

# Estafeta

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

Vol. 7, No. 1/Winter 2001

## Victories in Washington and the Road Ahead

by *Karen Orenstein*

As the new year begins, ETAN has victories to celebrate and injustices to overcome. Over a year has passed since East Timor embarked on its road to nationhood. Timorese children are attending rudimentary schools and activists are working hard to achieve a vibrant democratic society. East Timorese friends can visit the U.S. free of fear of reprisals from the Indonesian military.

Yet many remain sharply critical of the pace of development in East Timor and the lack of inclusion of Timorese in the UN administration's initiatives (see Ajiza Magno article, p. 3). Militias in West Timor still threaten East Timor's peace, and up to 100,000 refugees continue to suffer in camps in West Timor. Clearly much remains to be done to achieve genuine peace, justice and democracy in East Timor, and ETAN activists in the U.S. continue to support these struggles.

Through the vigilance of ETAN grassroots activists, friends in East Timor, and sympathetic members of Congress, we secured important provisions in the annually renewed Foreign Operations Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2001. The FY 2001 bill maintains last year's restrictions on virtually all military



**East Timorese activist Ajiza Magno stands in front of the White House during her stay in Washington, D.C. For more on Ajiza's tour, see page 3.**

Karen Orenstein

ties between the U.S. and Indonesia. Restrictions cannot be lifted until the President certifies that the Indonesian government and military have cooperated fully with efforts to prosecute those responsible for human rights violations in Indonesia, "allowed refugees to return home, and actively prevented militia incursions" into East Timor. This legislation follows the Clinton Administration's September decision to reinstate the U.S. suspension of military assistance to Indonesia after international outrage at the September 6 mur-

der of 3 UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) workers and unknown numbers of East and West Timorese civilians by rampaging militias in West Timor. The bill also ensures \$25 million in U.S. assistance for East Timor for 2001.

Indonesia is far from fulfilling conditions needed to lift the suspension. All deadlines set by Indonesia to disarm the militias have been abandoned despite the less than impres-

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## The Indonesian Military: Resisting Reform

by *John Roosa*

One has to marvel at the spunk of the Indonesian military (TNI). Despite a U.S. and European Union cut off on arms sales, training, and aid, a United Nations threat of an international tribunal for war crimes in East Timor, and universal condemnation for the killings of three UN workers in West Timor, the TNI has remained defiant. It has neither ended militia activity in West Timor, nor allowed for the safe repatriation of refugees,

nor stopped its infiltrations into East Timor (which have resulted in the killing of two peacekeepers). This is a remarkably daring defiance when the country is bankrupt — the total foreign debt is equal to the country's annual GNP — and is wholly dependent on loans from the very governments criticizing its crimes in Timor.

Much of the TNI's confidence derives from its belief that donor governments are unwilling to attach human rights conditions to loans and aid, and from the assumption that any

officials contemplating such conditions will back off if faced with the threat of an "ultra-nationalist backlash." The military's bargaining chip is "stability" in Indonesia. Whenever it faces international pressure, the military threatens to ruin Indonesia's foreign relations, wreck the democratization process, and promote the rise of Muslim fundamentalism. In effect, the generals are holding the entire country hostage. They are playing on the fears of the donor governments that the break-up

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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.

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 at last allowed the East Timorese to vote. On August 30, 1999, after a quartercentury 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. Untold thousands were killed. More than three-fourths of the people were displaced from their homes, a quarter-million taken forcibly to Indonesia. Most towns and houses in East Timor were leveled.

East Timor is now under a UN-administered transition to nationhood. But over 100,000 people have still not been able to return, 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

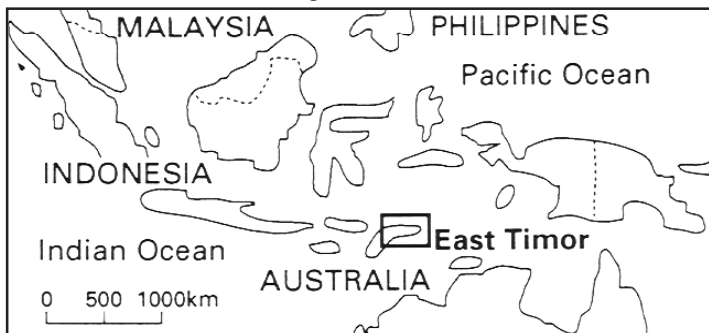
Dili massacre. ETAN is a grassroots movement of more than 10,000 members, with local chapters in 27 cities and states. We have worked for human and political rights for the people of East Timor and for Indonesians who are struggling for democracy in their country.

Since East Timor is now under UN administration on the way to

inevitable self-government, ETAN is supporting the transition and working to hasten empowerment, democracy, and development in East Timor, as well as supporting efforts to advance democracy in Indonesia.

Grassroots and Congressional pressure led to changes in U.S. government policy which were key to ending Indonesia's occupation. We in the U.S. are able to engage in peaceful protest with much less risk than East Timorese and Indonesians; it's a privilege we shouldn't take for granted.

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 maintained limitations on such aid 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, and those responsible for crimes in East Timor from 1975 to 1999 have been held accountable.



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# ETAN Fall 2000 Speaking Tour

## Ajiza Magno Discusses the Next Phase of Struggle

by Agatha Schmaedick

From late October to early December, Ajiza (pronounced aZEEza) Magno, an East Timorese women's rights and labor activist, covered twenty states in six weeks. In East Timor, Ajiza works with the Sa'he Institute for Liberation (SIL), an all-volunteer organization committed to popular education for critical consciousness and democracy. SIL has translated texts into Indonesian for mass distribution, including a critique of the World Bank, and coordinates youth projects focusing on community education and organizing.

Ajiza focused on what she sees as four necessities for her homeland: justice through an international tribunal as an essential part of reconciliation, U.S. pressure on the Indonesian military to help return refugees and prevent further attacks along the border with West Timor, gender equality without further delay, and an immediate increase of East Timorese involvement in decision-making within the United Nations Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET).

In addition to ETAN activists, Ajiza's talks reached labor organizers, feminists, and environmentalists. In Boise, Eugene, Missoula and Atlanta, she spoke to audiences of nearly 100 people.

Shortly before Ajiza's departure from the U.S., the UN Security Council Mission to East Timor published a report on its October visit to the country. Ajiza was pleased to see that much of the Mission's criticism of UNTAET echoed complaints of her and her colleagues, but she fears it might already be too late to reverse some of the many mistakes that the UN has made in East Timor. She notes that "if the Security Council Mission's recommendations are not followed immediately, especially building the capacity of native East Timorese to run their own government before the elections this spring, the elections will be a failure. The East Timorese will not understand or feel any ownership towards the new governmental structure that is put into place."

The following comments by Ajiza were taken from various appearances throughout her tour:

"Everyone has suffered in some way in East Timor, and everyone lives with some amount of trauma, but the women in particular faced the brunt of the suffering. Women were systematically targeted by the



Ajiza Magno (left) and tour organizer/translator Agatha Schmaedick

Indonesian military. They were seen as easy targets and were often more readily available than men. Some women took up arms and lived in the jungles with Falintil, but many stayed behind in the villages to look after the land and raise the children. The women in the villages were often raped or forced to marry and bear children of Indonesian soldiers. Sometimes women were forced to have children with several different men as they were passed from one soldier to another. The women went along with these marriages because they knew that if they didn't, their husband, father, or other relatives would be targeted for torture or death. The Communication Forum for East Timorese Women (FOKUPERS) has already documented over 180 cases of rape from the weeks prior to and following the August 30, 1999 referendum. This data only includes a few districts around Dili; imagine how many cases there must be throughout the country. Now many of these rape victims and their children face domestic violence as their spouses and families struggle to deal with the shame of rape. Domestic violence is also thought to be on the increase because of the wide availability of cheap Australian beer in East Timor.

"Of the already miniscule amount of East Timorese that work for UNTAET, only 6% are women and these women are only included as consultants in areas such as health care and education. Women have been excluded, for the most part, from discussions concern-

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## ETAN Needs Your Support!

A new president and Congress are taking office, and we have to work extra hard to educate and pressure the new administration to support a secure and prosperous East Timor. With your help, ETAN successfully turned U.S. policy from supporting Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor into one backing freedom and independence. Your support is needed now to secure and build on that victory. Please give generously to support ETAN's important work to bring the refugees home, achieve justice, and build a democratic and secure East Timor. Your donation will help us advocate for the East Timorese people during this new phase of the country's transition to the first new nation of this millennium.

Please send a check to ETAN today!

Tax-deductible donations of over \$50 for ETAN's educational work can be made out to "WESPAC Foundation" and mailed to ETAN's White Plains office. To make a tax-deductible credit card donation, point your browser to [www.giveforchange.com/interact/category.asp?cat=International+ReliefandDevelopment](http://www.giveforchange.com/interact/category.asp?cat=International+ReliefandDevelopment) and select the East Timor Action Network. Thanks for your support.

# Indonesia Human Right Network Prepares For Launch

by Kurt Biddle

In May 1998, the Indonesian people successfully toppled a dictator who ruled for 32 years with backing from the world's largest powers. The Suharto regime allowed no dissent and often used imprisonment, kidnappings, torture and murder to suppress opposition. The United States, in particular, supported Suharto's violent rise to power in 1966 and his self-proclaimed "New Order" government.

Although pro-democracy activists have made incredible progress since helping to push Suharto from office, the military and other New Order forces remain the dominant powers in Indonesia. The struggle for democracy in Indonesia is far from over, and the archipelago's grassroots activists need international support to continue campaigning for peace and justice.

The Indonesia Human Rights Network (IHRN) is a new activist organization dedicated to shifting U.S. foreign policy to support democracy and human rights in Indonesia. IHRN will help to break the power of the Indonesian military (TNI), which continues to violently repress dissidents across the archipelago.

In Aceh, military and police have killed hundreds in the past year, during what is supposed to be a cease-fire with Acehese rebels fighting for an independent state. Military terror against West Papuans calling for

self-determination has claimed dozens of lives in recent months. Although IHRN takes no position on self-determination for any given region, we demand Indonesian government and military compliance with all international standards of human rights.

The Indonesia Human Rights Network is grassroots-based and U.S. policy-focused, utilizing educational outreach, press work, protest and lobbying. Its advisory board includes such internationally recognized human rights activists as Carmel Budiardjo, Dr. George Aditjondro, Kerry Kennedy Cuomo and journalist Allan Nairn. A national kick-off conference on human rights in Indonesia will be held February 23 - 25, 2001 at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Educational and grassroots outreach and activism will be key to our success. Our website is in the works. IHRN will host exchanges with Indonesian NGOs, speaking tours with Indonesian activists and other programs. We hope to hire a National Coordinator and Field Organizer in early 2001. Let us know if you're interested in either position.

If you want to work for a democratic Indonesia, contact us at [ihrn@etan.org](mailto:ihrn@etan.org) or 202-546-0044 to join the Indonesia Human Rights Network. Together we can stop Indonesian military violence and help the Indonesian people achieve the freedom they need to make their own choices. ■

IHRN is building upon ETAN's congressional and foreign policy victories and will work to maintain the congressional ban on U.S. military ties with Indonesia. In addition to demilitarization of Indonesian society, IHRN supports:

- Genuine democracy and rule of law
- Genuine accountability for human rights violations
- An end to Indonesian law enforcement and intelligence agency abuses
- Investigations and exposure of all U.S. training of Indonesian military and police
- Exposure of and campaigning against corporate exploitation of Indonesia's peoples, environment and natural resources
- Monitoring and challenging the World Bank, IMF and international aid agencies
- Opposition to institutional violence and discriminatory practices against minority racial, ethnic and religious groups, women and sexual minorities
- Labor rights for Indonesian workers

## In Memoriam: Diane Mechling

On October 13, Diane Mechling, one of Portland's most dedicated activists, died in a car accident in Northern California. Diane worked with the Portland chapter of the East Timor *Action Network* since its founding in the Spring of 1993. Diane felt the suffering of others with a profound empathy and compassion, and she transformed those emotions into action. She brought dedication and a loving spirit to many struggles for justice and human rights, and to the fight to protect the forest and wilderness areas of the Pacific Northwest. We cannot express how much we will miss her warmth, her smile, and her passionate, caring presence. Her family has asked that donations be made in her name to the East Timor *Action Network*.



(left to right) José Ramos-Horta, Nancy Haque, and Diane Mechling

# Election Update: What Does the New Congress Mean for East Timor?

by John M. Miller

Turnout was greater and ballot counting went more smoothly in last year's UN organized vote in East Timor than in the recent U.S. elections. But the aftermath of our elections, while certainly more peaceful, has been far more confusing.

A fuller assessment of the likely impact of the 2000 presidential and congressional elections on East Timor and U.S.-Indonesia relations must await early 2001 when Congress resumes and more members of President-elect Bush's foreign policy team are named.

The last issue of *Estafeta* reported on some of the differences between the presidential candidates. While President-elect George W. Bush did mention East Timor during the debate, it was only to make a point about the U.S. role in regional "humanitarian" interventions. He said nothing about future support for East Timor, lessons to be learned from the more than two decades of U.S. support for the invasion and occupation of the country, or the future of military ties with Indonesia. Secretary of State designate Colin Powell, Secretary of Defense designate Donald Rumsfeld (who held the same position in 1975 when East Timor was invaded), and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice have so far been silent on these questions as well. However, during a March 1997 visit to Ja-

karta, Powell said human rights "should not be an overwhelming element in U.S. arms sales," while arguing the U.S. should go ahead with a sale of F-16 jet fighters to Indonesia. (As congressional and grassroots opposition to the sale escalated, Suharto subsequently nixed the deal.)

Even so, we must bear in mind the main lesson ETAN has learned over the past decade: given enough education or constituent pressure, both Republicans and Democrats have acted in support of East Timor. Now is the time to begin to influence the new Congress by contacting your senators and representative, whether new or returning.

In the House of Representatives, several strong supporters of East Timor and human rights in Indonesia in the House were lost to retirement (including John Porter (R-IL), co-chair of the Human Rights Caucus) or electoral defeat (Sam Gejdenson (D-CT), ranking member of the House International Affairs Committee). Gejdenson has been replaced by Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA), the other co-chair of the Human Rights Caucus. A new version of Gejdenson's East Timor bill will be introduced and considered this year.

Major changes in the House Committee and Subcommittee chairs took place in early January. Among those pushed out are International Relations Chair Benjamin Gilman (R-NY), Human Rights Subcommittee Chair

Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Asia Subcommittee Chair Douglas Bereuter (R-NE).

Henry Hyde (R-IL) is the new chair of the International Relations Committee. Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-AZ) will chair the important Foreign Operations subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee with Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) a stalwart supporter of East Timor, the ranking Democrat.

In the Senate, little change is expected in key committee chairs. Two supporters of East Timor, Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), are retiring. As U.S. Ambassador to the UN in 1975, Moynihan blocked serious UN action against Indonesia following the invasion of East Timor; since then he has expressed regret about that history and supported self-determination for East Timor. In Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Washington, incumbent Republicans who were less than enthusiastic supporters of human rights advocacy in foreign policy went down to defeat.

ETAN/U.S. as an organization is strictly non-partisan and does not endorse candidates. But one local ETAN activist took U.S. foreign policy and other issues to the people by running for Congress in Seattle, where Joe Szwaja garnered 20% of the vote, the highest percentage of any Green Party congressional candidate. ■

## ETAN Bids Fond Adieu To Departing Staff

In as non-militarist a fashion as we can muster, ETAN salutes our departing staffers Kristin Sundell and Lynn Fredriksson. Both have served ETAN well throughout our crucial final years of campaigning for East Timor's self-determination and have given their all in a fashion that has inspired many in our movement to do more for the East Timorese people. Lynn took the lead in forging strategies and establishing working relationships in Washington that were crucial in swaying congressional, and some administration, support to the side of the East Timorese. Kristin worked throughout the U.S. to strengthen grassroots pressure on Washington, and both helped on countless other East Timor and Indonesia solidarity projects. While both will continue to work in solidarity with the East Timorese, Kristin is moving on to graduate school and Lynn will serve as the interim director of the Indonesia Human Rights Network (see article, p. 4).

## ETAN Welcomes New Field Organizer Diane Farsetta

Diane Farsetta joined the East Timor *Action* Network in 1993, after learning about U.S. complicity in the occupation of East Timor from the writings of Noam Chomsky. She has been the coordinator of ETAN's Madison chapter since 1997. Diane has attended numerous ETAN lobby days and conferences, and has volunteered with ETAN's personnel and executive committees. She went to East Timor last year with the IFET observer project, and had the honor of meeting Father Hilario before the Indonesian military murdered him and 200 others at Suai cathedral. Diane and others in Madison are currently working on a sister city project with Ainaro, East Timor.

A well-rounded radical, Diane volunteers with a feminist news collective at Madison's community radio station, lives in cooperative housing, has worked at the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua, and has taken part in School of the Americas protests. She deplores injustice, but enjoys reading and jogging. Diane can be contacted by e-mail at [diane@etan.org](mailto:diane@etan.org) or phone at 608-255-4598.

# A Brief History of Aceh

by Ben Terrall

(with thanks to Sylvia Tiwon for valuable feedback and research assistance)

In the wake of East Timor's August 1999 referendum, hundreds of thousands have marched in support of a similar act of self-determination in the Indonesian region of Aceh, a region which also has endured decades of brutal military operations. Aceh is a province in Northern Sumatra, which, like most of Indonesia, is overwhelmingly Muslim. It has a population of around five million, and a long tradition of resistance to outside powers.

Islam likely first entered the Indonesian archipelago through Aceh sometime around the 12th century. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the port of Aceh became entangled, along with the rest of what now comprises Indonesia, in the European colonial powers' competition for worldwide political and economic dominance.

The British and Dutch were in competition for spices produced in Eastern Indonesia, for which Aceh was an international trading center. In an attempt to undermine Aceh's hold on the international spice trade, the British and Dutch carried their business (and rivalry) to West Java. After many parliamentary debates on the wisdom of attacking a sovereign state, in 1873 the Netherlands issued a formal declaration of war and invaded Aceh. One of their primary rationalizations for this aggression was to counter what they perceived as Acehnese piracy, especially attacks on trading ships. The Acehnese resisted occupation and fought a war of resistance which lasted intermittently from 1873 to 1942. The conflict was the longest the Dutch ever fought, costing them more than 10,000 lives.

In March 1942 Japan conquered the colonial forces in the Dutch East Indies. In August 1945, just days after the Japanese surrendered to the Allies, the Republic of Indonesia proclaimed its independence. Soon, however, both the British and Dutch were back in the region, though the Dutch did not return to Aceh.

Under the Linggarjati Agreement, mediated by Great Britain and signed by Indonesia and the Netherlands in March 1947, the Dutch recognized Indonesian sovereignty over the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Madura. Many Indonesians viewed the deal



as a violation of Indonesia's independence proclamation of August 1945, which implied sovereignty over the whole territory of the Republic. The agreement sparked guerrilla fighting and led to another four years of violence and territorial disputes between the Netherlands and Indonesia.

Many Acehnese see the 1949 Round Table Conference Agreements as the first serious betrayal of their homeland. Brokered through the United Nations, the agreements provided for a transfer of sovereignty between the territory of the Dutch East Indies and a fully independent Indonesia. On December 27, 1949, the Dutch East Indies ceased to exist and became the sovereign Federal Republic of Indonesia, which in turn became the Republic of Indonesia when it joined the United Nations in 1950. The Kingdom of Aceh was included in the agreements despite not having been formally incorporated into the Dutch colonial possession. The Indonesian government then used armed troops to annex Aceh.

Although Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any country, it is not an Islamic state. Most Acehnese have a less secular vision of Islam than Indonesians elsewhere in the archipelago, but compared to Iran, Afghanistan, and other more fundamentalist countries, Acehnese Islam tends to be relatively respectful of the rights of women. Its focus on community also stresses the importance of social and economic justice to an extent that runs contrary to Indonesian military hegemony.

The precursor to Aceh's independence movement began in the 1950s when the Darul Islam ("House of Islam") rebels on the major Indonesian island of Java tried to establish an Islamic state. The Acehnese lent support to this rebellion, which took years to crush.

In 1959, Jakarta gave Aceh "special terri-

tory" status, which ostensibly conferred autonomy in religious, educational, and cultural matters. In practice this policy ignored the two major complaints of the region's indigenous population: Javanese and foreign control of natural resources and a repressive military presence.

Resentment over those cruel realities contributed to the 1976 creation of the armed resistance group Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM-Free Aceh Movement), which the TNI refers to as Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan (GPK), or "gang of security disturbers." In the late 1970s, Indonesian authorities conducted mass arrests of Aceh Merdeka members and killed many of its leaders. The movement's leader, Hasan di Tiro, fled to Sweden in 1979 and created a government in exile.

After GAM re-emerged with broad popular support in the late 1980s, Jakarta officially declared the province a Military Operational Area (Daerah Operasi Militer, or DOM) and launched a counter-insurgency campaign code-named Red Net. The regional commander at the time spelled out his military's basic policies by saying, "I have told the community, if you find a terrorist, kill him. There's no need to investigate him ... if they don't do as you order them, shoot them on the spot, or butcher them." Amnesty International reported that between 1989 and 1992 about 2,000 people were killed by military operations in Aceh.

After international capitalism's "Asian financial crisis" and Suharto's downfall, Acehnese had high hopes for a new era of demilitarization and true democracy. Unfortunately the military proved unwilling to do much beyond make cosmetic changes: announcing an end to DOM status for Aceh on August 7, 1998, then Armed Forces Chief

Wiranto said “although human rights violations took place, the soldiers were only doing their job of annihilating the armed security disturbers,” and General Feisal Tanjung told reporters that accusations of TNI abuses were merely folk-tales.

Since Suharto’s rise to power in the 1960s Aceh has been one of the archipelago’s most profitable areas for international investment. The province includes most of Indonesia’s liquid natural gas; Mobil Oil Indonesia heads the country’s largest liquefied natural gas production project in Arun, North Aceh. In its report “A Reign of Terror, Human Rights Violations in Aceh 1998-2000,” the U.K.-based Indonesia Human Rights Campaign TAPOL notes that “the extent to which DOM in Aceh provided government officials and military personnel with limitless opportunities to profit financially from this economically fertile region cannot be underestimated.” Such vested interests will not be easily swayed by the

soothing rhetoric of Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid, who has repeatedly promised more than he can deliver to the Acehese people. On December 18, Wahid visited Aceh and called on military commanders not to be “an enemy of the people,” but resistance activist Amni Achmad Marzuki responded, “We have heard him say this many times. Where is the implementation of those words? His military makes no effort to obey his orders.”

The TAPOL report also notes that “The response of the security forces to the withdrawal for DOM can be divided into four phases, which more or less coincide with the different security operations launched.” These are “intimidation, overt massacres, war of attrition and the return to shock therapy, and targeting of civilian activists.”

That last phase is unfortunately still ongoing. In one of the more disturbing recent examples, Munarman, coordinator of the

Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence (Kontras) accused three policemen of being responsible for the December 6 murders of three activists from Rehabilitation Action for Torture Victims in Aceh (RATA). The three humanitarian workers were killed while helping victims of military violence in North Aceh.

As in West Papua, where a massive crackdown on a liberation movement and many thousands of civilians is also underway, the TNI and police seem to have learned one essential lesson from last year’s vote in East Timor: keep out the international observers. Few reporters or international human rights activists have been allowed access to either area, making the plight of those under siege even graver. Such conditions are yet another reason the emergence of the Indonesia Human Rights Network is timely and necessary; please see related story on page 4 and contact IHRN for more information. ■

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## Remembering Jafar Siddiq Hamzah

by Ben Terrall

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International coverage of the militia killings of three UN workers in West Timor in early September overshadowed the equally chilling discovery of the badly mutilated body of Acehese human rights lawyer Jafar Siddiq Hamzah. Jafar’s corpse was found with four other as yet unidentified bodies in a ravine in Medan, Sumatra, one month after he had been kidnapped in broad daylight.

Jafar was studying political science at the New School in Manhattan, where he worked closely with ETAN and played an instrumental role in the formation of the Indonesia Human Rights Network. Despite death threats which would have stopped a less courageous activist, Jafar returned to his homeland in June 2000 to investigate atrocities committed by Indonesian military and police, and the complicity of Mobil Oil in repression there. (In October 1998, 17 Indonesian human rights organizations asserted that Mobil Oil Indonesia, Mobil’s wholly owned subsidiary, provided crucial logistic support to the army, including earth moving equipment that was used to dig mass graves.)

Jafar started the International Forum for Aceh and helped found the first Acehese language newspaper, *Su Aceh*. A forceful advocate for his people, Jafar criticized violence perpetrated by Indonesian military and police as well as by members of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), while noting that

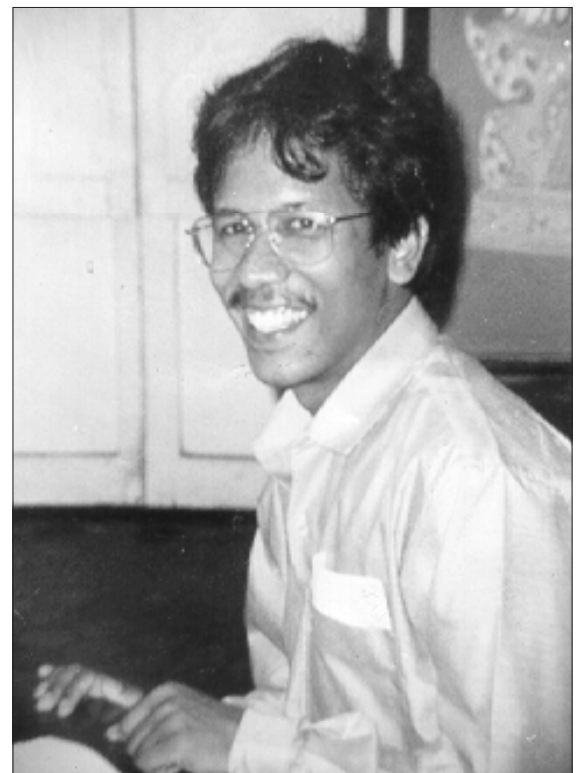
the military was responsible for the vast majority of human rights abuses in Aceh, and that some violence attributed to GAM was actually perpetrated by military operatives.

Jafar was a fierce critic of the Suharto/World Bank development model. Of Jakarta’s “transmigration” policy, which received considerable Bank funding, he noted that “In Aceh’s industrial zones on the coast, and in the mountains of Aceh, the people are primarily Javanese transmigrants and workers. So the Acehese have no access to the coast or to the mountains. We can’t get to the fish and the rice, which are the basis for our existence. We’re suffocating in the middle and are starving.”

This experience with the downside of New Order development programs helped make Jafar an enthusiastic supporter of anti-WTO and World Bank organizing. A friend and colleague to many in ETAN, Jafar was very much an internationalist and a supporter of nonviolent change. For these convictions, he was disappeared and subsequently tortured to death. Many observers felt his killing was a message from the military that internationally-connected Indonesian activists no longer have a greater degree of protection.

The killing of nonviolent activists like Jafar and Dr. Safwan Idris, rector of the State Islamic Religion Institute in Banda Aceh who was assassinated on October 5, indicates TNI has declared war on peaceful dissent. Such repression increases the appeal of armed resistance, which is then used as justification for the Indonesian security forces’

*(continued on page 11)*



(Ajiza Magno, cont. from page 3)

ing politics, economics, national security, and other such typically 'male' arenas. There is a 'Gender' branch of UNTAET but it has not been allotted a budget. This means that there are no UN investigations occurring specifically into the crimes committed against women, nor are there any UNTAET programs being set up to counsel women or help them deal with the trauma they've faced. The cases of fifteen and sixteen year old girls who were kidnapped near the border and brought to West Timor as prostitutes were presented to Mary Robinson (UN Commissioner of Human Rights) when she visited Dili last summer, but no action has been taken thus far by the UN to return these girls.

"East Timor does not have total independence. It is currently under the transitional administration of the United Nations that holds all legislative, executive and judicial power in the territory. Fundamental decisions such as the writing of the constitution, the structure of the first East Timor elections, and the land and property laws are in the hands of foreigners.

"UNTAET seems to be prioritizing the needs of their foreign staff

over those of the local population. The UN was quick to build flashy supermarkets that sell imported food to their foreign staff (because they are the only ones who can afford to shop there), yet the local market where people usually sell their produce and wares still remains in ruins from 'Operation Clean Sweep.' Hundreds of cars have been imported for the foreigners to use as they carry out projects in East Timor, yet public transportation is almost non-existent and what is available is very expensive. Unemployment is soaring at 75% but the UN has been reluctant to set labor standards that would require foreign business investors to use local labor; as a result many employers (including the UN) have brought in their own construction crews, carpenters, porters, and chamber maids. The end result: the majority of East Timorese people are very confused and frustrated by the UN. People find themselves once again living as observers and marginalized citizens in their own country." ■

*For information on the U.S. book drive to help build SIL's People's Library of East Timor, contact Ben at [bttrall@igc.org](mailto:bttrall@igc.org) or 510-985-0385.*



**Above: World Food Programme distribution centre.  
Below: A boy with machetes.**



**Above: Young men demand jobs in Dili.**

*Canadian photographer Elaine Briere first visited East Timor in 1974, taking a series of striking photographs documenting pre-invasion East Timorese culture. She returned to East Timor last spring, when the pictures on this page were taken. In 1976 she released the award-winning video "Bitter Paradise: The Sell-out of East Timor." For more information about the*

## February Call-In Days East Timor Action Network

Please call President Bush on February 15 & 16, 2001 via the White House comment line at 202-456-1111. Tell Bush to support support human rights and democracy in East Timor and Indonesia by maintaining the ban on U.S.-Indonesia military ties.

# Take Action for East Timor

*With a new administration and Congress, now is an excellent time to raise issues concerning East Timor and Indonesia with officials and elected representatives in Washington. Important issues to raise include:*

## **Ongoing Refugee Crisis**

\* Military-supported militias must be verifiably disarmed and disbanded, and their leaders must be arrested and extradited to East Timor to stand trial.

\* Indonesia must guarantee the safety of international and local humanitarian workers, and unimpeded access to refugees.

\* An internationally-supervised registration of refugees must be conducted in an environment free of fear and intimidation to enable refugees to choose to return to East Timor or settle in Indonesia.

## **Suspension of U.S.-Indonesia Military Ties**

\* The current suspension of all military ties must be maintained until the refugee crisis is resolved (as described

above) and the Indonesian government asserts full control over its military and holds it accountable for human rights violations committed in East Timor.

## **International Tribunal**

\* The U.S. should fully support an international tribunal for East Timor to prosecute military and militia leaders responsible for systematic human rights abuses and crimes against humanity in East Timor since 1975.

## **Timor for the East Timorese**

\* Calls by the East Timorese people for greater decision-making power about their own country's future must be heeded by the UN administration, UN member governments, and international NGOs and institutions.

## What You Can Do

### Contact Your Members of Congress

Meet with your representative and senators in person or call their offices. Plan to educate any newly-elected representative or senator about the situations in East and West Timor, and contact returning members to reiterate your concerns. (Call your local League of Women Voters for contact information, or go to [www.capweb.net/classic/index.morph](http://www.capweb.net/classic/index.morph) and type in your zip code to find your representative and senators.) See ETAN's website for legislation considered by the 106th Congress; some of these bills will be re-introduced in the new Congress.

Thank you for your support in 2000. Your efforts make a difference! Due to the hard work of ETAN activists like you, we succeeded in maintaining the cut-off of military training and weapons sales to the Indonesian military, and ensured a higher level of U.S. financial assistance for East Timor for 2001.

Contact ETAN's Washington Office (1101 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20002, 202-544-6911, [karen@etan.org](mailto:karen@etan.org)) with the results of your contacts. Visit ETAN's website ([www.etan.org](http://www.etan.org)) for updates and more information, including text of upcoming legislation.

### Call or Write the Incoming Administration

#### **Secretary of State**

2201 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20520  
202-647-5291 (tel), 202-647-6434 (fax)

#### **Secretary of Defense**

The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301  
703-692-7100 (tel), 703-697-9080 (fax)

#### **President Bush**

White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, DC 20500  
White House comment line: 202-456-1111



(*Washington update, cont. from page 1*)

sive confiscation or voluntary return of modern weapons. Violent militias remain in control of many of the East Timorese refugees in West Timor. In areas where militia control has weakened, repatriation has often increased, demonstrating a direct link between militia intimidation and repatriation. Many returning refugees tell of their money and goods being confiscated by Indonesian soldiers. Regardless of these outrageous abuses, some members of the incoming administration will no doubt try to end the ban or restore forms of military cooperation not explicitly forbidden under current law.

We fear an impending humanitarian disaster in West Timor. Few international aid organizations have returned to the Indonesian controlled half of Timor island since their mass evacuation on September 6. Medicine and food are already in short supply, and the upcoming rainy season will only worsen conditions. Unexpected flooding has already caused destruction and worsened health conditions in some parts of West Timor.

Immediately following the September 6 militia rampage in Atambua, West Timor, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1319 (UNSCR 1319), calling for “immediate and effective action” to resolve the crisis.

In mid-November, a UN Security Council delegation visited East and West Timor to review compliance with UNSCR 1272, the resolution establishing the UN administration and peacekeeping force in East Timor, and then assessed compliance with UNSCR 1319 in West Timor. The delegation noted the under-resourced state of East Timor’s judicial system, which has largely failed to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes committed in 1999, and remarked that while “the education system is functioning throughout East Timor, together with a basic level of healthcare in many areas...the overall state of East Timor’s infrastructure remains devastated.” They were particularly critical of the lack of development progress outside of Dili, and the “the small amounts so far expended on reconstruction.” In West Timor, delegation members found continuing intimidation and misinformation in refugee camps, and called for “the expeditious prosecution of those responsible for criminal acts.” The mission called the conditions of the refugees in the “dilapidated” camps “truly depressing,” and stressed the need to finally disarm and disband militias and to conduct “a credible, apolitical, and internationally observed” refugee registration.

Prior to the UN Security Council’s departure for East Timor and Indonesia, the U.S. administration had said that “our pledge [made at the Consultative Group on Indonesia meeting, see Indonesian military article, p. 1] is based on the assumption that Indonesia will fulfill its responsibilities to the international community, including full compliance with UNSCR 1319, and that our willingness to proceed with obligations under our pledge will take into account Indonesia’s progress toward these goals.” The delegation’s trip to West Timor yielded little in the way of new commitments from Jakarta or Washington. The U.S. must keep its word and be prepared to withhold further financial assistance as militias retain control in West Timor.

Meanwhile, the many victims of violence in East Timor still have not seen justice served. No Indonesian military personnel and appallingly few East Timorese militia leaders have been held accountable for human rights violations in East Timor. Nearly all TNI officers responsible for atrocities retain positions of power and prestige, often continuing to wage terror against the people of Aceh, Papua, Maluku, and other areas of Indonesia. UN investigators who traveled to Jakarta in December to question 22 Indonesian suspects and witnesses were not permitted to do so despite a Memorandum of Understanding between Indonesia and the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) allowing such investigations. The chief of Indonesia’s armed forces, Admiral Widodo Adisucipto, has refused to cooperate with any UN investigations, declaring: “As far as the legal process is concerned, no TNI officer is to be investigated or questioned by UNTAET.” Indonesia’s parliament backed this position. Clearly, the only credible option for justice is through an international tribunal for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in East Timor. Given its decades of support for Indonesia’s brutal military, tak-

ETAN heartily recommends the fine newsletter *IndonesiaAlert!*, a quarterly publication dedicated to “supporting the struggles for democracy in Indonesia and East Timor.” The current issue covers some of the many ongoing land conflicts in Indonesia.

A sample copy is available for \$2 postpaid, subscriptions are \$15 per year (outside the U.S., add \$6). Send checks payable to IndonesiaAlert! to: P.O. Box 267, Oakland, CA 94604-0267. See [www.indonesiaalert.org](http://www.indonesiaalert.org) for more information.

ing a lead on such an initiative is the least the U.S. can do.

Though notorious militia leader Eurico Guterres has been detained in Jakarta and may be prosecuted for crimes in West Timor, Indonesian authorities have refused to extradite him to East Timor, as requested by the UN. In fact, several Indonesian leaders are hailing Guterres as a national hero; he was recently awarded a “red-and-white award” by the State Defense Movement for his role in defending Indonesian rule via the destruction of East Timor. Meanwhile, a lack of resources is severely hampering the work of the the work of the UN administration’s Serious Crimes Unit, resulting in a reduction of investigations of brutal human rights abuses and prosecution of individuals.

With ETAN’s help and prodding, members of Congress have continued to raise their voices in defense of the rights of East Timorese. Thanks to Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI), on September 27 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed the East Timor Repatriation and Security Act of 2000 (S. 2621), which bans all U.S. military assistance to Indonesia. Senate and House letters to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright expressed concern over escalating military violence in West Timor, Aceh, and West Papua. In November, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) wrote President Clinton, requesting that the administration formally designate Eurico Guterres and other militia leaders as international terrorists. Reed and Harkin also wrote Indonesian Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri to question her support for Guterres (the militia criminal is leader of the youth wing of Megawati’s party, proving the falsehood of Western claims about her progressive leanings). In October, Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) and others sent a letter to World Bank President James Wolfensohn requesting postponement of the CGI meeting.

With the new administration’s arrival, it is important to educate your members of Congress, both new and returning, about the situation in East Timor and Indonesia. It would be foolhardy to assume that current bans on military aid to Jakarta will remain in place without our constant vigilance and attention. In-person home district meetings with your elected representatives can make an incredible difference, and we ask that you please do what you can to help achieve peace and justice in East Timor and Indonesia. Until next time, *a luta continua!* ■

See ETAN’s website — [www.etan.org/news](http://www.etan.org/news) — for more info about the above initiatives.

*(Indonesian military, cont. from page 1)*

of the fourth largest country in the world will erode stability in southeast Asia and ultimately frustrate economic growth in all of Asia.

The military began an anti-American campaign after Secretary of Defense William Cohen visited Jakarta on September 18 and warned that the failure to disband the militias in West Timor would “jeopardize continued economic assistance.” Cohen’s statement was exaggerated by the pro-military press, it seems intentionally, into a threat of a near-total embargo such as those imposed on Iraq and Cuba. This misinterpretation quickly became common wisdom and provoked militantly nationalist reactions from many politicians and commentators.

In late September and October, demonstrations were held almost daily in front of the U.S. embassy. Young teenagers from the slums were paid a very high daily wage of \$2.50 to burn U.S. flags and shout themselves hoarse. Some among the noisy gaggle of pro-military legislators demanded that the U.S. ambassador be declared *persona non grata*. A group of Jakarta toughs faithful to the military’s bidding over the past two years that parades as a Muslim organization (FPI), announced it would sweep the city, telling all U.S. citizens to leave the country. Although the action was called off, an affiliated group in the central Javanese city of Solo did carry out such a sweep. Meanwhile, a bomb scare prompted the embassy to close for over a week. To add to the sense of crisis in bilateral relations, the military arrested a U.S. citizen in West Papua and charged him with espionage.

Accompanying these scare tactics were a series of bluffs. Mahfud M.D., the civilian defense minister who proudly serves as a ventriloquist’s dummy for the military, announced in late October that Indonesia would forge a defense pact with China, India, and Japan to exclude the U.S. from Asia. This was a pathetically empty threat: China and India are rivals and Japan would hardly have any interest in prioritizing Indonesia over the

U.S. Not unlike the Suharto family calling the IMF “neo-colonial” when its privileges were threatened two years ago, the military is now absurdly resorting to the rhetoric of former president Sukarno to defend principles exactly contrary to his.

The TNI’s vow to purchase weapons from sources other than the U.S. is also nonsense. The Indonesian air force doesn’t have the money to purchase a whole new fleet of planes to replace its F-16s and C-30s. It very much needs the spare parts for these planes and wants the present military embargo to be removed.

It may seem irrational for the Indonesian military to be orchestrating an anti-U.S. campaign when it needs U.S. spare parts and wants U.S. training and legitimacy. But the strategy is carefully calculated to pressure the U.S. into returning to its former longstanding tolerance for the TNI’s many human rights abuses.

To avoid completely alienating itself from donor governments of the Consultative Group on Indonesia (CGI) meeting in mid-October, the Indonesian military appeared to compromise. Its carried out cosmetic changes meant to convince governments that desperately wanted a pretext, no matter how flimsy, to avoid tying aid to human rights progress. The inconsequential disarmament of militia members in West Timor beginning in late September failed to acknowledge that the militias have been lording over refugees with fists, sticks, and knives. The arrest of militia leader Eurico Guetteres was likewise a pre-CGI charade; the charge was minor and will likely be dropped after a decent interval.

The U.S. and the World Bank threatened that aid might be jeopardized if Jakarta failed to curtail the militias, but when the CGI met in Tokyo it remained true to tradition and refused to attach any human rights conditions to the \$5.3 billion in loans promised Indonesia. The military’s gamble succeeded; the generals correctly predicted that the donor governments would not challenge Indonesia no matter how many UN workers they killed or how many UN resolutions they defied.

The TNI remains committed to prolonging militia operations in West Timor. The man directly responsible for the militias over the past year, Gen. Kiki Syanakri, commander of the ninth military region based in Bali and a former Kopassus officer with long experience in the East Timor occupation, served as the martial law administrator during and after the scorched earth operation. To reward his fine work in Timor, he has recently been promoted to serve as the army’s deputy chief of staff.

In certain respects, the Indonesian military is in crisis. It is facing numerous human rights investigations, deep public hostility and distrust (as revealed in opinion polls), guerrilla insurgencies in Aceh and West Papua, and civil war in the Moluccas (partly of its own making). There are frequent brawls between units over their drug, gambling, and prostitution rackets. There are demands for its vast business empires to be audited.

In other respects, the military is flourishing and stands poised to dominate the government for the foreseeable future. President Wahid has been unable to gain control over the military and has given up trying. The political parties in the legislature, most of whom are focused on sabotaging Wahid, have embraced the military and refused to impose reforms upon it. They voted to grant the military continued representation in the legislature until 2009 — five more years than the military itself was requesting. If, as is likely, Wahid is forced out of office by ill health or the machinations of rival parties, vice-president Megawati will assume the presidency. Given her and her party’s entirely uncritical stance on the military, the generals have been unable to conceal their joyful anticipation of such an eventuality.

For all of its crises, the military remains the most powerful institution in the government. It is well prepared to emerge from this post-Suharto wave of reform with its domestic power intact. The military is also prepared to continue sabotaging East Timor — and international donor governments have proven themselves willing to allow it. ■

*(Jafar Siddiq Hamzah, cont. from page 7)*

“iron fist” approach.

Sidney Jones of Human Rights Watch/Asia responded to Jafar’s killing by saying: “We find it odd that so many high-profile people can vanish or be killed, particularly in Medan, Indonesia’s third-largest city, and yet the police have not been able to

make a single arrest.” In a vast understatement, Jones added: “it would seem to indicate incompetence or complicity of the security forces.”

Jafar’s family has received death threats as they continue to press for justice for their son and brother, and Indonesian journalists writing about the case have also been terrorized. But they continue to carry on

Jafar’s work, for as East Timorese Nobel Laureate Josè Ramos Horta commented, “Jafar’s life and death will always inspire us to pursue justice with all our strength.” The Indonesia Human Rights Network is dedicated to the memory of Jafar. ■

*See ETAN’s website for more information on Jafar’s murder.*

# The Struggle for Justice in East Timor

*Aderito Soares is an East Timorese human rights lawyer and Director of the Dili-based Sa'he Institute for Liberation (for more on SIL, see Ajiza Magno article, p. 3).*

*While based in Indonesia, Aderito defended political prisoners and represented indigenous West Papuans seeking justice from the U.S.-based mining giant Freeport MacMoRan. Aderito has written numerous articles on international law and human rights in Indonesia and East Timor. He is on the Board of Directors of La'o Hamutuk (Walking Together), a joint East Timorese - international organization monitoring the activities of global institutions in East Timor's reconstruction process. (See [www.etan.org/lh](http://www.etan.org/lh) for the current issue of the La'o Hamutuk Bulletin, which focuses on the World Bank in East Timor.) Aderito relayed the following comments to Estafeta while on a recent brief visit to the United States.*

In terms of conflict resolution, I am very proud of East Timorese society. For at least 5 months after the referendum, there were no police, there was no law, no regulations, but people managed, doing conflict resolution at the local level, without any instruction from the UN, or from the political leaders. I traveled around East Timor talking to people about legal issues, and it was amazing for me that they managed all these conflicts that they face at the local level. The elders of the villages that have traditional ways of resolving these cases have tried to reconcile the ex-militia that came back from West Timor with the village people. We recently held a kind of paralegal training, not for students but for people who cannot read or write, but who have traditional ways of resolving conflicts.

As a lawyer I am debating with UN people how to combine these traditional means with the justice system. Of course we have to take into account that maybe some traditional ways are not in line with human rights values, so some friends are doing assessments of the traditional systems. We need to identify which cases need to be resolved in the traditional cultural ways, and which cases should be brought to justice. I don't think we should resolve serious crimes the traditional way, you give one buffalo and then you forget, but I will say that in general I am proud that this society remains optimis-

tic. We have the ways, and the instincts to resolve disputes. I'm very proud of that.

On the other hand, one year after it arrived, the United Nations is in charge and has all the authority and power to run the transition period. In this sense the situation is not in the East Timorese people's hands. I am not yet seeing that the justice system works. For example, in Dili there is now a detention center in which the lower level militias were supposed to be kept. But up to now no one has been detained in this center. During the occupation there was very little trust for the judiciary because people saw it as part of an oppressive system. We need to prove there is now a justice system that works.

Last December the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights called for an international tribunal for East Timor, but there has been no implementation of this recommendation. Not one general who ordered atrocities has been brought to justice.

Although some militias were directly involved in atrocities, many of the lower level militias were forced to join. Efforts should be concentrated on prosecuting those Indonesian generals involved.

For a peaceful future in East Timor, we have to talk about democratization in Indonesia, which means weakening the military. And the way to weaken the Indonesian military is to bring them to the court. And so we need a lot of pressure for an international tribunal. [The next Estafeta will feature more comments from Aderito.] ■

## ETAN Strategy Conference

Tempe, AZ: January 27-28, 2001

As the people of East Timor decide the fate of their emerging nation, we must choose the path that ETAN will follow.

Join fellow ETAN members for a weekend conference in Tempe, Arizona, to strategize and help shape ETAN's future. This year's conference is particularly critical given the changing nature of the East Timorese struggle. For more information or to register, contact ETAN's Field Organizer Diane Farsetta at [diane@etan.org](mailto:diane@etan.org) or 608-255-4598. [A summary of the conference's discussions will be featured in the next issue of Estafeta.]

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**U.S.A.**

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