and disempowerment, but the population remains peaceful, with most people working constructively against difficult odds. An elected government is in power; an elected parliament is passing the basic laws every country needs. East Timorese police, teachers, health care workers, judges, administrators, activists, and politicians go to work every day.

All have too few resources to do their jobs well, and nearly all have less education and experi-

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Pamela Sexton

A 2002 demonstration in Dili calling for Australia to respect East Timor's full rights to oil in the Timor Sea.

(In)Justice and the Struggle for Accountability

by John M. Miller

East Timor's Serious Crimes Unit (SCU) finally did what Indonesian prosecutors have failed to do. On Feb. 24, the United Nations-established unit indicted ranking Indonesian military officials for orchestrating the violence before and after East Timor's independence vote in 1999.

The SCU indictment charged General Wiranto (Defense Minister and armed forces chief at the time) and six other military com-

manders with crimes against humanity for murder, forced deportation and persecution "undertaken as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against the civilian population of East Timor and specifically targeted those who were believed to be supporters of independence for East Timor" in 1999.

Indonesian officials were predictably dismissive. Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda said his government would "simply ignore" the indictments. Another cabinet member said trials would damage relations with East

Timor.

Even some important East Timorese leaders have been less than supportive. While voicing respect for the independence of the prosecutors and courts, they expressed strong concerns about the impact of the indictments on relations with Indonesia. Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta thus quickly flew to Jakarta to smooth Indonesia's ruffled feathers.

The United Nations' first official reaction was to disassociate itself from the SCU by stat-

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About East Timor and the East Timor Action Network

Estafeta is the Portuguese word for messenger. In East Timor, it identifies people who, with great courage and ingenuity, carried messages throughout the resistance and civilian underground during the Indonesian occupation.

East Timor is a half-island the size of Massachusetts, 400 miles northwest of Australia. It was a Portuguese colony for four centuries, and its 600,000 people tasted independence following the anti-fascist Portuguese revolution in 1974. But nationhood was short-lived.

On December 7, 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor after getting the "green light" from President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger. Indonesian armed forces occupied East Timor until October 1999, with essential military and diplomatic support provided by the United States.

Between 1975 and mid-1999, more than 200,000 East Timorese people (one-third of the pre-invasion population) were killed by massacre, forced starvation and disease. Systematic campaigns of rape, murder, torture and arbitrary arrest terrorized the population. Natural resources (including oil, coffee and marble) were pillaged by Indonesian dictator Suharto's military-business complex.

Suharto ruled Indonesia brutally for 32 years (and oversaw genocide in East Timor for 23). But the Indonesian people forced him to resign in 1998, and the Habibie government allowed the East Timorese to vote. On August 30, 1999, after a quarter-century of brutal Indonesian rule, 78.5% of the East Timorese people chose independence.

Following the vote, the Indonesian military and their militias carried out their threats of retaliation. Thousands were killed. More than three-fourths of the people were displaced from their homes; a quarter-million were forced to Indonesia. Most towns and houses in East Timor were leveled.

East Timor is now the world's newest independent country. Yet some 30,000 people have still not returned, and those who have face a mammoth task of reconstructing their country from scratch. Not only must they design their political system, they have to find their families, build their homes, salvage their society, and travel the difficult road from occupation through aid-dependency to self-sufficiency.

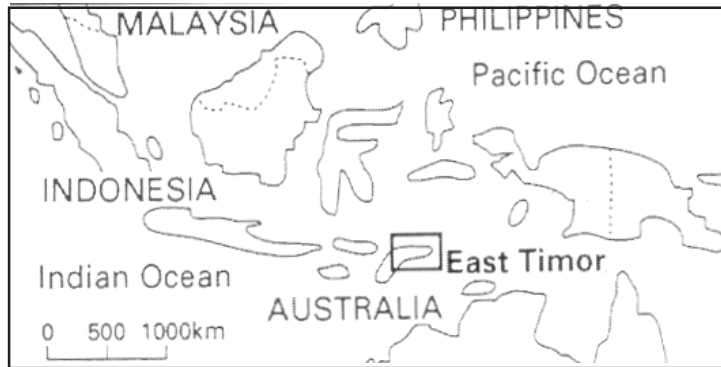
International awareness of the horror of East Timor increased after November 12, 1991, when Indonesian soldiers acting under high-level orders killed more than 270 nonviolent demonstrators at Santa Cruz Cemetery in Dili. Unlike many previous massacres, this one was witnessed by foreign journalists, who documented the incredible courage of the demonstrators — and the horrific inhumanity of the Indonesian army.

The East Timor *Action Network* was created in response to the Dili massacre. ETAN is a grassroots movement with thousands of supporters, key contacts, and chapters across the United States. We have worked for human and political rights for the people of East Timor and for Indonesians who are struggling for democracy in their country.

Since East Timor is now independent, ETAN is working with East Timorese organizations on issues of human rights still affected by the U.S. and multilateral powers, including justice and U.S.-Indonesia military ties.

ETAN embraces tactics from public education to protest, lobbying to local organizing, diplomacy to development, resource production to media work. We helped stop U.S. military training aid to Indonesia in 1992 and have worked to keep restrictions in place ever since. Our grassroots pressure over the years blocked numerous weapons sales to Indonesia, and President Clinton's belated cutoff of all U.S. military support in September 1999 opened the way for international troops to replace the Indonesian army. We will continue to pressure Indonesia until all East Timorese people have been allowed to return home, the Indonesian army has allowed democracy in areas remaining under its influence, those responsible for crimes in East Timor from 1975 to 1999 have been held accountable, and the East Timorese people have genuine self-determination.

ETAN is made up of people just like you who contact their representatives in Washington, protest, and educate others in the community about the situation in East Timor and Indonesia. We survive on your generous donations of time, talent and money. Please join us. And thank you. ■



The East Timor *Estafeta* is the newsletter of the East Timor *Action Network* of the United States. We welcome your comments and suggestions on improving its layout or content.

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Legislation, Language and Lobbying

A Report from Washington, D.C.

by *Karen Orenstein*

The 108th session of Congress has begun, bringing with it a Republican-controlled Senate and House of Representatives. This presents ETAN activists with new challenges as well as opportunities. An intense Senate floor debate over U.S. training for the Indonesian military (TNI), sparked by an amendment introduced by Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) in late January, kick-started 2003 and set the tone for a demanding year.

The Senate and House versions of the Foreign Operations Appropriation bill for fiscal year 2003 (FY03) did not restrict International Military Education and Training (IMET). Feingold's amendment would have reinserted that restriction, conditioning IMET availability on, among others, the Indonesian government and military "taking effective measures, including cooperating with the [FBI], to bring to justice" those responsible for the August 2002 ambush in Papua that killed two U.S. and one Indonesian citizen and wounded at least 12, eight of whom were American. Indonesian police and non-governmental organization investigations indicate that the TNI was responsible for the ambush.

Under the guise of the "war on terror," the Bush administration worked with Senate allies to defeat the amendment, allowing full IMET for Indonesia for the first time in a decade. The State Department asserted that the amendment would "damage important U.S. foreign policy interests in Indonesia."

Thirty-six senators voted for the amendment, and 61 against. Senators Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Christopher Bond (R-MO) led the opposition. In his floor speech, Bond talked of "slurs on the Indonesian military," and submitted that the amendment would "embarrass the military because some activist groups are not satisfied with the results of the tribunals that investigated the outrages in East Timor." Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and Ron Wyden (D-OR) co-sponsored the amendment.

Still, there have been significant legislative gains. The FY03 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act continues restriction of foreign military financing and added a restriction on licensing of lethal defense articles for

export to Indonesia. Four conditions have been placed on these restrictions (known as the "Leahy Conditions"), pertaining to accountability for gross human rights violations in East Timor and Indonesia and audits by the Defense Ministry of TNI receipts and expenditures publicly available. (The government only provides 25% to 30% of the TNI budget. The TNI raises the rest from legal and illegal businesses, including extortion, illegal logging and granting of mining concessions, drug trafficking, and prostitution rings.)

The same legislation also contained \$25 million in economic assistance for East Timor. It further required that the Departments of Defense and State provide Congress with a report on all military training given to foreign military personnel, as well as a report by the Secretary of State evaluating the IMET program in general.

ETAN, together with the Indonesia Human Rights Network (IHRN), is already busy working with friends in Congress on several FY04 bills. In addition to military assistance restrictions, we hope to see strong language on justice, support for peace initiatives in Aceh and Papua, and condemnation of the TNI's ongoing human rights atrocities and the militia threat to East Timor's peace and security. ETAN continues to work with other coalition groups on these initiatives.

ETAN is also working with several con-

gressional offices to press the Bush administration to honor a January 2003 letter from East Timor's Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation. The letter asks Bush to assist in the speedy provision of information pertaining to a selected number of historically significant events and particularly egregious human rights abuses during the Indonesian invasion and occupation.

In April, 46 representatives, led by Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Chris Smith (R-NJ), wrote to Secretary of State Colin Powell requesting that the U.S. delegation to the 59th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) press for a formal, comprehensive review of Indonesia's ad hoc Human Rights Court on East Timor and for an international tribunal on East Timor as the only remaining option for real justice. The letter also urged Powell to press Jakarta to extradite suspects residing in Indonesia indicted by the joint UN-East Timor Serious Crimes Unit. ETAN also wrote a memo to the State Department with recommendations for the UNCHR.

In another initiative, Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) and seven others wrote to the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee on restricting military assistance and other matters.

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Support ETAN!

On May 20, East Timor will be one year old as an independent nation. As noted elsewhere in this issue, the new nation has made some progress, but still faces many challenges. While the world's attention is focused elsewhere, ETAN remains committed to supporting justice and genuine self-determination for the people of East Timor. Your participation and financial support are essential to this work. *Please donate generously.*

Contributions of any amount towards our political advocacy work should be made to ETAN/U.S. Contact us if you want to make a tax-deductible contribution of more than \$50 towards our educational work or you can donate online. Mail contributions to: ETAN/U.S., 1101 Pennsylvania Ave. SE Suite 204, Washington DC 20003. You can also make a secure tax-deductible credit card contribution via our website at www.etan.org/donate.htm.

The Iraq War as Seen from East Timor

by Joseph Nevins

Like any national society, East Timor is a complex one with different perspectives on a great variety of issues. On the matter of the United States-led war on Iraq, however, public and official opinion — before and after the invasion — has been largely critical of Washington.

An important exception was Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta, who was the first within the new government to voice his opinion publicly on the matter. In an op-ed published in *The New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *International Herald Tribune*, and *Sydney Morning Herald* in late February, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate wrote, “History has shown that the use of force is often the necessary price of liberation.” Implying that such force had helped to bring about East Timor’s freedom, Ramos-Horta argued that the threat of force by the international community was the only way to contain Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime and to get him to surrender his alleged weapons of mass destruction and resign from office. He also praised the Bush administration’s “aggressive strategy,” stating that it was the reason that Baghdad had allowed United Nations inspections to restart. At the same time, however, the foreign minister called upon Washington to allow more time for the inspections to work.

Ramos-Horta’s statement generated a great deal of controversy

within the international solidarity movement. Numerous long-time activists wrote public statements denouncing his position.

Once the war started, other government officials also let their positions be known. While visiting Australia — one of the few countries that provided troops in support of Washington’s war — East Timor’s president Xanana Gusmão stated: “As a human being I will not support [the war].” “We came from a war and we know the consequences,” he explained. “We know all the psychological and social impacts.”

And Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri issued a statement saying his government was “shocked” that the UN Security Council had not arrived at a “peaceful and consensual solution,” while arguing that UN inspectors had needed “more time.” “The UN system should function in such a way as to never permit unilateral decisions by any country or group of countries in the search of solutions for problems that affect all humanity,” Alkatiri stated.

In terms of East Timorese civil society, a coalition of the country’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs) held a demonstration in Dili on Feb. 15 as part of an international day of action against the looming war. Over 100 East Timorese participated, along with people from 11 different countries. Because of the stature of these organizations, *Estafeta* reprints excerpts from their statement below. ■

Statement presented to the United States, United Kingdom and Australian embassies in Dili, East Timor

15 February 2003

The impending war between the United States (with a few supporters) and Iraq is a matter of global concern, and we, the people of East Timor . . . want to make our voices heard.

The government of the United States (with support from Great Britain and Australia) is leading the charge for war against Iraq. These three governments have helped East Timor’s independence since 1999 but from 1975 until 1999 they supported the brutal Indonesian military occupation of this country, supplying weapons and training to the Indonesian army to better enable it to kill and torture the East Timorese people.

There is no moral principle in their current desire to overthrow Saddam Hussein . . . when they felt no compulsion to overthrow Suharto, who was at least as bloody and brutal as Hussein. . . .

Suharto’s dictatorship was eventually ousted by the Indonesian people, who accomplished “regime change” through largely peaceful means. The people of East Timor made our own “regime change” through the Popular Consultation. In both cases, international support was mostly nonviolent and always defensive, never targeting civilians. . . .

During 24 years of illegal occupation, neither East Timor’s

resistance nor any foreign government advocated invading Indonesia or attacking Indonesian civilians. The Indonesian people, like the East Timorese, were victims of Suharto, not to be punished for his crimes.

Likewise, the people of Iraq, living under Saddam’s repression, are not his co-conspirators. An invasion of Iraq would kill even more Iraqi civilians, on top of hundreds of thousands who have already died from the decade-long embargo. The decision about who should govern Iraq is one for the people of Iraq to make, not foreign governments. . . .

East Timor is a small and new nation, but we know quite a lot about the death and destruction that come with war, and we don’t want to see similar destruction anywhere. Therefore, the civil society organizations signed below, joined by many, urge all governments to respect the decisions of the United Nations, and not to take the law, or the war, into their own hands. Human life is too precious to be wasted for political or economic profit.

The full statement is available online at www.etan.org/lh/misc/irakdemo1.html.

Justice for East Timor: We can't stop now!

José Luis de Oliveira's Visit Focuses on Social and Economic Justice

by Pamela Sexton

"The struggle for justice and accountability in East Timor is an international struggle to end a cycle of impunity that affects people across the globe." These words laid the foundation for the presentations that José Luis de Oliveira (otherwise known as Zé) gave during his month-long tour of the United States at the beginning of the year. "As long as there is no accountability for those individuals and institutions that instigate and support aggression and poverty," he told his audiences, "there will be no end to war and suffering."

A founding member of the two largest and best-known human rights organizations in East Timor, HAK (Association for Law, Human Rights and Justice) and FOKUPERS (the East Timorese Women's Communication Forum), Zé has much experience working with victims and survivors of Indonesian military abuse. Today, these organizations continue to seek justice for past crimes while also addressing new challenges such as the economic violence of neo-liberal policies introduced by international financial institutions.

The struggle for a legitimate process of justice for East Timor — starting from the past but looking ahead to the future — is a focus of Zé's work. And he calls on friends in the United States, from members of ETAN and peace and justice organizations to members of Congress, to increase our commitment and solidarity at this critical time.

Zé's month in the U.S. began with a week of networking meetings with progressive organizations in Washington DC. The purpose of these meetings was to share information and strategies for effective organizing, and to identify potential solidarity partners. Zé met with many groups focusing on global economic justice including the Institute for Policy Studies, the Bank Information Center, the Center for Economic Justice, Jubilee USA, and 50 Years Is Enough. He also met with labor and human rights organizations including the Solidarity Center of the AFL-CIO, Jobs with Justice, the Campaign for Labor Rights, the Worker Rights Consortium, the International Labor Rights Fund, and the International Human Rights Law Group.

Meetings with the Nicaragua Network and the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA) offered some per-



José Luis de Oliveira (center, striped shirt) at a February speaking event in Durham, North Carolina.

spective on how other U.S.-based international solidarity groups have changed the focus of their work as the political situation in these countries has changed and demanded new approaches. Zé was keenly interested in learning more about organizing work on U.S. domestic issues, such as homelessness, domestic violence, racism, and Native American land rights, and met with U.S. activists working on these issues.

Altogether, Zé visited eight different cities, where his presentations reached diverse audiences. Presentations were organized and attended by Amnesty International (D.C. and OK), Human Rights Watch (NY and D.C.), International Capoeira Angola Foundation (D.C.), Tampa Bay Action Group and Gainesville Civic Media Center (FL), Southerners on New Ground (NC), American Friends Service Committee (PA), students and faculty at Arizona State University in Phoenix and Tucson, as well as various ETAN chapters.

We were also able to reach larger audiences through media interviews with the Washington Post, Catholic News Service, Agence France Presse, Free Speech Radio News, United Nations Radio, Voice of America, and a community television station in Philadelphia. Unfortunately, New York's biggest blizzard in decades snowed us in, and

we missed two stops on the tour (Portland, ME and Chicago, IL).

So many wonderful people were involved in making these presentations and interviews possible. Thanks to all of you.

Finally, Zé met with various U.S. government offices, including USAID, the State Department, and key Congressional offices, including meetings with important committees (Foreign Operations Appropriations and International Relations).

In Zé's presentations, he stressed that the Bush administration's identification of the Indonesian military as a partner in the "war on terror" decreases the chances of holding any Indonesian leaders accountable for past crimes. He explained that without this accountability, clearly absent from the ad hoc human rights trials in Jakarta as well as the Dili courts, the Indonesian military will continue to regain power, threatening peace for East Timor and democracy for Indonesia. Without some high level truth telling within the U.S. about the role of U.S. leaders in past atrocities in East Timor, he repeatedly stated, "the place and people may change but the tragedy of U.S.-sponsored terror will continue. Thus, the cycle of impunity continues unless we work together to stop it now."

For a 78-minute CD of Zé's New York presentation, send \$10 postpaid to ETAN. ■

We're All Organizers

by Diane Farsetta

At the end of May, I will be leaving my position as ETAN's field organizer, although I will continue to do East Timor and Indonesia solidarity work.

In some ways the transition feels cyclical, since I started volunteering with ETAN in the mid 1990s. Over the past two and a half years, I've been fortunate to meet and work with many of you who squeeze ETAN activism into schedules already loaded with school, work and other activist commitments.

We all know that calling attention to issues relating to East Timor has become more difficult post-independence. We've struggled to articulate the importance of continued solidarity with a tiny, far-away country for justice for crimes against humanity, for accountability for U.S. complicity with the illegal and genocidal occupation, for restrictions on U.S.-Indonesia military ties, for a humane end to the refugee crisis, and for economic justice and genuine self-determination for the world's newest country. But we agree with East Timor's civil society groups (and many of its government officials!) that U.S.-based solidarity is still needed.

Due to our limited resources, ETAN is not hiring a replacement field organizer. This decrease in staffing means two things: ETAN will have to be more selective when choosing its campaign priorities, and ETAN's grassroots have a greater opportunity (and obligation!) to participate in and shape our work at the national level. This does not mean that we are asking or expecting you to take on big, demanding responsibilities; a small, sustained effort goes a long way. There are many successful local and other national volunteer-based organizations. ETAN itself did not have any paid staff during its first six years. This shows that, together, we can continue to make a difference!

Over the next month, I will be speaking with grassroots members, trying to help you build local organizing strategies for the future. Here are some suggestions:

- Think about how awareness of and action in solidarity with East Timor could be institutionalized locally. If you have uni-

versity or school contacts, ask that units on East Timor be added to relevant classes; information and speakers on East Timor be included in international or Asian events; the possibility of sistering with East Timorese schools be explored. If you have ties to religious or charity groups, ask them to support East Timor solidarity work and/or organizations in East Timor. Discuss focusing on one major annual event (maybe in coalition with other solidarity organizations) with your local group.

- Consider how your expertise and interests may help further ETAN's work at the national level. We currently have working groups for our justice and military ties campaigns, personnel support and fundraising efforts. In addition, there are many small tasks volunteers can take on: making calls, doing research and computer work, helping write thank you cards. If you can make a small, ongoing commitment, please let us know!
- Take the initiative to communicate with other ETANers and ETAN staff. If you have email access, this is easy! There is a low-volume listserv for international and organizational news; contact us to subscribe. ETAN staff are always happy to have you call. (See the contact information on page two.) But please do realize that staff are dealing with increasing workloads; be understanding but persistent.

I would like to end by acknowledging your contributions and our accomplishments. It's rare for people in the U.S. to support international solidarity and even more rare for that work to continue after times of crisis pass. But solidarity requires a joint commitment to build relationships and challenge injustices—just what we are doing.

People involved with ETAN are exploring and benefiting from a unique opportunity by working with a newly independent country. We can and are supporting the establishment of responsible, equitable systems and people-to-people relationships right from the beginning.

A luta continua! The struggle continues! ■

Enjoy East Timorese Coffee! **(and support ETAN)**

Just Coffee is a new effort to support small coffee farmers and cooperatives around the world and raise awareness of "Fair Trade" coffee, which ensures farmers have greater control over working conditions and wages. Just Coffee offers organic Fair Trade East Timorese coffee unblended and as part of their "Solidarity Blend" (with beans from Nicaragua, Mexico, Colombia, or El Salvador). ETAN receives ten cents per pound of "Solidarity Blend" sold.

You can order from Just Coffee at: www.justcoffee.net, 608-204-9011, or 100 S. Baldwin St, Suite 303, Madison, WI 53703.

Post a Card for Justice

The crimes against humanity inflicted on East Timor for 24 years must be punished. Failure to do so will signal to violent dictatorships around the world that violation international law is acceptable, and that the lives of those killed in East Timor are insignificant. The Jakarta trials have failed to deliver justice (see p. 1), so an international tribunal is the only path to justice for East Timor.

Take a moment to clip this postcard and send it to John Negroponte, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, urging him to support an international tribunal for East Timor. 200,000 men, women and children killed with weapons from the U.S. deserve no less.

We also encourage you to call Ambassador Negroponte with the same message, at 212-415-4050 or fax him at 212-415-4053.

FROM:

\$0.23
stamp

Justice for East Timor!



TO:

**AMBASSADOR JOHN NEGROPONTE
U.S. MISSION TO THE U.N.
799 U.N. PLAZA
NEW YORK, NY 10017-3505**

The following poem was written by East Timorese activist and lawyer Aderito de Jesus Soares in response to recent U.S. military action in Iraq. The original Tetum version is included at right. For more on the reaction in East Timor to the Iraq war, see p. 4.

If Only

If I were God
Bush, Saddam, Powell, I'd enter their bodies
and replace their hearts with a child's...

If Mahatma Gandhi were alive
Bush, Saddam, Powell, I'd replace their spirits
With Mahatma Gandhi's...

If I could create oil
I'd create it next to the soil
Where the White House toils...

If I could remove oil
I'd remove it from Iraq's soil
For one minute
To give Bush and Powell more time to ponder...

If I were a ghost
Bush, Saddam, Powell, I'd fright them
Away from their WMDs...

If I could perform a miracle
I'd turn nuclear bombs
Into dolls for children to play....

If I were an angel
I'd give wings to every child
To fly
When bombs fall in Iraq....

Se-karik

Se-karik hau mak maromak
Hau sei tama ba Bush, Saddam, Powel nian laran.
Truka sira nian fuan ho labarik sira nian fuan.....

Se-karik Mahatma Gandhi sei moris
Hau sei truka Bush, Saddam, Powel nian kakutak
Ho Mahatma Gandhi nian kakutak.....

Se-karik hau bele hamosu mina-rai
Hau sei hamosu mina-rai
Iha White House nian sorin....

Se-karik hau bele hamaran mina-rai
Hau sei hamaran mina-rai iha Iraq
Ba fulan ida nian laran....
Fo tempu ba Bush, Powel hodi hanoin tan...

Se-karik hau mateklamar
Hau sei babeur Bush, Saddam, Powel
Sai tauk hare sira nian kilat rasik...

Se-karik hau bele halo milagre
Hau sei halo kilat nuklir....
Sai boneka ba labarik sira bele halimar...

Se-karik hau anzu
Hau sei fo liras ba labarik sira houtu
Hodi semo
Wainhira bomba tun iha Iraq.....

Aderito de Jesus Soares is an East Timorese lawyer and activist, founder of Sa'he Institute and the East Timor Jurist Association, member of East Timor's first parliament and a member of La'õ Hamutuk's Executive Board.

Dear Ambassador Negroponte,

War crimes and crimes against humanity in East Timor must not go unpunished. More than 200,000 civilians were killed during the illegal Indonesian military occupation of East Timor, from 1975 to 1999.

The U.S. must immediately begin work with other Security Council members to pass a resolution establishing an international tribunal for East Timor, with a mandate covering the entire occupation. The established judicial processes will not serve justice. The Indonesian ad hoc court is an internationally-recognized sham, due to its limited mandate, exclusion of top officials and vital evidence, and distortion of facts. The Indonesian government has refused to cooperate with the joint UN/East Timor Serious Crimes Unit; this has given nearly two-thirds of those indicted by the SCU de facto impunity.

I urge you to use all resources at your disposal to ensure the timely establishment of an international tribunal for East Timor.

Sincerely,

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The crimes against humanity inflicted on East Timor for 24 years must be punished. Failure to do so will signal to violent dictatorships around the world that violation international law is acceptable, and that the lives of those killed in East Timor are insignificant. The Jakarta trials have failed to deliver justice (see p. 1), so an international tribunal is the only path to justice for East Timor.

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ACTION ALERT

Stop U.S. Military Assistance to Indonesia!

The Indonesian military remains brutal and unreformed and continues to enjoy impunity for its many abuses in East Timor and elsewhere. Yet the Bush administration is working hard to convince Congress to provide this deadly force with prestigious U.S. military assistance. We need *you* to voice your opposition and demand that your members of Congress act on the issue.

Congress has begun work on the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, which contains human rights restrictions on military assistance for Indonesia. Call your Senators and Representatives and let them know the U.S. should not be giving the Indonesian military any assistance.

Tell them that:

- Congress should not provide any aid to the brutal Indonesian military, which continues to have an atrocious human rights record and to enjoy impunity for numerous crimes against humanity in East Timor and Indonesia.
- Congress should strongly support restrictions on military assistance for Indonesia in the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, especially foreign military financing, International Military Education and Training (IMET), and licensing lethal defense articles for export to Indonesia.

Phone calls and faxes are generally more effective than email. The congressional switchboard number is 202-224-3121 (ask for the office of your Senators and Representative), or see www.congress.org for other contact information.

Tell us the results of your contact: ETAN, PO Box 15774, Washington, DC 20003-0774; 202-544-6911; karen@etan.org.



NEW RESOURCES FROM ETAN



Books

East Timor: A Rough Passage to Independence

by James Dunn
424 pp. \$35

From the days of the colonial Portuguese rule, through the tumultuous years of the Indonesian invasion, to the present day, this book is a disturbing portrayal of the failures of the international community.



Bitter Dawn: East Timor - A People's Story

by Irena Cristalis
306 pp. \$25

A vivid first-hand account of the lives of individual Timorese during the long decades of Indonesia's occupation and their often heroic struggle for freedom. Based on years of research, and lengthy interviews with East Timor's leaders, it explores the complexities of East Timor's internal politics.



Stirrings of Nationalism in East Timor: Fretilin 1974-1978

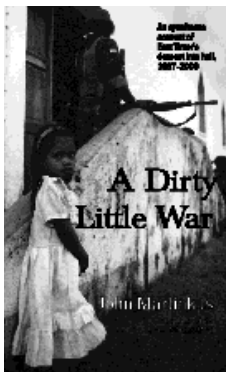
by Dr Helen Hill
223 pp. \$25

A history of the early years of Fretilin, East Timor's dominant political party. A vibrant account of a nationalist party upon which enormous stresses and responsibilities were thrust while it was still a political toddler.

A Dirty Little War

by John Martinkus
428 pp. \$15

An extraordinary and eye-opening eyewitness account of Indonesia's sustained campaign of terror from 1997 to 1999 against East Timor. For several years, Martinkus was the only foreign journalist permanently based in East Timor in the lead-up to the independence vote.



Fighting Spirit of East Timor: The Life of Martinho da Costa Lopes

by Rowena Lennox
260 pp. \$22.50

Biography of Martinho da Costa Lopes, the first Timorese leader of the East Timorese Catholic Church. And the first person to speak out publicly within East Timor about abuses perpetrated by the Indonesian occupation

The Trial of Henry Kissinger

by Christopher Hitchens
160 pp., \$12

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Add postage and handling (20%, 15% for orders over \$50, 30% int'l air mail)

See ETAN's website for a complete list:
www.etan.org/resource/booksetc.htm

Video

Circle of Stones (Fatuk Hadulas)

20 minutes. VHS. \$20

Suai's emotional observance of the anniversary of the September 6, 1999 churchyard massacre. Informative, touching and concise; great for presentations.

East Timor and U.S. Policy

2 hours. VHS. \$20.

Noam Chomsky analyzes U.S. policy in the region. Winston Rondo of the Center for Internally Displaced People in West Timor (Indonesia) discusses his work with East Timorese refugees in militia-controlled camps.

From Annihilation to a New Nation: The Founding of East Timor

6 hours. VHS. \$50



Video dispatches by Amy Goodman and Democracy Now! reporting from East Timor for a week and a half before, during and after independence day, where they interviewed a wide range of East Timorese, activists and officials as the new nation is born.

Emails from East Timor

56 min. VHS
video. \$40

An independent documentary about the reality of life in East Timor. 'Emails' explores critical issues facing East Timor today. A Documentary by Peter Marra. Written & narrated by Dave Owens. Handwoven Productions.



(Post-Independence, cont. from page 1)

ence than would be required in many other countries. So they make mistakes and learn on the job; people's expectations are unfulfilled, deadlines are missed. Laws and procedures are missing or deficient; administrators don't understand the systems they regulate. But East Timor is free and responsible for its own destiny – and I have not met one person nostalgic for the better infrastructure, efficiency and jobs during the Indonesian occupation.

Considering its history and conditions, this is a remarkably peaceful country. Violent crime (with the significant exception of domestic violence) is much lower than any U.S. city. Revenge killings are nonexistent.

There have been a few violent incidents, however: On Dec. 4, police mishandling of a Dili protest left two students dead and a number of buildings burned. Foreign media sensationalized the event as “the worst violence since 1999,” but the real news was three years of peace after Indonesia left. And early in 2003 alleged militia murdered seven villagers in two attacks.

In spite of mishandling by UN security forces, and East Timor's new military overreaching its authority, these incidents did not spread. The incipient violence, however, has caused UN police and peacekeepers to slow their departure, although they will all be gone by mid-2004.

Political polarization is increasing, driven by Prime Minister Alkatiri's reluctance to delegate or decentralize authority and the majority party's failure to consult meaningfully with the citizenry or the political opposition. The recently unified opposition parties make vague or personal charges, rather than presenting policy alternatives. Most elected officials don't feel accountable to the voters (the next scheduled election is four years away), and civil society rarely lobbies the people they elected.

Neither leaders nor citizens have experience with representative government; they have always had to resist illegitimate foreign-imposed autocracy. Although international

agencies did much “civic education” during the past three years, they focused on the voting process, failing to teach that government exists of, by, and for the people. So this highly politicized population is learning by doing, and, like all roads in East Timor, there will be bumps along the way.

Some of the physical and human infrastructure that Indonesia destroyed in 1999 has been rebuilt, but much has not. Electricity is almost back to pre-1999 service, but telecommunications, roads, water, health care, and education are not.

The World Bank and other international institutions are promoting a fee-for-service, private enterprise economic model, insisting that East Timor live “within its means” — not depending on unending donor assistance, nor oil revenues that will start around 2006. At present East Timor is debt-free, but the World Bank, as the intermediary between donors and the government, has power over East Timor's economic and other policies.

Wet Season

This year the wet season started late, causing a poor harvest and some food shortages. But more worrisome is the effect of “free trade” policies on East Timor's food security. Imported rice is cheaper than local rice; but the IMF-driven adoption of the U.S. dollar and the prohibition of selective tariffs prevent East Timor from protecting its agriculture. Coffee is the main export crop, but historically low world market prices make it less profitable than during the Indonesian times.

Perhaps the single greatest disappointment is the failure of the international community, including Indonesia and the United Nations, to achieve justice for the crimes against humanity committed by Indonesian forces and their supporters from 1975 to 1999. Although victims (most of the population) continue to demand justice, government leaders are discouraged, and East Timor cannot stick its neck out alone without support from the UN. Instead, priority is given to enabling low-level East Timorese criminals to be re-accepted by their communities. This has the

effect of blaming the victims, while the real perpetrators enjoy impunity.

Given the history of international complicity in crimes against East Timor, such a result should not be surprising, but it is a sharp reminder that the sovereignty of a new, small, poor country is not equal to that of its large, strategically important, former occupier. And the government in Dili feels powerless to confront its huge northwestern neighbor (Indonesia), with whom it needs trade and a peaceful border, without international peacekeeping.

Relations with East Timor's southern neighbor are also problematic. Australia is stealing about 60% of East Timor's twenty billion dollars worth of oil and gas under the Timor Sea. Canberra refuses to negotiate the maritime boundary between the two countries, while continuing to extract oil that should belong to East Timor under international legal principles. For many East Timorese, the independence struggle will not be finished until their country's boundaries are consistent with international law. Nevertheless, Australia and the UN coerced East Timor into signing “interim” agreements to enable oil companies to continue working in the disputed areas. If these temporary agreements are not replaced by a permanent boundary settlement, Australia will reap ten times as many dollars in oil as it has given East Timor in aid.

As world attention shifts to the Middle East, and as donors, “crisis junkie” humanitarian agencies and journalists redeploy to Iraq, East Timor is still remembered by the solidarity activists and people of good will who supported this struggle before it was front-page news. Today the people of East Timor are dealing with a complex new set of problems, perhaps more difficult than military occupation, and they continue to rely on their friends.

In the long run, their voluntary sharing of experiences, skills and struggle will do more to support the East Timorese people's struggle for genuine independence than the thousands of highly paid consultants who dropped by for a time, and moved on. ■

(Washington Update, cont. from page 3)

ETAN further raised in Washington the need for the Australian government to honor the national sovereignty and resource rights of East Timor by respecting international law and negotiating permanent maritime boundaries in the Timor Sea, which Australia thus far has resisted. Vast oil and natural gas re-

sources lie in these waters.

In December, Grover Joseph Rees became the first U.S. ambassador to East Timor, a new benchmark in formal relations between the two countries. Ambassador Rees was a strong supporter of self-determination for East Timor in his previous work as a Congressional staffperson.

As the “war on terror” continues, our voices are critical in steering U.S. foreign policy in a direction respectful of human rights. Face-to-face meetings with members of Congress are the most effective way to advocate for this. Please join ETAN and IHRN June 8-10 for our Washington, D.C. Lobby Days (see p. 12). ■

(Justice & Injustice, cont. from page 1)
ing that the indictments were solely East Timor's responsibility. But on April 10, a spokesperson clarified that the UN "attaches the highest importance to the successful completion of the investigation and prosecution of serious crime cases, as mandated by the Security Council. The indictments are prepared by international staff who report functionally to the Prosecutor-General of Timor-Leste, and are issued under the legal authority of the Timorese Government."

The United Nations Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET), which ruled East Timor up until independence, established the SCU and Special Panel courts to hear its cases. After independence, the UN retained authority to investigate and prosecute serious crimes committed through 1999 in the post-independence, UN support mission, UNMISSET, through Security Council Resolution 1410.

Thus far, the SCU has issued 60 indictments at the Special Panel for Serious Crimes charging a total of 248 persons; More than 30 have been convicted; but most, including all Indonesian military officers, remain out of reach in Indonesia which refuses to extradite anyone.

The ability of the SCU to complete its work remains up in the air. The office is set to expire with UNMISSET next year. Unless its mandate is renewed and funding found, even ongoing trials might have to end.

Meanwhile, the SCU continues to issue further indictments. On April 10, the serious crimes prosecutor indicted five East Timorese TNI soldiers for the rape of five East Timorese women, highlighting an important issue that was neglected in the Indonesian prosecutions. The five soldiers are believed to be currently living in Indonesia. (This was the SCU's fourth indictment for rape. In late April, East Timor's truth and reconciliation commission held a special hearing devoted to violence against women during the Indonesian occupation.)

Despite the apparent progress, the Special Panels, the courts in East Timor that are trying those accused of serious crimes, remain hampered. One of the international judges resigned, leaving the court with insufficient judges to conduct trials.

Jakarta-style Justice

At this writing, Indonesia's ad hoc Human Rights Court on East Timor has acquitted 11 of 14 Indonesian defendants tried thus far. The light sentences handed down for the

five people convicted (including the only two East Timorese defendants) have not been commensurate with the crimes committed; four defendants received less than the legal minimum under Indonesian law. All remain free pending appeal. The final two verdicts are expected soon.

The defendants were primarily accused of failing to prevent the actions of others rather than for acts they may have directly committed. The prosecution repeatedly described the violence in 1999 as the result of conflict among East Timorese factions and portrayed the UN administration of the referendum as biased and anti-Indonesian.

Criticisms

Criticisms of the Jakarta court are wide-ranging. ETAN and other human rights groups have noted that the top-ranking officers and officials named by Indonesia's own human rights commission in January 2000 were never seriously investigated, much less indicted. The prosecution failed to make use of vast amounts of UN documentation available to them as evidence.

Sergio de Mello, UN High Commission for Human Rights and former UNTAET administrator, issued a report criticizing "the limited geographical and temporal jurisdiction of the Court; the lack of experienced prosecutors and judges; the intimidating and, at times, hostile, courtroom treatment of Timorese witnesses by some judges, prosecutors and defense counsel; the causes and consequences of non-attendance of Timorese witnesses at the proceedings; and the lightness of the sentences imposed, which bear no reasonable relationship to the gravity of the offences committed."

He added that "the failure to put before the court evidence that portrays the killings and other human rights violations as part of a widespread or systematic pattern of violence seriously undermines the strength of the prosecution's case and jeopardizes the integrity and credibility of the trial process."

The UN's Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers recently wrote that the prosecutions violate "the principle that prosecutions are to be undertaken in good faith," He called the investigations "insufficient" and criticized witness protection procedures.

However, the UN Human Rights Commission, while expressing "disappointment" in the ad hoc court, called on Indonesia to "improve the current legal processes;" in ef-

fect urging Indonesia to fix the unfixable. Follow up is unlikely as the Commission decided to limit next year's agenda to consideration of technical cooperation with East Timor in the field of human rights.

The Future

The final verdicts in the Jakarta process are due in late April / early May. Soon thereafter, the UN Secretary-General is expected to go to the Security Council with a recommendation for future action.

It is clear that neither of the processes set up to try those responsible for crimes have delivered anything approaching justice for the suffering visited upon the East Timorese people. Jakarta lacks the political will and trust from the victims; the serious crimes process in East Timor is hampered by a lack of resources and the refusal of Jakarta to extradite. Nether has addressed the many crimes that took place before 1999.

Throughout most of Indonesia's occupation, the United Nations and the powers that dominate the world body failed to enforce Security Council and General Assembly resolutions as the East Timorese suffered. In 1999, the international community assured the East Timorese that they would be safe during the independence referendum. But the UN-brokered agreement left Indonesia in charge of security, helping make possible the post-ballot destruction. After the vote, the UN took responsibility for establishing a system of justice in East Timor. Without real action from the UN and its most powerful members, the failure to effectively prosecute the masterminds of the systematic abuses in East Timor will end up as just one more broken promise to the people of East Timor.

While ETAN urges the U.S. and the UN to actively pursue the extradition and prosecution of all those indicted by the Serious Crimes Unit (SCU) currently residing in Indonesia, ETAN also continues to press for an international tribunal as the best way to bring to justice Indonesian officials accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in East Timor from 1975 on. And countries, like the United States, that supported Indonesian brutality with weapons, military training, and economic and diplomatic support must also account for their actions.

Without full accountability, other peoples are more likely to suffer the horror from which the East Timorese people are now free.

For more information see www.etan.org/action/issues/h-rights.htm. ■

Join Our 10th Annual Lobby Days!

Washington, DC: June 8, 9, & 10

Tell Congress: Support Human Rights, Not Military Might!

The East Timor *Action* Network and Indonesia Human Rights Network invite you to join our Washington efforts to stop the Bush administration from trumping justice for East Timor and human rights in Indonesia. This is a crucial time to make your voice heard in Congress!

As predicted, Indonesia's ad hoc court on East Timor has failed to serve justice. Still, the Bush administration refuses to support alternatives, most importantly an international tribunal for East Timor. Instead, the administration has used the "war on terror" to convince Congress to resume U.S. training of Indonesian troops for the first time in years. The legislation containing human rights restrictions on U.S. military assistance for Indonesia is up for renewal. Join us in June to insist that all military training for Indonesia be restricted in law and that existing limits on other forms of military assistance continue. The U.S. must not subsidize Indonesia's increasing repression of civil society in Aceh, Papua and elsewhere.

Face-to-face meetings with your members of Congress are the most effective way to advocate for human rights, not military might. Together we can make a difference! Please come to the ETAN/IHRN Lobby Days June 8 to 10.

Free housing can be arranged. Partial travel subsidies are available on a limited basis. *For more information*, contact Karen Orenstein, East Timor *Action* Network Washington Coordinator, at karen@etan.org, 202-544-6911, or see our website, www.etan.org.

This year's Lobby Days will focus on:

- Restricting U.S. military assistance to Indonesia. Opposing U.S. support for the repressive Indonesian military.
- Supporting justice for the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against the people of East Timor. Congressional support for an international tribunal is key to ending the Indonesian military's impunity.

The Schedule

June 8 will be a full day of training in lobby skills and updates on East Timor, Indonesia, and Congress. Then we'll head to the halls of Congress for meetings with Representatives and Senators on June 9 and 10. (Please plan on arriving Saturday night and leaving no earlier than 6 pm Tuesday night.)

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