

## Background

In 1975 Indonesia invaded the former Portuguese colony of East Timor. The ensuing occupation has been marked by horrifying brutality, taking more than 200,000 lives. In spite of recent Indonesian claims that they want to remove East Timor as a blot on Indonesia's international reputation, the new government has not significantly changed policy – the occupation persists. Habibie's regime refuses to negotiate with East Timorese resistance leaders or to consider a referendum on self-determination, which is demanded by the overwhelming majority of the East Timorese people.

Last May, the Indonesian people rose up and overthrew the 32-year-old Suharto regime. But his protégé successor, B.J. Habibie, perpetuates military domination of Indonesia. He is beholden to the army for his position and to the international financial community to salvage Indonesia from the corruption and financial meltdown which led to Suharto's ouster.

The Suharto-era brutality began with the killing of over a million Indonesians after he took power in 1965. The later genocide in East Timor has been well-documented; recent atrocities in Aceh and widespread attacks against Chinese Indonesians are being exposed only after his departure.

The Habibie regime wants to distinguish itself from Suharto's dictatorship, but it is still plagued with the same corruption and military manipulation. The new government has made some conciliatory gestures, but these make little difference in people's lives. They only serve to appease foreign governments and the international media, creating a mirage of reform.

Recent changes in Jakarta and Dili pose challenges and opportunities for people who support the human and political rights of people there. We have new issues to work through, new campaigns to undertake, and new constituencies to work with.

As the people of East Timor and Indonesia grapple with how to make their temporary democratic space permanent, and how to force a military-backed regime to give way to government based on the consent of the governed, we in the U.S. need to pressure our government to play a constructive role. We need new strategies to reverse the decades of support Washington has given to the most brutal and corrupt elements of Indonesian society.

## East Timor *Action Network*/U.S.

ETAN/US was formed after the Indonesian military shot down more than 271 unarmed East Timorese protesters at Santa Cruz Cemetery in Dili, East Timor on November 12, 1991. Since the United States has been the principal supplier of weapons and diplomatic support to maintain the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, we share the Timorese resistance's view that the U.S. must play a key role in ending that occupation. ETAN has successfully campaigned against U.S. military aid, weapons sales, and military training for Indonesia's brutal armed forces. We have persuaded many in the U.S. Congress (including a recent unanimous Senate resolution) to support self-determination for East Timor. We have challenged the economic ties between U.S. companies and the occupation, and continue to educate Americans and others about our role in supporting – and ending – Jakarta's repression.

**East Timor *Action Network* / U.S.**  
P.O. Box 1182  
White Plains, NY 10602  
USA

## East Timor & Indonesia After Suharto *Challenges and Opportunities*



## National Strategy Conference

**October 30 - November 1, 1998**  
Lake Ossipee Conference Center  
Freedom, New Hampshire

**EAST TIMOR *ACTION NETWORK***  
PO Box 1182, White Plains, NY 10602  
Tel. 914-428-7299, fax 914-428-7383  
etan-us@igc.org  
<http://www.etan.org>



Please send this registration form as soon as you can (by October 19 if possible) to:  
**East Timor Action Network/U.S.**  
PO Box 1182  
White Plains, NY 10602 USA

We welcome your proposals for topics to discuss and projects to undertake. If you submit them in advance, we'll distribute them to all who register.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Day \_\_\_\_\_

Evening \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary needs (vegetarian/vegan/other):  
\_\_\_\_\_

I arrive at (place) \_\_\_\_\_

on (time and date) \_\_\_\_\_

by (flight no.) \_\_\_\_\_

I will depart from \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ to cover registration, food, and accommodations.

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ as a donation to help subsidize other conference participants.

Thank you.

## Program

The conference will feature prominent East Timorese leaders. We will also be joined by experts and activists from many groups working on East Timor and Indonesia, including representatives of ETAN's chapters around the country, and several people who have recently visited East Timor and Indonesia. The UN-facilitated All-Inclusive Intra-Timorese Dialogue concludes in Austria the day our conference starts, and we will have an immediate report. We hope that José Ramos-Horta, Constâncio Pinto, Bella Galhos, who will attend that dialog, will be able to join us on Sunday.

Our guest of honor is **Fernando de Araujo**. Ten years ago, as an East Timorese student in Indonesia, Fernando was the key link between the East Timorese people and the outside world. In 1992, he was arrested, tortured, and sentenced to nine years in prison for helping to organize a demonstration in Jakarta a week after the November 1991 Dili massacre. While in prison, Fernando worked closely with Xanana Gusmão, the leader of the CNRT. Fernando was freed in March 1998, and comes to us directly from East Timor.

The conference will begin with dinner on Friday evening, October 30, at 6:00 pm, followed by introductions and a discussion of recent events in East Timor and Indonesia.

On Saturday, we'll have panels and workshops. Because so many knowledgeable and active people will be present, our emphasis is on discussion rather than presentations. Among the topics we will explore are:

- √ Who runs Indonesia today? Habibie, the army, multinationals, Suharto cronies, or the IMF? How are Indonesian people working for democracy, and how can we help? What role should the U.S. government play?
- √ Is East Timor becoming free? How do we get foreign leaders to see through mock troop withdrawals to the ongoing military occupation? How are people using the increased "democratic space" in East Timor? Will it last, becoming real democracy?
- √ What could autonomy mean for East Timor? How do we resolve the attention it's receiving with the almost total preference for a referendum among the East Timorese? Can a peace process for East Timor avoid the pitfalls of such processes elsewhere?
- √ What role is the U.S. government playing now? How can we make it better?
- √ What does the economic crisis mean for Indonesia and East Timor? How should we campaign around the IMF and multinational corporate supporters of the Indonesian regime?
- √ How can supporters best work with East Timorese and Indonesian activists both inside and outside their countries? How do we join the new energy among overseas Chinese, and burgeoning activism amongst Indonesian-Americans? Are there new possibilities for humanitarian aid?

We'll end the day on a lighter note, with a cultural event and a party!

On Sunday, we'll figure out how the perspectives developed on Saturday should shape our legislative, economic, political, educational and other work – and on how to transform these discussions into action.

We won't get all the perfect answers, but will learn from each other to make our activism more interesting, powerful, and fun.

We plan to end the conference by 4:00 pm, but come early or stay late to enjoy the beautiful wooded, lakeside setting.

## Logistics

Freedom, New Hampshire is an hour's drive from Manchester and two hours from Boston. Please fly into Manchester, which is served by Southwest, US Airways and other airlines. You can get an inexpensive fare if you plan ahead. ETAN will arrange transportation Friday and Sunday evenings between Manchester airport and the conference site. We will also facilitate carpools from Washington, Boston and New York.

Each ETAN local chapter will be subsidized for the travel cost of one person, although chapters should feel free to share the subsidy among several representatives.

The registration fee includes accommodation, meals and ground transportation. The rates are \$250 for an organization or a sponsor, and \$150 for individuals. Please contact ETAN if that is too much; some scholarships are available for East Timor activists.

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