

**Action Alert from the East Timor Action Network/US**  
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Phone 914-428-7299 fax 914-428-7383, email fbp@igc.apc.org

May 20, 1994

\*\*\*\*\* Philippines Tries to Suppress East Timor Conference \*\*\*\*\*

Ramos bows to pressure from Suharto

If Jakarta has its way, Indonesia's suppression of freedom in East Timor will spread throughout Southeast Asia. The Philippine government has barred non-Filipinos from attending a conference on East Timor in Manila. Calling the conference "inimical to the national interest," President Fidel V. Ramos ordered his Justice Secretary to "take immediate steps to exclude [Timorese leaders in exile] and other non-Filipino conferees."

Please call or fax the Philippine Embassy in Washington or other representatives of the Philippine government immediately. Tell them that the Philippines' proud reputation as the most democratic country in Southeast Asia is at stake, and urge them to change the policy.

The Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor (APCET), to be held from May 31 to June 5, is expected to attract 200 participants from the region and around the world. With discussion from a variety of perspectives, the conference promises to be a significant event in airing the problem of East Timor.

The Indonesia government, which does not allow such discussions in its own country, has demanded that Manila prohibit the conference. Until yesterday, Philippine leaders said that they were "constrained" by their constitution to allow freedom of speech and assembly. They need to be reminded that speech is not free unless people with things to say are allowed to participate.

Please call or fax the following Philippine government representatives:

Office of President Fidel V. Ramos. Fax 63-2-731-1325, phone 63-2-521-2301.

Min. of Foreign Affairs Robert Romulo. Fax 63-2-832-8309. Ph 63-2-832-7793.

Philippine Embassy in Washington. Fax 202-467-9417, phone 202-483-1414.

Please send a copy of your letter to the East Timor Action Network.

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**Reaction from the Manila conference organizers, May 20, 1994**

Indonesia has succeeded in invading the Philippines -- not in military terms as it did in East Timor in 1975 - but in foreign policies and diplomatic work.

Banning foreign personalities from entry to the Philippines is a clear



surrender to Indonesian pressure. Certainly, the Ramos administration is acting as if the Philippines is Indonesia's 28th province. To placate General Suharto, Gen. Ramos will do everything, even surrender our own dignity as a race.

On what basis has the Philippine authorities banned speakers and participants to the conference except on the hate list issued by the Indonesian government?

We have repeatedly informed high government Philippine and Indonesian embassy officials that the conference has invited international participants of different persuasion, including pro-Indonesian Timorese. This obviously has not diminished the extreme paranoia of Indonesia that will only be satisfied by complete silence.

What does Indonesia have to hide on East Timor?

If they can pressure the Philippines this way, we can only imagine what they can do in Indonesia and what they have done in East Timor.

But definitely, the conference will push through despite the collusion of the Indonesian and Philippine governments. The East Timor issue has been silenced for two decades. It can not be silenced now. Certainly not in its neighbourhood.

Note: Anyone issuing press statements or writing to President Ramos can fax copies to APCET, fax +63-2 921-6774.

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**TAPOL, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, issued the following press release today, 20 May 1994:**

President Ramos urged to rescind order barring foreigners from East Timor conference

TAPOL, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, today called on President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines to rescind his decision barring non-Filipinos from attending a conference on East Timor scheduled to begin in Manila on 31 May.

A presidential palace statement issued today said their presence would be 'inimical to the national interest'.

Carmel Budiardjo of TAPOL said in her letter:

We regret that you have bowed to pressure from the Indonesian government which has been doing everything possible to sabotage the conference.

Indonesia has on numerous occasions spoken out angrily against other countries for intervening in internal Indonesian affairs whenever governments raise issues with



Jakarta about the situation in East Timor or about human rights generally in Indonesia. Yet now, the Indonesian government has used every diplomatic resource to exert pressure on the Philippines government to prevent the conference from taking place. This is a case of blatant interference in the internal affairs of a neighbouring country and an example of how Indonesia feels it can throw its weight around in the region.

TAPOL has learnt from reliable sources in Manila that the Filipino authorities have a blacklist of persons barred from entering the country for the conference. The eight names include Jose Ramos-Horta, co-leader of the East Timorese resistance movement, the CNRM, several East Timorese and two activists from TAPOL, Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong. Such a list could only have been supplied by Indonesian intelligence, proving the close collusion between the Indonesian and Filipino intelligence to sabotage the conference.

TAPOL warmly welcomes the decision of the organisers in Manila to go ahead with the conference regardless of all the barriers emanating from Jakarta that have dogged their preparatory work from the very start.

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#### **APCET Press Release on Manila**

The following Press Release was issued today, 20 May 1994, in Manila by the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor:

#### **APCET REACTION ON THE RAMOS ORDER BANNING THE ENTRY OF FOREIGN CONFEREES**

Indonesia has succeeded in invading the Philippines -- not in military terms as it did in East Timor in 1975 - but in foreign policies and diplomatic work.

Banning foreign personalities from entry to the Philippines is a clear surrender to Indonesian pressure. Certainly, the Ramos administration is acting as if the Philippines is Indonesia's 28th province. To placate General Suharto, Gen. Ramos will do everything, even surrender our own dignity as a race.

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### **Philippine media fax numbers**

APCET organisers have mentioned that it would be of GREAT value to them if the Philippine media were to be sent support statements for APCET by solidarity groups from abroad.

It would be good to address the matters raised in the latest statement by Manglapus upon his return from Jakarta, we posted 18 May on reg.easttimor.

APCET organisers have provided the following list of media numbers. They all have the prefix 63 2

BULETIN TODAY 49 90 50  
BUSINESS WORLD 722 62 14  
BUSINESS CHRONICLE 49 69 48  
BUSINESS STAR 530 13 26  
TODAY 810 1970  
INQUIRER 58 89 54  
MANILA TIMES 631 77 88  
MANILA CHRONICLE 40 19 48  
MALAYA 530 1208  
MANILA STANDARD 40 75 58  
PHILIPPINE STAR 40 49 85  
PHILIPPINE TIMES 48 68 72

### **News Agencies/Wires:**

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE 522 01 85  
ASAHI SHIMBUN 812 56 66 521 24 30  
AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORP. 817 11 78  
EASTERN HORIZONS TV 831 68 26  
FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW 522 02 92  
INTERPRESS SERVICE 635 3660  
JIJI PRESS 521 1474  
KYODO NEWS SERVICE 813 39 14  
MAINICHI BROADCASTING SYSTEM NEWS 522 3905



MANILA NEWS FEATURES AND COMMENTARIES 741 4232  
PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM 633 5887  
PHILIPPINE NEWS AND FEATURES 521 7442  
REUTERS 817 6267  
UNION OF CATHOLIC ASIA NEWS 922 6952

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### **Alatas welcomes Manila ban**

Source: Reuter  
Date: 20 May 1994  
Dateline: Jakarta  
Abridged

#### **INDONESIA WELCOMES MANILA MOVE TO (EASE) EAST TIMOR ROW**

Indonesia on Friday welcomed the Philippines decision to ban non-Filipinos from taking part in a Manila conference on East Timor, a move which seemed to be aimed at easing the growing row with Jakarta over the meeting.

Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said the denial of visa to overseas participants by President Fidel Ramos reflected Jakarta's views and judgement of the conference.

"The conference has been inspired, planned and engineered by certain individuals such as Ramos Horta and his friends," Alatas said in a statement. He said the Manila meeting was not an academic conference on human rights but was clearly part of Horta and his friends' political campaign to attack and tarnish Indonesia's name and disrupt its territorial integrity.

President Ramos' chief legal counsel, Antonio Carpio, told reporters that foreigners seeking to attend would be denied visas. Those already here would have their visas revoked. The only exceptions would be journalists covering the talks and exchange students, he said.

President Ramos had earlier roundly condemned the meeting but insisted that freedom of speech guarantees in the Philippines constitution prevented him from halting it. Carpio said on Friday that those constitutional guarantees did not extend to foreigners.

Indonesia has continued to bring strong pressure to bear on the Philippines despite Ramos' repeated assurances that Manila fully recognised Jakarta's rule over East Timor. It has threatened to end its role as a peace broker between Manila and Muslim rebels and has withdrawn from a business development conference scheduled for next week in southern Philippines. On Friday Indonesia's Chamber of Commerce, Kadin, added its weight to the growing boycott of the Davao meeting, saying it would also cancel its participation in the trade fair



## CNRM- National Council of Maubere Resistance

### STATEMENT ON THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN THE APCET CONFERENCE ON EAST TIMOR

President Ramos' succumbing to Indonesian pressures to ban access to foreign participants at next week's Asia Pacific Conference on East Timor in Manila, is deeply saddening, a blemish on Philippine standing. Ninoy Aquino, who I had the privilege and honour to have met only a few days before his assassination, would be profoundly distressed. With his heroic dedication to fight for freedom from oppression, justice and truth, Ninoy had fully supported the struggle of the East Timorese people against the brutal Indonesian occupation of their country.

The East Timorese leaders in exile, who for so many years had joined in support of the struggle of the Filipino people against tyranny, feel profoundly disappointed and betrayed by President Ramos' surrender to the latest blatant interference in Filipino international affairs on the part of the Indonesian dictatorship.

Our high expectations in the supposedly free and democratic Filipino system had led us to expect that due respect and consideration would be given to APCET. Our intention in holding the conference had been to bring together freedom loving Filipinos and an international group of well qualified and distinguished people, able to provide valuable contributions to the process of search for a solution to the East Timor problem. As a democratic member of our region, with its people sharing some deep affinities with the East Timorese people, the Philippines seemed a logical venue, able to provide regional inputs helping to find the solution of an issue of regional concern.

Unlike Jakarta's coarse efforts to impinge on Philippine foreign policy and create regional tensions, which it shamelessly accuses us of trying to do, our intentions are to present the truth. Is there something wrong in this? Why is the Indonesian Government so afraid of dealing with the truth, to the point of responding with the present embarrassing hysteria?

All along we had welcomed the participation of high level Indonesian officials, including their Foreign Minister, at the Conference, so as to provide them a platform to present their views. Are they so lacking in arguments, that they can only respond by brutally blackmailing the Philippines, trampling on its sovereignty and dignity? The list of foreign conferees banned by President Ramos further proves Indonesian interference in the conduct of Filipino affairs. Why are no East Timorese collaborators of Jakarta named among those banned?

We sincerely hope that reason and respect for principle will prevail, and that the government of President Ramos will reconsider its position. This episode has been a valuable learning experience on the Indonesian regime's meaning of 'friendship', namely, coercion for the surrender of hard won freedom and dignity.

JOSE RAMOS HORTA

20 May 1994



**PRESS STATEMENT BY APCET CONVENORS**  
23 May 1994

**UNDERSTANDING THE GAME OF THE GENERALS**

Suharto called a bluff. To bad for Ramos, he took it. Guess who is loosing?

The order to bar foreign participants from attending an international human rights conference is a desperate attempt to subvert the free exchange of ideas on matters that affect regional and global peace and stability.

Gen. Ramos invokes national interest as basis for the ban. He did not specify whose national interest. Certainly not the Philippines'. The government has long been jeopardising the interest of the State. We need no conference to do that for us.

Government officials and apologists have charged the Philippine Convenors Group of putting national interest at stake. But we did our part. We met with top government and Indonesian Embassy officials on April 4 this year, we sent a memorandum to Gen. Almonte-which, we were told, had been taken up in the Cluster E of the Cabinet. The memo articulates our proposal of the role the Philippine Government may take in mediating the East Timor conflict.

But the Ramos government would rather believe in the ghosts created by Indonesia, and even added its own. It even rose from the dead the much-abused Red-scare tactic. Human rights and self-determination are once more defined by the rules of the games the generals play.

To rationalise its decision, the Ramos government took the Jakarta lies hook, line and sinker, claiming that APCET is a political activity out to embarrass Indonesia. But in its ban list there was no mention of other Timorese in exile who were once revolutionary leaders turned pro-Indonesia integrationists. Will they be "physically barred" too, like those who government identified as troublemakers?

The conference will discuss the legal, political and cultural dimensions of the East Timor situation. Papers will be presented by internationally acknowledged legal minds, humanitarians, and peace advocates.

If Indonesia will be embarrassed, it is because there are reasons to be so. Inevitably the conference will discuss its atrocities in East Timor and the annihilation of a people. There have been more than 200,000 deaths. And still counting. Even Hitler will be threatened by this challenge to his fascist throne.

Gen. Ramos, the good soldier, acted upon the orders of his general, Suharto. First, he upheld the Constitution. Then, he spat on it. Never mind if it was his face that got wet in the end. In the eyes of Big Brother, Ramos is once more a favored administrator -- a reliable governor-general, indeed!

Jakarta fears the conference will be nothing more than Indonesia bashing. But our list of attendees, and those who have endorsed the conference, is a respectable roster of people who have better things to do than to spend much money for fare and conference fees just to lash out at Indonesia. They can do that in their respective countries, where democracy seems to function better.



The Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor is called to discuss higher ideals which the governments both of Indonesia and the Philippines may not understand. Higher ideals are only for those who value life and human dignity.

RENATO CONSTANTINO Jr.  
Chair, APCET Philippine Convenors.

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### **Timorous on Timor**

Editorial, The New York Times, 24 May 1994

It is generally reckoned that at least 200,000 civilians died after Indonesia lawlessly invaded in 1975 and then annexed the former Portuguese colony of East Timor. But unlike recent massacres in Rwanda, it caused no international outcry, no calls for military intervention by the United Nations. One reason for the different response is that Indonesia is a big and powerful Islamic country, a leader of the nonaligned bloc, yet also a lucrative market for Europe and the United States. And Jakarta has few scruples about using its muscle.

This has been confirmed afresh by Indonesia's crude pressure on President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines to censor a human rights conference in Manila scheduled to begin next Tuesday, at which eight exiled East Timorese activists were invited to speak. When Indonesia's military regime learned of this, it warned that unless the conference was canceled, Indonesia would probably refuse to be host to peace talks between the Philippine Government and Muslim separatist rebels.

Initially President Ramos tried to mollify Indonesia, sending an envoy to Jakarta and stressing that Manila recognized East Timor as part of Indonesia, adding that his Government was powerless to halt a private conference. The rumbling only increased in Jakarta, so Mr. Ramos on Friday banned non-Filipinos from taking part in the conference, saying their presence would be "inimical to the national interest." Now Jakarta has pulled out of a Filipino trade fair, which has been postponed. Thus does Indonesia assert its right to silence debate on East Timor anywhere.

Will Australia be the next target? In years past, Australian journalists have defied travel restrictions to East Timor. But like the Philippines, Australia meekly refuses to challenge Indonesia's illegal grab of this unfortunate former colony. Indeed, in the tradition of Orwell's Newspeak, Australian diplomats avoid mentioning the words "East Timor" and pointedly talk about "Timor," thus uniting in their vocabulary what Indonesia has vainly striven to unite with gun and bomb. The sound of those dropping knees surely has not escaped the Suharto regime, and Canberra may soon be pressured to carry self-censorship even further.



Indonesian archipelago, during a civil war in the territory  
colony.<

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PM-Philippines-East Timor, 1st Ld-Writethru, a0446,0475  
Philippine Supreme Court Overturns Injunction, Allows  
Conference

Eds: LEADS throughout with conference open. CORRECTS number of  
foreigners. ADDS details. EDITS. No pickup

By OLIVER TEVES

Associated Press Writer

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MANILA, Philippines (AP) \_ A conference on Indonesia's  
annexation of East Timor opened today after the Supreme Court  
ruled it could go ahead as planned but that President Fidel  
Ramos could ban foreigners.<

Ramos banned 34 foreigners, including the wife of French  
President Francois Mitterrand, from the five-day conference  
after Indonesia threatened retaliation against the Philippines.<

Indonesia has been accused of widespread human rights abuses  
in East Timor, which it invaded in 1975 and annexed a year  
later. The United Nations has condemned the annexation.<

At least 25 foreigners registered as delegates but 10,  
including Nobel Peace Prize winner Mairead Maguire of Ireland,  
were turned back at Ninoy Aquino International Airport.<

Danielle Mitterrand, president of the human rights group  
France Libertes, on Monday told reporters in Paris that  
Indonesia applied "tyrannical pressure on us and on the  
Philippine government to keep me from going to that meeting."<

She said Indonesia threatened to pull \$300 million in  
contracts it has with the Philippines.<

"By going, I would have thrown oil on the fire," she said.<

Indonesian officials were not immediately available for  
comment, but Indonesia's foreign minister has called the  
conference "a platform to attack and discredit Indonesia."<

The foreign participants, supported by a human chain of  
students, nuns and priests, marched from the state-run  
University of the Philippines to the nearby conference site a  
few hours after the Supreme overturned a lower court injunction  
against the conference.<

But the high court said Ramos had the authority under the  
constitution to restrict foreigners in the interest of national  
security. The court said foreigners who had already arrived for  
the conference could attend.<

Renato Constantino Jr., head of the Philippine group  
sponsoring the conference, drew boisterous applause and cheers  
from the more than 200 participants after he declared the  
conference open. About 100 foreign and local reporters also  
were attending.<

Ramos has defended his decision to bar foreigners, saying  
freedom of assembly and speech were outweighed by issues of  
national security.<

Ramos has not explained the comment, but aides said  
Indonesia has threatened to stop mediation efforts to end the  
Muslim rebellion in the southern Philippines.<

The archbishop of Manila on Monday, in a letter to the Roman  
Catholic bishop of East Timor, condemned the Philippine  
government for trying to stop the conference.<



Cardinal Jaime L. Sin wrote that he was sorry "to see the political leaders of my own nation giving in to the pressure of a foreign nation."

Indonesia invaded East Timor, part of an island in the Indonesian archipelago, during a civil war in the Portuguese colony.

AP-WS-05-31-94 0404EDT

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G #51;ASIA /PAKISTAN-VIO/

BC-PAKISTAN-VIOLENCE<

PAKISTANI GUNMEN KILL THREE POLICEMEN, ONE OTHER<

KARACHI, Pakistan (Reuter) - Gunmen killed three plainclothes policemen and another man in Pakistan's port city of Karachi Tuesday, police said.<

They said the policemen were fired on while they were traveling in a taxi at Natha Khan Goth in eastern Karachi. Their uniforms were found in the boot.<

Police said no one had claimed responsibility.<

One of the officers was in charge of a police station in northern Karachi. The fourth man was identified as a college student at Larkana, a town in the north of Sind province of which Karachi is the capital.<

At least 32 people were killed and 115 wounded in six days of violence in southern Pakistan earlier this month.<

More than 2,000 people have died in ethnic and political clashes in Karachi since 1986.<

REUTER Reut02:00 05-31

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PM-Philippines-East Timor,0410

Philippine Supreme Court Overturns Injunction, Allows Conference

By OLIVER TEVES

Associated Press Writer

MANILA, Philippines (AP) - The Supreme Court today ruled that a conference on Indonesia's annexation of East Timor could go ahead as planned but upheld President Fidel Ramos' authority to ban foreigners from the session.<

Ramos had banned 34 foreigners, including the wife of French President Francois Mitterrand, from the five-day conference which was to start later today.<

At least 10 foreigners registered as delegates but several, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Mairead Maguire of Ireland, were turned back at Ninoy Aquino International Airport.<

Danielle Mitterrand, president of the human rights group France Libertes, on Monday told reporters in Paris that Indonesia applied "tyrannical pressure on us and on the Philippine government to keep me from going to that meeting."

She said Indonesia threatened to pull \$300 million in contracts it has with the Philippines.<

"By going, I would have thrown oil on the fire," she said.< Indonesia has been accused of widespread human rights abuses in East Timor.<

Indonesian officials were not immediately available for



Also yesterday, the United Nations said it is checking reports that 500 people have been massacred in a refugee camp in the last few days.

The government's barracks at Nyanza, about 30 kilometres southeast of Gitarama, has fallen to the rebels, a visit there yesterday showed. But the government has not fled Gitarama, contrary to rebel claims.

However, a United Nations source said earlier on condition of anonymity that the fall of Nyanza would be seen as a major blow to the army's

day. Kabia said the rebels raised serious concerns about continuing ethnic massacres, radio broadcasts inciting killing and allegations of government interference with UN efforts to evacuate displaced people in the capital.

Kabia said the United Nations is checking reports from aid agencies that 500 people had been massacred two days ago at a refugee camp south of Kigali.

"I am alarmed by reports just received that

additional 5,500 peacekeepers, but it is not clear when they might arrive.

Tony Burgener, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, said more 500,000 displaced people are now stranded in the Gitarama area without food and drinking water.

He said the rebel advance had cut off the main supply route from the south and that the plight of the displaced people is unclear if Gitarama falls. He said the refugees have no other place to go.

## Philippines bans foreigners heading to Timor meeting

JONATHAN MANTHORPE  
SOUTHAM NEWS

HONG KONG - French human-rights activist Danielle Mitterrand is reportedly among 34 foreigners banned by the Philippines government in its bid to stop an international conference on Indonesian repression in East Timor.

But organizers say they will defy the efforts to prevent the five-day conference, to start in Manila today. Indonesia seized East Timor in 1975 and some 200,000 people are thought to have been killed in the subsequent repression.

A Manila newspaper yesterday published the names of 34 interna-

tional human-rights activists it said will be turned away, including Mitterrand, the wife of President François Mitterrand and an outspoken critic of Indonesia's treatment of East Timorians. She was to give the keynote address.

Northern Irish 1976 Nobel Peace Prize winner Mairead Maguire and U.S. Prof. Susan Castillo were refused entry on the weekend after Philippines President Fidel Ramos ordered officials to keep foreigners from the conference.

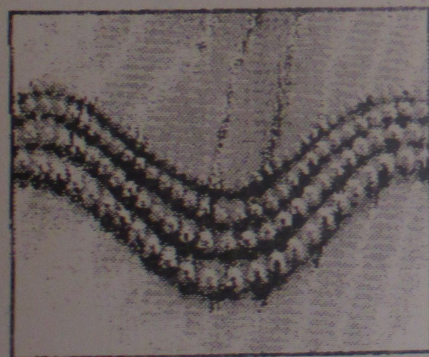
Indonesia reacted angrily to the plans for the conference and threatened reprisals, which Ramos fears could have severe political and economic repercussions.

But he has come under heavy fire at home, with critics accusing him of wielding Indonesia's hammer.

Initially, the president was reported to have agreed that banning the conference would violate the Philippines' 1986 democratic constitution. But he grew increasingly alarmed at the vehemence of Jakarta's threats.

He barred Australia-based East Timorese resistance leader Juan Ramos-Horta and seven followers from entering the country and then got a court order banning the conference.

On the weekend, conference organizer Renato Constantino said he believes the ban is illegal and insisted the conference will go ahead.



### Pearls

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THE LARGEST SELECTION  
OF PEARLS IN QUEBEC

# My neighbour is safe

Mantorpe

Gazette

May 31

94



17402

LETTER TO ALL PARTICIPANTS OF  
THE ASIA - PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON EAST TIMOR (APCET)  
IN MANILA, THE PHILIPPINES

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by George Junus Aditjondro

First of all, let me convey to all of you, brothers and sisters, the greetings and blessings from Dom Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Dili, passed on to me via telephone by Mgr. Belo's himself very recently. He also wishes to relay his gratitude to Jaime Kardinal Sin, on behalf of the people of East Timor, for the letter sent by Kardinal Sin to Mgr. Belo. Unfortunately, Mgr. Belo himself has not received the letter personally, and only heard about the letter in the news broadcast. Last but not least, in his phone message to me he appealed to the conference to support the idea of carrying out a UN-supervised referendum in the territory, which he had already appealed to the former UN Secretary General in his letter of February 6, 1989. Myself and the Indonesian organizations which sent their delegation to protest at the Philippine embassy on May 27, 1994, fully support the idea of having the East Timorese people themselves determine their own future through a UN-supervised referendum.

Next, from the deepest of my heart I salute all my Filipino and Filipina brothers and sisters for your determination in carrying out this conference, inspite of all the concerted attempts of the Indonesian and Philippine governments to abort the conference. I also wish to congratulate all the participants, who are attending this conference in person, through video-tapes, or otherwise.

On this very precious and historical occasion, I have to apologize to all the organizers and participants for my physical absence in this conference, which I had promised to attend. There are two reasons for my physical absence, namely, first, it is high-time for my younger Indonesian colleagues to come to the conference, so that they may also experience the "baptism of fire and blood" into the heroic independence struggle of the Maubere people.

The second and fundamentally more important reason for my physical absence in this conference is to express my solidarity with my East Timorese brothers and sisters, who do not enjoy the freedom of movement in their own country nor their freedom to leave and re-enter their country. These universal human rights, which I have enjoyed so far, is still a luxury for my brothers and sisters in the occupied territory. Especially in the wake of the Manila conference, more and more of East Timorese brothers and sisters have been and are being deprived of these universal human rights, which I will elaborate further in this open letter.

Hence, I have decided to cancel my trip to Manila, so that I may still lend a listening ear and provide some counseling words to my East Timorese friends, whom so often contact me in person or by phone during these days. On the same time, during these days my phone is ringing of the hook from my press colleagues, who rely on me



for information to "balance" the disinformation operation launched by the Indonesian government and their cronies to discredit the Manila conference. In addition to responding to all those life- and telephone-interviews and tele-conferences, I have also responded to press interviews in Yogyakarta and Jakarta, where I joined a protest demonstration at the Philippine embassy in Jakarta, last Friday. In fact, during the last month my family and myself have rarely enjoyed a day of peace, without the press, fellow activists, or military intelligence agents asking me *whether* and *why* I wanted to go to Manila.

Nevertheless, as a result of all those attempts to counter the "official" line concerning the Manila conference, to a certain extent I have been able to debunk two most important lies splashed-around about the conference, namely that the lot of the Maubere people could be traded for the well-being of the Moro people, and that all the 27 international and national organizations supporting the Manila conference are all merely puppets manipulated by one single person, Jose Ramos-Horta. (Without realizing it, probably, the latter lie is implicitly also a disgrace to the Indonesian people, as if independence was not something desired by all if not most of the Indonesian people, and that we were all manipulated by one single person, Soekarno, who, together with Mohammad Hatta, proclaimed Indonesian independence on August 17, 1945).

As far as my own ideas about East Timor are concerned, my 65 pages booklet published by the Australian *East Timor Talks Campaign* will speak for itself. So, let me dwell on the second reason for my physical absence in this conference, by describing the recent human rights violations exerted on the East Timorese in their occupied territory as well as in Java.

First of all, beginning in early May 1994, a series of detentions have occurred in East Timor. The detainees have two things in common: they all strive for an independent East Timor, and they all expressed that political opinion publicly in front of foreign journalists who stayed at Mahkota Timor hotel in Dili in the previous month. Eleven persons have been detained so far, namely Nuno de Andrade Sarmiento Corvelho, Anibal, and Isaac of Santa Cruz, Dili; Rui Fernandes of Bemori, Dili; Octaviano, Pedro Fatima Tilman, Pantaleao, Miguel, Rosalino, and Marcos, all of Kuluhun, Dili; and Lucas Tilman dos Santos of Bairro-Pite, Dili. However, only four undisclosed names have been forwarded to be taken to court, so far.

The detentions in Dili have been followed by detentions in the city of Malang in East Java. On May 14, 1994, an East Timorese student at Universitas Merdeka, Antonio Soares Araujo was detained by the security apparatus in the city. His boarding room was ransacked and his documents confiscated. This, probably, led to the detention on May 19, 1994, of another East Timorese student, Jose Antonio Neves, who is still studying at the Catholic seminary in Malang, after leaving the seminary's convent, three years ago.

The latter's detention may lead to another series of detentions, since Neves is a leader of the Maubere students' resistance movement and regularly travelled back and



forth between his homeland and Java. Currently, rumors are circulating among the East Timorese students in Surabaya, the capital of East Java, that six East Timorese students in the city are going to be "picked up" by the Indonesian police or military in their city, just as their two colleagues in Malang.

So, in solidarity with *companhero* Nino Konis Santana and all the freedom fighters who can rarely leave their hiding places in the bush, in solidarity with *companhero* Jose Antonio Neves and all the East Timorese students who have repeatedly suffered various forms of discrimination and human rights violations from the civilian and military arms of the Indonesian government, in solidarity with *companhero* Xanana Gusmao and all other East Timorese political prisoners in Dili, Kupang, and Jakarta, and in solidarity with *companheiros* Emilia Gusmao as well as *companheiros* Mar'i Alkatiri, Jose Luis Guterres, Jose Manuel Ramos-Horta, Joao Carrascalao and all other East Timorese refugees and exiles who have not been able to see their homeland for many many years, I voluntarily turn down the invitation and airline ticket to attend the Manila conference.

Turning down this invitation is personally not easy thing for me, since it also means turning down the chance to re-visit the places which I visited about 15 years ago, to learn about the numerous urban- and rural-based struggles against the Marcos regime in Luzon. Turning down this invitation deprives me from the chance of re-visiting the Cordillera peoples, whose homeland's status has been raised constitutionally to an autonomous region, which, together with the homeland of the *Bangsa Moro*, was a major constitutional change supported by the same democratic forces which currently organize this conference to uphold the right of the Maubere people to self-determination.

Hopefully, dear Filipino and Filipina brothers and sisters, I will come to visit the Philippines on another more peaceful time. Because, right now, my main battleground is right here, among my own people, where I have to explore for ways to persuade my fellow Indonesians to listen to the song of the *loricos* in the shadow of Mount Ramelau. In this is my battleground I have to fight the rising "big brother syndrome" among my fellow compatriots, who feel that -- as a big nation -- they have the right to "teach" the lesson to all (smaller) ASEAN nations to "hands-off" from East Timor, in the name of "ASEAN solidarity." In this battleground, too, I have to face the "double standards" of some of my fellow Indonesian intellectuals, who often express their solidarity with minorities discriminated in Indonesia's neighbor countries, or in the Balkans, or in the Middle East, while simultaneously ridiculing a minority fighting for its independence within what has now been proclaimed as Indonesia's legal borders.

Salatiga, 1 June 1994





*A Victory for the East Timorese and Filipino People  
APCET causes UPSET for Manila and Jakarta*

A Report from the  
**Asia-Pacific Conference  
 on East Timor**

Manila, Philippines, May 31 - June 4, 1994

By Charles Scheiner

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# Report from the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor

by Charles Scheiner, East Timor Action Network/U.S.

July 5, 1994

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Pressure from the Indonesia government and harassment from the Philippine government could not prevent the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor (APCET) from succeeding far beyond anyone's expectations. The determined efforts of the President-Generals – Suharto in Jakarta and Fidel Ramos in Manila – could not delay the scheduled start of the conference, attended by over 50 foreign delegates and more than 200 Filipinos. Although their intent was to avert discussion of East Timor, the blacklists, bla ckmail, deportations and threats by the two generals – countered by the deliberate determination of the conference organizers – kept the issue on the front pages. APCET, held in Manila from May 31 to June 4, was far more successful than if the generals had simply left it alone.

The Indonesian press deemed APCET a public relations disaster for Jakarta, as the occupation of East Timor attracted attention in Southeast Asia and around the world. They compared the "Manila Incident" to the "Dili Incident." But unlike the massacres of November 1991, which left hundreds of people dead, the worst the "Manila Incident's" victims had to face was hours on airplanes, only to be sent home. Those of us who got in helped lay the groundwork for ongoing East Timor work in the Philippines and throughout Southeast Asia.

Much has been written about those who were kept out – the blacklisted first ladies of France and Portugal, four Christian Bishops, Indonesian democracy advocates, exiled Timorese resistance leaders. As the only U.S. representative at the conference, I thought it might be interesting to share some personal impressions and conclusions.



### Premonitions

Before embarking on the 24-hour flights from Ottawa and New York to Manila, Sharon Scharfe of ETAN/Canada and I were well warned. Under pressure from Jakarta, President Ramos had declared the conference "inimical to the national interest" of the Philippines, retreating from his initial position that he could not override Constitutional protection of freedom of speech and assembly. He announced that foreign delegates would not be allowed to participate, and leaked a blacklist of barred individuals.

Press coverage went global (including a *New York Times* editorial, see page 28), and ETAN and others had called for protests to the Philippine government. But Sharon and I weren't on the blacklist, and the organizers urged us to go, so why not give it a try? I kept thinking back to my first visit to Manila in 1986, when I left a week before dictator Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown by the nonviolent "EDSA Revolution," and friends in Belau (Palau) convinced me it was too dangerous to return. I was determined not to miss another major event in the nonviolent advancement of Philippine and Timorese peoples' struggles.

As we flew across the Pacific on Friday, May 27, a Quezon City court judge was banning the conference, ordering the University of the Philippines (UP) to deny APCET access to the hostel where we were to stay and the law school where the meeting was to be. We didn't know that as we uneventfully cleared immigration and customs. But as we checked in to our hotel at midnight and saw an anti-APCET article headlining the giveaway tourist weekly, things began to sink in. We turned on the TV and caught a 15-minute news clip featuring APCET and clips from *Death of a Nation*, and we began to realize how significant this conference would be.

### Preparing for the worst

In the morning, we went to the office of Initiatives for International Dialogue, the conference organizers. Minutes after walking in the door, we were told to "write a statement we can release to the press when you are deported" – hardly the warmest welcome I've received to an international gathering. After reading the massive clipping files from the past few weeks, we did our assignment and emailed it home. Our hosts gave us lunch, briefed us on security and harassment – phone taps and outages, infiltration, mysterious visitors – and settled us in housing at the University of the Philippines. Since the conference wouldn't begin until Tuesday (if at all), the UP hostel manager had been persuaded that the court order didn't yet ban us from campus.

Quezon City Judge Mariano Bacalla issued his order at the request of the newly-formed Philippine-Indonesia Friendship Association, headed by Jose Laurel and his relatives. Laurel, son of the puppet president of the Philippines during the Japanese occupation, had received his education at Japanese military academies. Bacalla rationalized that even if the government could not constitutionally ban the conference, a private group could stop it. Political "justice" is not new for Bacalla; he had been on the military tribunal that sentenced Ninoy Aquino (tried in absentia) to death by firing squad ten years ago. (Aquino was assassinated at the airport before his sentence could be carried out, setting in motion the events

that led to the fall of Marcos and the election of Corazon Aquino, Ninoy's widow, as the first post-dictatorship president.)

Renato "RC" Constantino Jr. and the other conference organizers decided not to dignify Bacalla's outrageous order with an appeal, but Law School Dean Pacifico Agabin did, and the Supreme Court set a hearing for Tuesday morning – four hours before APCET was to open.

Sunday more foreigners arrived, and two – Tom Hyland of the East Timor Ireland Solidarity Campaign and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Mairead Corrigan Maguire – were deported from Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Of the 32 people banned in advance, Maguire was the first to arrive and be deported – but not before she gave a spirited and emotional interview which punctuated TV coverage for the rest of the week. Embarrassed, the Department of Foreign Affairs wrote the Irish peacemakers:

*The Philippine government is currently pursuing a peace process to heal the divisions among the Filipino people, in much the same way that Maguire and Hyland have sought to bring peace among the Irish people. Like the Irish strife, the conflicts among Filipinos arising from the communist insurgency, Muslim secessionism and military rebellion have cost the Filipino people much in terms of blood and treasure. It is estimated that 75,000 Filipinos have been killed in these conflicts, 100,000 wounded and tens of thousands left homeless. We would most warmly welcome it if Maguire and Hyland were to lend their wisdom and experience in peace-making in order to help us resolve our own conflicts.*

Over the next few days, airport officials turned back ten more, but many more got through, including two East Timorese women from Australia and two Indonesian activists.

The foreign delegates spent our time in meetings, trying to keep out of the way of the organizers and to use our time productively. As we borrowed space and facilities from numerous "cause-oriented organizations," I was reminded of the breadth and strength of the Philippine movement for social justice.

### Indonesia's 28th Province

Life was hectic for the next four days, as we struggled against government agencies and media to keep East Timor in the spotlight. We had to shift our focus, often at a second's notice, between East Timor and Philippine political and legal issues. Although Indonesia's occupation of its "27th province" (East Timor) received less media coverage than the clumsy efforts of its "28th province" (the Philippines) to expel us, East Timor nevertheless received meters of newspaper columns and hours of television time, making the Filipino people the most informed in the world (outside of East Timor and Portugal) about Indonesia's genocide. APCET folks were on TV talk shows nightly – RC and I went on the local equivalent of the David Letterman show, followed by Miss Philippines.

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Ten foreign delegates from the press conference were served by the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation: Front, L-R Pedro Pinto Leite, Netherlands; Charles Scheiner, USA; Marcello Ferreira, Argentina; Robert Wesley-Smith, Australia. Middle: Shambhu Chopra, India; Luisa Teotonia Pereira, Portugal; Saskia Kouwenberg, Australia; Sharon Scharfe, Canada. Back: Max Lane, Australia; Peter Wesley-Smith, Hong Kong. There were about 40 other foreigners at the conference, from East Timor, New Zealand, Malaysia, Nepal, South Korea, Indonesia, West Papua, Britain, Thailand and Japan.

Monday we went public, putting the lie to the government's claim that foreigners had been kept from the conference. Ten of us held a press conference to release a letter we had sent to President Ramos, telling him "We feel your actions over the last few weeks indicate that you have not been receiving good advice on the issues involved in East Timor. Certainly, there is much more to the story than what the government in Jakarta has told you. We would like to [meet with you to] help you see the East Timorese side of the picture." The journalists outnumbered us five to one.

At 5 am Tuesday morning, officers from the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation (BID) came to our hostel, demanding a list of foreign delegates. A sleepy volunteer staffer managed to act confused enough to send them away without names. Three hours later, BID served an "order" revoking permission for the ten of us at the press conference to be in the Philippines. A rumored hearing was rescheduled from 10 to 3, but we decided we were in Manila for APCET, not to explore the inner workings of deportation. Only our lawyers went to BID.

The conference was scheduled to formally open at 2 pm. As the Supreme Court met, we planned contingencies: a public opening inside (or outside) the UP Law School, followed by a film, and the conference proper to begin the next morning, either at UP or one of the other universities which had graciously offered space after Judge Bacalla's order.

The foreign delegates divided into seven groups, each accompanied by two trained paralegals. If we were arrested, one paralegal would go with us, while the other reported to the legal team. The organizers held our passports for safekeeping – and so that we couldn't be deported without their knowledge. We carried signed legal motions to be given to our arresting officers, asserting our rights under the Philippine Constitution.

#### The Supreme Court and Solomon

The Supreme Court ruled that the University could host the conference, but the President could still keep foreigners out. Ramos termed the ruling "Solomonic" (some said he thought Solomon cut the baby in half), but BID was apparently directed not to arrest anyone on campus. We walked peacefully from the hostel to the Law School, ringed by our paralegal, Church, and student protectors. Although it was sometimes hard not to laugh at the press photographers tripping over each other as they walked backwards in front of us, the echoes of the EDSA uprising reverberated through the crowd. Nuns and students were nonviolently regaining Filipino democratic rights, just as when they toppled the dictatorship eight years ago. We didn't know that police were massed outside the campus, prepared to move in if the Supreme Court ruled the other way.



Throughout the week, the ghost of Ferdinand Marcos kept appearing in editorials and cartoons. Some said that even under the dictatorship, the University had been left alone – that Ramos was worse than Marcos. Others recalled Filipino leaders who had been in exile, and conferences held in many countries to support the Philippine struggle for democracy: "How can we not support East Timor when our own freedom was gained with international solidarity?" And, as we kept reminding the media, the attempted suppression of freedom in Manila that week paled in comparison to 19 years of invasion, genocide and military occupation in East Timor.

For people active in the anti-Marcos struggle, APCET was a reunion – an occasion for many human rights activists and attorneys to work together for the first time in years. Although one segment of the Left did not actively participate, APCET did gather a wide range of progressives. I renewed friendships with Filipino lawyers I had met during their years of exile, and the young law students got the chance to work with some of their idols and to relive a little of the excitement of 1986. This watering of the tree of liberty will have lasting effects for Philippine freedom.

#### Voices of the Banned

The conference began with messages from East Timorese leader José Ramos Horta and Mairead Maguire, both banned from the Philippines. Horta expressed his disappointment with the Philippine government, and noted that high-level Indonesian officials has been invited to present their views at APCET. "Are they so lacking in arguments that they can only respond by brutally blackmailing the Philippines?" he asked. Shambhu Chopra spoke on behalf of the foreign delegates, and we adjourned to celebrate musically in front of the Law School.

The foreigners spent the afternoon discussing how to keep BID and deportations from diverting too much attention from East Timor. International messages of support poured in from deported delegates, East Timor's Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, the Portuguese and other governments, helping to keep the issues in focus.

Wednesday, APCET's substantive sessions began. Philippine Senator Wigberto Tañada gave the keynote speech:

*The Indonesian military's occupation of East Timor has made a mockery (of the UN's mission to support self-determination) and has deprived East Timor of independence and liberation. ... The people of East Timor have had to walk down a long, terrible road of suffering. In spite of this they have indicated that bitterness will not get in the way of friendly relations with their Indonesian neighbors once independence has been achieved. I sincerely hope that Indonesia will listen to courage and respect to the magnanimous voice of the people of East Timor and will search for the concrete means to bring about a solution. ...*

*Our sense of worth as human beings obliges us not to deny others their own humanity and human existence. When a country against the grain of human decency, it*

*is right to protest and immoral to compute the cost-benefit of protesting. To ignore injustice and oppression is to betray our humanity, to fail in our adherence to human rights, and to subvert our conscience which stands for what is good and just.*

*Simply put, the issue of East Timor involves invasion, military occupation and annexation. The issue involves the domination of the weak by the force of arms of the strong, under the dictum that 'might is right.' The issue involves what has been termed as Indonesia's version of Auschwitz, where millions of Jews were exterminated by the Nazis in their 'final solution' of ethnic cleansing.*

*It is a perversion of national interest to equate non-interference with silence, to abandon conviction for the sake of opportunism and to foster the illusion of an imaginary common interest where no real common interest exists. It is a cowardly foreign policy which negates its own constitutional guarantees on freedom of assembly and freedom of expression in the name of diplomacy, which allows itself to be bullied by another state as if it were its vassal and which cannot distinguish between friendship and subservience.*

*Like you all, I look forward to the day East Timor will acquire its independence and take its rightful place in the community of nations. When that time comes, let it not be said that the Philippines, their neighbor, was silent party to their continuing oppression, repression and persecution.*

Retired Philippine Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan discussed the legal aspects of the East Timor occupation, debunking Indonesia's claims and declaring human rights to be

*subsumed under the more fundamental issues of self-determination and non-aggression.*

*The right to self-determination, coupled with the right against aggression, are indubitably the most important of all human rights. As aptly echoed in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the effective exercise of a people's rights to self-determination is an essential condition for the genuine existence of the other human rights and freedoms.*

*Beyond the legal issues and our commitments to international legal duties and norms – each of us must face up with an irrevocable moral issue – what is good and just and right for all peoples, and not only for ourselves as individuals and as citizens of separate nations.*

*Nothing can ever justify the crime of robbing other people of their birthright to freedom and to determine their own destinies in the manner and through paths they alone have the right to choose.*

Afternoon panels with speeches by Pedro Pinto Leite (of the International Platform of Jurists for East Timor - IPJET) and Cecilia Jimenez (Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates - PAHRA) further explored self-determination and human rights.



## East Timor wins the day

As the conference continued, the Ramos government tried to justify its ham-handed handling of the issue. Scores of Filipino fishermen had been jailed by the Indonesian government, and Indonesia had threatened to cancel \$700 million in investments. A regional business conference in Davao (southern Philippines) was postponed after the Indonesian government kept its 100 delegates away, and Jakarta threatened to stop mediating between the Philippine government and Muslim Moro separatists in Mindanao.

The tide of press and public opinion had turned. Some commentators initially held APCET organizers responsible for creating trouble for the Philippines, but the blame shifted to Suharto as people learned more about East Timor and as Ramos' concessions to Jakarta's bullying only brought more bullying.

Philippine Cardinal Jaime Sin wrote East Timor's Bishop Belo:

*As a Filipino citizen and as brother in the faith, I apologise for the ineptitude of my political leaders to spearhead the growth of freedom and human dignity in our region.*

*I know how much your people have suffered all these years on account of the illegal Indonesian occupation of East Timor. I know that this has resulted in abominable human rights violations inflicted upon your flock.*

*I'm sorry to see the political leaders of my own nation giving in to the pressure of a foreign nation. How short is our memory and how thoughtless we could become only a few years after our own liberation.*

At Belo and Sin's request, President Ramos lifted the blacklist order against Japanese Catholic Bishop Aloisius Nobuo Soma, who had been prevented from boarding his plane a few days earlier. With an overwhelmingly Catholic electorate, the Philippines' Protestant President found it untenable to ban a Bishop with a long history of work for the human rights of Filipinos in Japan and elsewhere. Soma arrived on Thursday, and conducted a moving and political mass.

Finger-pointing among Manila politicians became rampant, since the government had known about the impending conference for over a year. Senator Leticia Shahani, the President's sister, demanded the resignation of those responsible for the debacle – not her brother, but the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Ambassador to Indonesia. When President Ramos belatedly took responsibility and said there would be no scapegoating, the damage had already been done –

his government was labelled "Solomonic" – incompetent and without direction.

Thursday's conference got down to basics – East Timorese activist Ines Almeida spoke the importance of the APCET conference to her people:

*Men, women and children have been killed in these last twenty years without even the chance to make the world hear their crying. We are here, therefore, to make sure that thousands of Timorese women being raped by barbarous men who call themselves soldiers and have been looting my country for the last nineteen years; we are here to echo the voices of those young women and children who have disappeared without a trace; we are here to raise the voices of these oppressed people. And let's do it as we have been doing in the last historic days: raise their voices to the point where no guns can silence them again!*

Ines outlined the three-phase peace plan of the National Council of Maubere Resistance: military withdrawal, then autonomy, followed by a UN-supervised referendum, and urged the conference to support it:

*Supporting this Peace Plan will enhance the fact that the struggle of the Timorese people is not against Indonesia, let alone against the Indonesian people; the struggle of the Timorese people is only against the illegal and barbaric occupation of our country, and we demand the right to live the way we want, and to choose freely our future as the people of Indonesia did demand from their colonial master of the Netherlands. So long as this right is not met, we will continue to resist until we win.*

Filmmaker Max Stahl described the Santa Cruz massacre and his recent visits with the resistance. We watched video messages from blacklisted Timorese exile leader José Ramos Horta and guerilla commander Konis Santana, and workshops discussed the implications of APCET for the Asia-Pacific region. That night, several of us were wined and dined by the Foreign Correspondents' Association.



Philippine Daily Inquirer, 6/4/94





TODAY, 6/1/94

sion and coercion in East Timor must be stopped in the name of our humanity, and of life itself, in the name of the victims that have fallen on both sides. The cries of children who have lost their fathers and mothers, their relatives, is the same everywhere: in East Timor and in Indonesia. We cannot let so many victims fall become of misunderstanding, hostility and revenge.

Another victim of Indonesian occupation, John Ondawane of West Papua (Irian Jaya) discussed his people's struggle:

The colonial regime imposes cultural imperialism on the entire society where the Papuans' values systems are strictly prohibited to develop and preserve it.

Our traditional lands have been confiscated and given to immigrant and foreign companies and illegally exploited and plundered our natural resources such as oil, minerals and forests.

Our deportation hearings were postponed from Wednesday until Friday because of legal deficiencies in the papers served by BID. Dissenters in the government seemed to be sabotaging efforts to throw us out – the Immigration Commissioner declined to sign the orders, and the signature of his Deputy was legally insufficient. We spent many hours discussing how to approach Friday's hearing, and again decided to remain at the conference and let our lawyers go to BID. By Friday, nearing the end of the conference and with public opinion on our side, the government decided to settle. They reinstated our permission to stay in the Philippines through June 11 (longer than anyone planned to stay) and forbade us from making political statements after the conference. Everyone on the blacklist would be removed and was welcome to visit the Philippines in the future.

#### Voices from under the New Order

Meanwhile, the conference focused on Indonesia and its occupied territories. Rachland Nashidik had come from Jakarta after other Indonesians were blacklisted:

*Our acceptance of the invitation to attend this conference - and I do not want to sound overly dramatic here - comes with very high risks. You all know the character of the regime in power in Indonesia today. ... [Because of government myth-making] there are many people in Indonesia, perhaps even a majority, who believe that East Timor is the 27th province of Indonesia, who believe that what happened in East Timor was not an annexation paid for by the Timorese with blood and tears, but an 'integration' accompanied by flowers and joy. Criticism of events in East Timor, even the demand for more openness of information, can be construed as an act of treason.*

*We are here in this conference because we cannot refuse to see that East Timor is part of the democratic and human rights struggle in Indonesia. Violence, repres-*

*Thousands of innocent people have been forcibly put into prisons, detainees, concentration camps, resettlement camps, with many political prisoners been forcibly moved to Java, an act against international law that guarantees the right to visits by family.*

*An apartheid system has been systematically imposed and operated in my country, where discrimination, corruption, social injustice and violation of democratic freedom have affected human freedom.*

*Therefore, if we are serious in concerning human rights and the issue of self-determination, the people and governments in our region should be reeducated on the subject of democracy. Towards this direction, the idea of regionalisation of the issues of self-determination and human rights are important.*

*For these obvious reasons, our people pledge our total solidarity with the people of East Timor in their just struggle against Indonesian colonialism.*

*We also express our solidarity with liberation movements, democratic and progressive movement within Indonesia.*

Friday afternoon's workshops laid the base for ongoing work; Philippine and regional networks were established to support East Timor, and dozens of projects were listed for these networks to start with.

On Saturday, the conference ended with a stirring speech by Bishop Soma. APCET Chairman Renato Constantino gave the closing address: "We Won the Battle; it's Time to Win the War."

*The Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor ends today. It could have been the longest four days for many of us who chose to stand by what we believe in. We struggled and we fought. And we won!*



At least for the moment.

*We challenged both Indonesia's annexation of East Timor and Soeharto's invasion of the Philippine foreign policy. We looked at the human rights violations against the Maubere people even as we put to test the Filipinos' Constitutional right to freedom of expression.*

*While Indonesia bandied about that official relations with the Philippines will be adversely affected, the international participants to the meeting forged link; and solidarity. In the end, people's diplomacy triumphed.*

*But these are not the only victories we want to achieve.*

*Because East Timor is not just an issue for a campaign. East Timor is a reality.*

*Resistance leader Xanana Gusmão and a couple of hundred others are languishing in jail After having been tortured; others are summarily executed while still several others are missing. Rapes occur everyday. Poverty is widespread; malnutrition kills children who survive the bullets.*

*Human lives and dignity are high stakes in the arrogant game of hegemony and regional supremacy.*

*Today, as we leave for our respective countries to go back to our work, let us not forget the reason for which we come for the APCET.*

*Our solidarity is one battle won for the East Timorese. Each network formed is one step in their long march to freedom much as it affirms our commitment to our humanity and dignity.*

*Long live the people of East Timor!*

*Long live the solidarity of the struggling peoples of the world!*

*A luta continua!*

Eighteen resolutions were adopted (see next page), supporting the East Timorese struggle and formalizing Philippine Solidarity for East Timor and Indonesia (PSETI) and the international Asia-Pacific Coalition for East Timor (APCET) – no longer just a conference. Bishop Soma is the titular head of the new APCET, which will bring together not only those who attended the conference, but groups from throughout the region.

#### **The work goes on**

After a day of follow-up meetings – the new APCET steering committee, the International Platform of Jurists for East Timor (IPJET), and the International Federation for East Timor (IFET) – and visits around Manila, seven of us practiced international solidarity by spending two days at the beach – with a mostly-kept promise not to discuss politics or conferences. Substantial work had already been done, and we knew that when we got home there'd be a lot more.

A few days later, I headed back to New York via Ninoy Aquino International Airport, wearing a "Free East Timor" T-shirt. When I checked in, the airline people eagerly told me how APCET was major news in London and Singapore. As I sat in the departure lounge, an American approached me.

He had been an environmental specialist for USAID in Jakarta fifteen years ago, when he was asked to approve a malaria control project (spraying insecticide) for East Timor's swamps – without being allowed to inspect the site. "It was a population relocation project disguised as a health program," he said, recalling the involuntary herding of thousands of East Timorese people into camps in the swamps, where they starved. "And the US government paid for it."

APCET planted seeds which will grow and flower for a long time. The skillful persistence and impressive commitment of the Philippine organizers – unwittingly helped by the ineptitude of the President-Generals and the fascination of the media – gave East Timor a higher profile than anyone could have imagined. I am thankful to have been a part of it, and look forward to continuing to work with PSETI, APCET and the activists from eighteen countries who came together for a very exciting week.

The day I got home, *The New York Times* ran its second editorial on APCET: "In trying to manage the news in Manila, Indonesia has only quickened the world's curiosity about what it seems to be hiding." Two weeks later, Jakarta banned three leading Indonesian weekly newsmagazines. If APCET is a turning point for Philippine democracy and Asian awareness of East Timor, it may also mark the start of increased curtailment what little free expression exists in Indonesia. Only time will tell.

**ETAN/US can supply additional materials, the conference newsletter, and articles or media coverage about the conference.**

**If you would like to be in touch with APCET or PSETI directly, you can contact them at**

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# Resolutions from the APCET Conference

We, the 130 participants from various countries throughout the world, gathered together for the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor held May 31-June 4, 1994, at Malcolm Hall, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, hereby resolve that APCET:

## POLITICAL

- 1 Calls for the release of Xanana Gusmão and all political prisoners, and for Xanana's participation in negotiations to resolve the East Timor situation.
- 2 Advocates an immediate cease-fire, the complete demilitarization of East Timor, and a fair and honest referendum under the supervision of the United Nations.
- 3 Supports CNRM's peace proposal and other East Timorese groups' initiatives for genuine self-determination. Actively campaign the peace proposal at the regional, subregional, national and grassroots level for its popularization.
- 4 Requests UNHRC Special Rapporteur on Torture to consult women in East Timor regarding atrocities against women, sexual violence/rape by Indonesian military in East Timor.
- 5 Condemns Indonesia's forced birth control and aggressive family planning program in East Timor.
- 6 Extends our solidarity to the women of East Timor. Support their efforts for full participation of women in decision-making in society as well as in the struggle for self-determination as women and as East Timorese.
- 7 Urges the Indonesian government to uphold its own promise to allow expanded access to East Timor for Human Rights and Humanitarian organizations, the media, and UN special rapporteurs.
- 8 Expresses support to the pro-democracy movement in Indonesia, particularly the activists who actively support the struggle of the East Timorese people, including those who took the risk of coming to the APCET.
- 9 Hereby recognize East Timor as a sovereign people and nation.
- 10 Affirm our commitment to help in the struggle of the Maubere people for genuine liberation in any way we can.

## ORGANIZATIONAL

- 1 Transforms the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor into the Asia-Pacific Coalition on East Timor with an ad hoc committee composed of at least one representative each from South Asia, East Asia, Pacific, Australia-Aotearoa-New Zealand-Papua New Guinea, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. That Bishop Aloisius Nobuo Soma will be the honorary chairperson of the newly-formed coalition. The incumbent APCET secretariat remain functioning until a permanent committee is formed.
- 2 Organize Philippine individuals and groups who subscribe to the just cause of the East Timorese people and link-up with the East Timor international network. Hold activities that would facilitate exchange of experiences and understanding of East Timor and other struggles for self-determination.

## IMMEDIATE ACTION

- 1 Appeal to Indonesia's ODA donor countries in the region: Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand to urge Indonesia at the upcoming meeting of the Consultative Group of Indonesia to begin steps to extricate itself from East Timor.
- 2 Endorse Bishop Ximenes Belo for the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 3 Organise a mission to East Timor as soon as possible to investigate the real conditions inside the country.
- 4 Urge Radio Netherlands not to stop Bahasa language broadcasts—responding to request by Bishop Belo and others.
- 5 APCET to initiate a demonstration or other appropriate action to bring East Timor to the attention of the East Asia Growth Area Business Conference to be held in Davao City in September 1994 to press Indonesia to pull out of East Timor and let the East Timorese chart a development plan appropriate to them.
- 6 Campaign ideas as listed in workshop reports.



## Speeches Delivered at APCET

*[The speeches and messages in the sections that follow are necessarily a selection from four days of interesting and useful material. Some items were omitted because I didn't have them, and others because of space.]*

### International Participants: Thanks

First of all, the international participants in APCET would like to congratulate the Filipino convenors for their initiative and persistence in holding this international conference thereby demonstrating the support in Asia for the East Timorese struggle for self-determination. It is not surprising that such an initiative should come from the Philippines, given the strong tradition of struggle for democracy and human rights that exists in this country. Around the world everybody has heard of Filipino "peoples power." The holding of this conference is clear proof of the solidarity of the Filipino people with the East Timorese struggle.

In 1975 the Soeharto government of Indonesia ordered its army to invade and occupy East Timor. Since that invasion over 250,000 people have died. Tens of thousands were killed by the Indonesian military, tens of thousands of others died of starvation and disease as a result of the occupying army's disruption of East Timorese society. All democratic rights of assembly, freedom of expression etc. are suppressed. Even after the initial invasion military offensives against the East Timorese population continue today. Despite this, despite the forced resettlement of about 70% of the population, use of defoliation agents, famine, massacres, imprisonment, torture, rape, "salvagings," arbitrary killings, the East Timorese people continue to resist. On November 12, 1991 over 200 people were killed when they marched to openly declare their desire for Independence.

The East Timorese struggle for their rights has inspired many people around the world. Some of us have visited East Timor and witnessed this struggle on the spot. We all have campaigned to build public support for their struggle and have tried to stop our own government if they have been supportive of the Soeharto government in its effort to silence the East Timorese people.

It is unfortunate that the East Timorese people and those concerned about their basic human rights have had to face from the Ramos government the same hypocritical policy of silencing any attempt to broaden the information and support for East Timorese human rights. We deplore the fact that President Ramos has succumbed to Soeharto's bullying. We express our protest against the deportation of international participants of the APCET conference. We are especially saddened that so many East Timorese delegates, already deprived of their homeland by Soeharto, have now been deprived of the right to speak to the Philippines' people by the Philippines government.

Once again we thank the Filipino convenors and the secretariat, and look forward to the growth of the East Timorese solidarity movement in the Philippines, as well as all over the world. In this way, the East Timorese people's valiant struggle for their human rights will more quickly succeed and their demands for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops from their country and the holding of a self-determination referendum will be met more speedily.

### Senator Wigberto Tañada: The Tragedy of East Timor is Our Own Tragedy

First, let me say that as a human rights advocate, I am greatly honored to address this controversial Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor. As a peace advocate, I am now even more challenged to be with you today. And as an elected official, I declare my solidarity with this "unofficial" conference.

Second, let me say that despite the many obstacles put on its path, this conference has achieved its objectives even before it started. Thanks to our friends in the Indonesian Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Philippine National Security Council, the Foreign Affairs Department, the Immigration Bureau, the Quezon City court and of course President Ramos, an almost forgotten issue has become an international cause celebre which even APCET organizers (like RC) never imagined or planned.

Third, let me say that at a time when compacts for peace are replacing cycles of war in major parts of our world, when colonizers are finally recognizing the legitimate rights of the colonized to their homeland, it is the height of hypocrisy that this government should tolerate the bloody colonization and continuing oppression, repression and persecution of a people, all in the name of preserving ASEAN unity.

For certain, APCET has upset the false equanimity in this region. It has forced out into the open certain questions that have long been swept under the ASEAN rug of authoritarianism. What are these key questions?

One, what is the problem of East Timor that Indonesia should resort to diplomatic blackmail to stop the holding of a human rights conference on it?

Two, why should we be concerned about the plight of the people of East Timor when this could adversely affect our relationship with an ASEAN ally?

Three, is "national interest" served by turning a blind eye to the condition of East Timor?

Let us tackle the first question. In 1974, the Colonel's Revolt in Portugal forced this aged colonial power to abandon its colonies, including the tiny country of East Timor. On November 28, 1975, the nationalist revolutionary front FRETILIN which held de facto control over the whole country proclaimed the independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor. Nine days after, the Indonesian army invaded East Timor and annexed it as Indonesia's 27th province.

Summary executions, mass arrests, forcible migrations to "community villages," bombing raids using napalm and defoliants took place, not to mention rape, torture and looting by Indonesian troops. Thus was Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor established to the accompaniment of the sound of sea and land shelling and the rumble of



advancing tanks and cannons against a newly-independent people who in 1975 had freed themselves from 300 years of Portuguese colonial rule.

According to documented reports, 200,000 Timorese died during the full-scale invasion. This was one-third of East Timor's population then. In 1983, Amnesty International in London published an 82-page Indonesian military manual instructing its troops in East Timor "to avoid taking photographs showing torture in progress" so that "the antipathy of the people is not aroused."

On November 12, 1991, according to a documentary film produced by the journalists John Pilger and David Munro, at least 271 people were massacred in Dili, East Timor's capital, while attending a funeral procession for a slain activist.

The Dili massacre was soon followed by the rounding up and execution of as many as 100 people in an attempt to suppress information about the earlier massacre.

The killings provoked an international outcry and the cancellation of a UN-sponsored meeting in Jakarta. In reaction, Indonesia banned human rights groups like Amnesty International from ever visiting East Timor.

As early as 1975, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling on Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor. The UN has since then categorized East Timor as a non-self-governing authority whose people are entitled to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. In effect, even the United Nations recognizes as legitimate all forms of opposition to a colonial presence in a country where people are fighting for liberation.

In 1992, a UN resolution called on the UN Secretary General to initiate consultation with all parties to explore all avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem. But Indonesia rejected the participation of any East Timorese representative in all future talks and the holding of a referendum on East Timorese independence. Last year, 22 member states of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva passed and approved a resolution critical of human rights violations in East Timor, despite the objections of Indonesia which was seated as vice-chairman of the same commission.

This is the record of Indonesia on East Timor and the record speaks for itself.

This brings us to our second question. Why should we care about the plight of a relatively obscure and isolated people when there seems nothing to gain from this as far as our country is concerned?

We should care because our sense of worth as human beings obliges us not to deny others their own humanity and human existence. When a country goes against the grain of human decency, it is right to protest and immoral to compute the cost-benefit of protesting. To ignore injustice and oppression is to betray our humanity, to fail in our adherence to human rights, and to subvert our conscience which stands for what is good and just.

As one of our foremost human rights advocates, Sen. Jose Diokno, put it: "The conscience of all mankind must condemn violations of human rights." For there is no excuse for torture, political imprisonment and killings - whether they be in Bosnia, Iraq, El Salvador, East Timor, Indonesia or the Philippines. There is no excuse for denying people their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. For it is by virtue of this right that people freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

History has shown that the world cannot turn a blind eye to a country's disregard and contempt for human rights for these usually result in barbarous acts which outrage the conscience of mankind. We have the horrors of the Holocaust to forever remind

us of this. It is for this reason that after the Second World war, we bound ourselves into a community of nations and sealed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to uphold "the inherent dignity and the rights of all members of the human family (a)s the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."

When a country occupies another and annexes it as its province, we cannot accept this as an internal affair between the invader and the occupied weaker state. This is imperialism. And imperialism is oppression. And oppression should be condemned everywhere, just as we condemned the former Soviet Union when it invaded Afghanistan and Iraq when it invaded Kuwait. In this corner of our globe, imperialism cannot be masked even when it is undertaken by a Third World country. The mere fact the East Timor has been the subject of UN resolutions and a constant agenda in the UN Decolonization Committee shows it is not an internal Indonesian problem.



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Let me thus state bluntly that it is not the Indonesian people who are at war with the people of East Timor. The Timorese are at war with the Indonesian army which occupies them. Should the East Timorese be grateful to have Indonesian colonialism rather than Portuguese colonialism? As Xanana Gusmão, imprisoned leader of the East Timorese, asked: "Can colonialism be quantified as good or bad?"

Simply put, the issue of East Timor involved invasion, military occupation and annexation. The issue involves the domination of the weak by the force of arms of the strong, under the dictum that "might is right." The issue involves what has been termed as Indonesia's version of Auschwitz, where millions of Jews were exterminated by the Nazis in their "final solution" of ethnic cleansing.

This brings us to our third question. Is Philippine "national interest" served by turning a blind eye to the human tragedy that is East Timor?

Since martial law, the Philippine government has officially granted de jure recognition to the de facto integration of East Timor into Indonesia. It has supported Indonesia all the way, in defiance of UN resolutions for Indonesian withdrawal from East Timor. Today, this official attitude has not changed. Over this past month, we have seen how the Ramos government has bent over backwards to accommodate every Indonesian demand to stop the holding of the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor - from barring foreign delegates, expelling a Nobel peace prize winner and clamping a restraining order on the whole affair, which the Supreme Court yesterday saw fit to lift on constitutional grounds.

Let me say this, it is a perversion of national interest to equate non-interference with silence, to abandon conviction for the sake of opportunism and to foster the illusion of an imaginary common interest where no real common interest exists. It is a cowardly foreign policy which negates its own constitutional guarantees on freedom of assembly and freedom of expression in the name of diplomacy, which allows itself to be bullied by another state as if it were its vassal and which cannot distinguish between friendship and subservience. Let me say this too, it is a weak-kneed President who answers foreign dictation with abdication, barter national honor in exchange for temporary trade benefits and deludes himself that by appeasing his neighbor peace and prosperity will be at hand.

In doing this, this government has reduced our Constitution to a powerless formality and diminished our sovereignty. In doing this, this government has brought on us shame and humiliation that we are a supplicant people who not only bend their knees but their minds.

If anything, the Ramos government's efforts to cancel this human rights conference only exposes the same traditional mendicant role of the foreign policy designed by the National Security Council. Behind this council's glossy rhetoric of deceptive nationalism is the colonial mentality of a government that has been so deeply ingrained it subordinates the interests of its people to that of a bigger, powerful country.

NOW let me say this, we do not want to sit in summary judgment over Indonesia. God knows the Philippines has its own bad record on human rights. But through this conference, we appeal to the honest senses of Indonesia to realize that its leadership of the Third World Non-Aligned Movement lies in its ability to respect the rights of its member nations and to recognize the rights of those it has conquered. The block vote of Third World solidarity against the North countries should not be used as an argument to spread and tolerate human suffering and degradation, wherever it is found.

Our neighbor Indonesia must understand that we cannot officially close our eyes to the sordid human rights violations in East Timor for this would compromise our commitment to human rights and betray us into a tacit support for a war that is without justification. Indonesia must understand that barely 40 years ago, it too fought to overthrow the yoke of Dutch colonialism and establish its independence. The Philippines too, like many other countries of the Asia-Pacific, shares this history of liberation struggles, which should push it more to help those still fighting for their liberation.

The relationship of Indonesia and the Philippines must stand on stronger ground. It must be strong enough not to be affected by the holding of a private affair by non-government organizations. It must be strong enough not to disrupt the peace negotiations being held in Jakarta that could solve the long-standing Moro rebellion in the Philippines. Solidarity and harmony must be based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's national sovereignty, independence, constitutional rights and processes.

Meantime, East Timor refuses to be forgotten. The just struggle of its people cries out for deliverance. The road towards a just, political solution to the problem of East Timor must be found. In this regard, the peaceful settlement of the racial conflict in South Africa and the PLO-Israeli accord provide us with insights as to what is possible. That no conflict is so intractable or permanent which cannot be ended by two enemies making peace with one another.

Before I end, let me dwell on the significance of this conference by quoting Terence des Pres who denounced the terrors of the Nazi death camps: "When governments across the face of the earth, not excluding our own, are prepared to sacrifice populations and shoot down protest in any form, when darkness begins to seem total, proof to the contrary becomes invaluable." This solidarity conference on East Timor provides that proof.

It is thus my honor to be part of this conference of courage and hope. Like you all, I look forward to the day when East Timor will acquire its independence and take its rightful place in the community of nations. When that time comes, let it not be said that the Philippines, their neighbor, was a silent party to their continuing oppression, repression and persecution and an accessory in blocking their bid for independence.

Maraming salamat. Mabuhay tayong lahat! At mabuhay ang East Timor!



## Retired Chief Justice Marcelo B. Fernan

### Introduction

The circumstances that attended the mounting of this conference reflect so vividly the panorama of contentiousness prevailing in the global community regarding the East Timor situation.

That we have persisted in holding this conference despite the climate of inhibitions foisted by the *modus vivendi* forged by the Philippine and Indonesian governments should not, however, be construed as a conscious and stubborn effort to stoke further the fires of contention.

On a larger scale, it must be viewed, instead, as an expression of commitment to the imperative of discovering just avenues towards the resolution of contentions. And on a more limited scale, as a principled initiative at expanding the arena of discussion on an issue crucial to the future of the people of East Timor, the stability of the region, and the integrity of the commitment of the nations of the world to genuine international security and peace.

The comparison may be frail owing to the differences in socio-political conditions, but, in the recent past, when the Philippines lay prostrate under the heels of a dictatorship with the aspirations of our people for freedom cruelly stifled by the forces of repression, we, too, sought refuge among the freedom-loving peoples of foreign nations hoping that our struggle to break the yoke of the dictatorship may be buoyed by the force of international opinion.

We are, therefore, compelled to remember that the aspiration for freedom is the single, most vital humanizing and civilizing link that unites all peoples of the world despite the barriers of race, culture and creed. It is an aspiration that knows no bound, nor fear. It is an aspiration that imbues the human spirit with the shining glow of courage, dignity, justice and truth.

My presence at this hour, perhaps, can serve as a small contribution to the survival of this aspiration.

My task is to discuss the implications of the East Timor situation on the corpus of international Law. I must forewarn you, however, that much of what I will say has been said before. Many learned studies on the subject have been published and discussed, and the most I can contribute is to emphasize those areas I deem to be most significant.

### The Rights to Self-Determination

The principle of self-determination has been defined as "the need to pay regard to the freely expressed will of peoples."<sup>1</sup> United Nations doctrine recognizes that non-self governing territories have the right to self-determination, and that right entitles each territory to choose the status it will assume on completing decolonisation. Status alternatives include emergence as a sovereign state, free association with an independent state, or integration with a sovereign state, and such other political status "freely determined by a people."<sup>2</sup> Prior to the full scale invasion of East Timor, the UN General Assembly was already considering a Resolution sponsored

by Indonesia and other nations, calling on all states to respect the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination, freedom and independence.<sup>3</sup>

This reveals that member states of the UN, including Indonesia, supported the position that the people of East Timor were entitled to the rights recognized under the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and the International Covenants On Civil and Political, and On Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Article 1 of each of the Covenants provides that;

*All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.*<sup>4</sup>

Principle IX of UN General Assembly Resolution 1541 of 1960 also provides that

*Integration should have come about in the following circumstances:*

- a) *The integrating territory should have attained an advanced stage of self-government with free political institutions, so that its peoples would have the capacity to make a responsible choice through informed and democratic processes;*
- b) *The integration should be the result of the freely expressed wishes of the territory's peoples acting with full knowledge of the change in their status, their wishes having been expressed through informed and democratic Processes, impartially conducted and based on universal adult suffrage. The United Nations could, when it deems it necessary, supervise these processes.*<sup>5</sup>

These documents offer verifiable standards against which can be measured the validity of Indonesia's actions concerning East Timor.

Three explanations impacting on the principles of self-determination have been offered by Indonesia concerning its efforts to integrate East Timor.

First, that integration is the will of the East Timorese people. Second, that regardless of any explicit consent to integration, the historical, ethnic, cultural and geographical ties between Indonesia and East Timor established the latter as an integral part of the Indonesian archipelago. Implicit to this assertion is that administration of East Timor by any authority other than Indonesia would violate Indonesia's territorial integrity. And third, East Timor is not economically viable. It requires direction and assistance from an economically stable state before it can be expected to survive as an independent state.<sup>6</sup>

It must be noted that there has not been a comprehensive legal case presented by Indonesia for its actions. Its positions are gleaned principally from the statements of its representatives in the General Assembly and the Security Council, and from Indonesian publications.<sup>7</sup>



## Integration As Free Expression of the East Timorese People's Will

On the assertion that the East Timorese integration with Indonesia is a free expression of will, allegations are rife that the process was stage-managed by Indonesia and did not reflect the true will of the East Timorese. It is also alleged that contrary to Principle IX aforesaid, representatives to the Regional Popular Assembly were not impartially or freely conducted, with the election process violating the principle of universal adult suffrage. With the integrity and validity of the RPA in question, its petition for integration similarly becomes questionable.

The absence of verifiable records of the proceedings as well as third party supervision, perhaps by the United Nations, of such nations not known for being sympathetic to Indonesian interests, further exacerbate suspicions on the impartial conduct of the proceedings.

Moreover, it is to be stressed that at the time, no strong claim can be posited that the people of East Timor have attained an advanced stage of self-government with free political institutions to have the capacity to make a responsible choice for integration through informed and democratic processes.

In view of perceived deficiencies in the requisite compliance to Principle IX aforesaid, there is ground to assert that grave violations of the right of peoples and states to self-determination have been committed in the case of East Timor. indeed, the United Nations did not and has not recognized that the East Timorese exercised self-determination in regard to their integration with Indonesia.

### Historic, Ethnic and Cultural Ties

According to Roger S. Clark, the most explicit expression of the ethnic ties argument appears in a November, 1975 press release from the Indonesian Embassy in Washington which argues not only that Timor is geographically part of the Indonesian archipelago, but also that ethnically, the people living in their Portuguese controlled part of the island of Timor (East Timor) are the same as the people of Indonesia. Said statement also maintains that in the past, like Indonesia, Timor was under the administration of the Srivijaya and Majapahit empires.

Srivijaya and Majapahit were earlier recalled by Sukarno in his famous Pantja Sila Speech of June 1, 1945, but up to the time of formal declaration of Indonesian independence in August, 1945, no claim was made to East Timor, and any aspirations for its incorporation were expressly disavowed by Indonesia in the 1950's and 60's.

It must also be recalled that no claim based solely on geographic contiguity has ever been given the slightest countenance by the United Nations.

Scholarly writings discussing the empires support at best a tenuous tributary relationship between Timor and the Majapahit Empire. Clark also notes that the heart of the Indonesian Republic is Java and Sumatra, and the Timorese probably have more in common with the Melanesians of Papua New Guinea in terms of racial characteristics and language than they do with Javanese and Sumatrans.

Following the ethnic argument, the Indonesian territory may well extend to a substantial part of the Luzon archipelago which some scholars posit as having been part, too, of the expanse of the Srivijaya and Majapahit empires.

Let it suffice to say, however, that incorporation on the basis of the ethnic argument is at best specious especially if considered in the light of Indonesia's prior actions at recognizing the right of the East Timorese to self-determination before the United Nations and prior denials of intent to claim East Timor as its rightful territory.

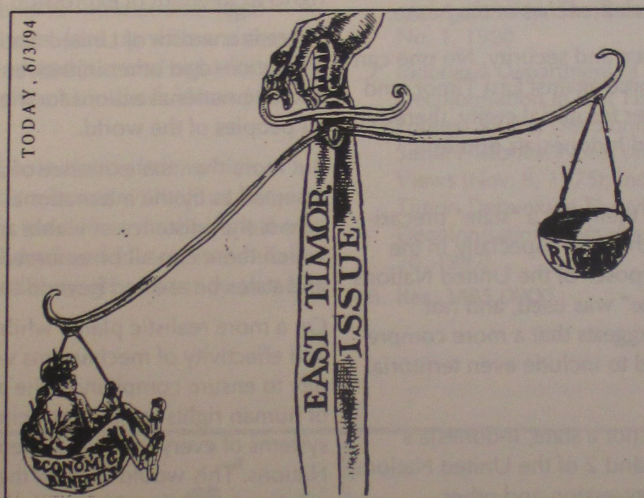
### Integration Without Prior Consultation

Arguments have been put forth that reintegration without prior consultation can be justified under paragraph 6 of G.A. Res. 1514 (XV) which provides that "Any attempt aimed at the partial disruption of the national integrity of a country is incompatible with the purpose and principles on the Charter of the United Nations."

Perhaps, this can be entertained if a sovereign nation has a well-established historical claim to a territory. A more favored construction consistent with the principle of self-determination would be that it denies a non-self governing territory of an independent country the right to secession. Indonesia's claim to East Timor is frail under this provision especially in the context of its weak historical claim to East Timor with no convincing proof that the latter ever formed an integral part of a pre-colonial Indonesian empire.

### Economic Nonviability

Resolution 1514 (XV) does not welcome any indication that lack of economic viability is just ground for delaying independence of a non-self governing territory. Paragraph three thereof specifically provides that "inadequacy of political, economic, social and educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence." Acknowledging the dire economic situation of the territory, it must also be noted that in a 1975 U.N. report, the area is described as rich in natural resources with which to build a viable economy. On these considerations, East Timor's economic condition is, again, a frail argument to justify incorporation and to deny its people the right to determine and choose their political status.





## Right Against Aggression

The United Nations General Assembly<sup>a</sup> strongly deplored the invasion of December 12, 1975, called for Jakarta's armed forces to be withdrawn, and reaffirmed the people's right to self-determination and independence. In this resolution, the General Assembly referred specifically to Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter, which provides that

*states should.... refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or national independence of any state or in any other manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations.*

Article 1 of said Charter also provides that as among the purposes of the U.N. is:

*to take effective collective measures ... for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace.*

so as to maintain international peace and security. No one can ably dispute that Indonesia used force against East Timor, and that use of force was against another territorial entity, thereby characterizing the matter as beyond Indonesia's domestic jurisdiction.

The argument that East Timor was, then, not a "state" precariously narrows the construction of the term especially in the context of the overall aims and purposes of the United Nations Charter. The fact that the term "state" was used, and not "member" or "nation" justifiably suggests that a more comprehensive interpretation was intended to include even territorial entities such as East Timor.

Even assuming that East Timor was not a state, Indonesia's invasion runs counter to Articles 1 and 2 of the United Nations Charter which prohibit all acts of aggression and other breaches of the peace, or the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. It must be noted that the United Nations' purposes encompass developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples. Again, these provisions do not restrict their applicability only to states.

Indonesia has justified its invasion on four grounds: self-defense, invitation by the East Timorese, future stability of Indonesia and Southeast Asia, and humanitarian purposes.

Again, on the basis of earlier actions of the United Nations condemning the Indonesian invasion and calling for withdrawal of armed forces from the area, as well as verifiable data on alleged incursions of armed East Timorese bands into Indonesian territory, there is cause to doubt the basis of any assertion of self-defense. More so, considering the absence of "armed capability" of the East Timorese to pose a threat to Indonesian national security or stability. The extension of the East Timor threat justifying self-defense to the arena of Southeast Asian stability is, sadly, frail unless it is seen in the context of straining relations between Southeast Asian nations and Indonesia because of disparities in sympathies to the portion that Indonesia has taken on the issue. This is best manifested in the skirmishes between the Indonesian and Philippine governments on the holding of the APCET in the Philippines, which, undoubtedly has caused tension or irritation in Indonesian-Philippine relations.

The humanitarian justification is sadly, ironic, as there has not been any instance where aggression against peoples and territories served humanitarian ends. The depth and extent of allegations of human rights violations belie the validity of this argument, especially as of late, the Indonesian Government has taken pains to create mechanisms with which to address allegations of human rights violations in the country.

## Human Rights

International covenants and customary law uphold the legal and moral duty of all nations to keep sacred the arena of human rights. I am not in a position to discuss the human rights situation in East Timor, except perhaps to state my awareness of allegations on instances where there have been gross and systematic violations of the East Timorese people's right to life, liberty and property as well as their fundamental rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

There is a wealth of United Nations Conventions, covenants, resolutions and other initiatives which would allow national and international actions for the protection of human rights of all peoples of the world.

But more than the existence of all these laws and conventions assented to by the international community, the bigger concern is the existence of viable and workable mechanisms with which these can all be enforced, and compliance by nations and states be assured beyond the realm of self-serving rhetoric.

On a more realistic plane, while I do not discount the efficacy and effectivity of mechanisms within the international community to ensure compliance, the arena of war for the protection of human rights remains principally within the sociopolitical systems of every individual member nation of the United Nations. This would include the existence of working and efficient judicial and law-enforcement institutions, ably supported by governmental policies on human rights protection, to ensure the citizens' redress of their grievances and protection of their rights.

I did not focus principally on the human rights aspect of the East Timor issue, principally because of my conviction that this is subsumed under the more fundamental issues of self-determination and non-aggression. Moreover, to view the East Timor situation as primarily a human rights concern, may bring us to the threshold of disregarding the principles of self-determination and non-aggression where easing or resolving human rights issues may substituted for more determined action on the more fundamental issue of making an informed judgment on the invasion and incorporation of East Timor into Indonesian territory.

## Conclusion

The basic concern is not whether the people of East Timor are entitled to the right of self-determination or whether they have exercised it. They had and still have the right, by universal agreement and international law.

The right to self-determination, coupled with the right against aggression, are indubitably the most important of all human rights. As aptly echoed in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the effective exercise of a people's rights to self-determination is an essential condition for the genuine existence of the other human rights and freedoms.



The lack of mechanisms for assertion of this right may well have encouraged some states to flout it with impunity, and given courage to victimized states and peoples to resort to armed struggle. From this vantage point, this right becomes the gridlock of genuine international peace and security.

The assertion of national interest by nations to justify their frail compliance or fidelity to the preservation of this right requires our imperative attention. Nations and governments have found it convenient to invoke the national interest to close their eyes to the violation of the right of other peoples and states to self-determination.

Geopolitical realities specifically in the complexity of increasing interdependence among nations preclude us from making unfavorable conclusions on the wisdom of the national interest argument.

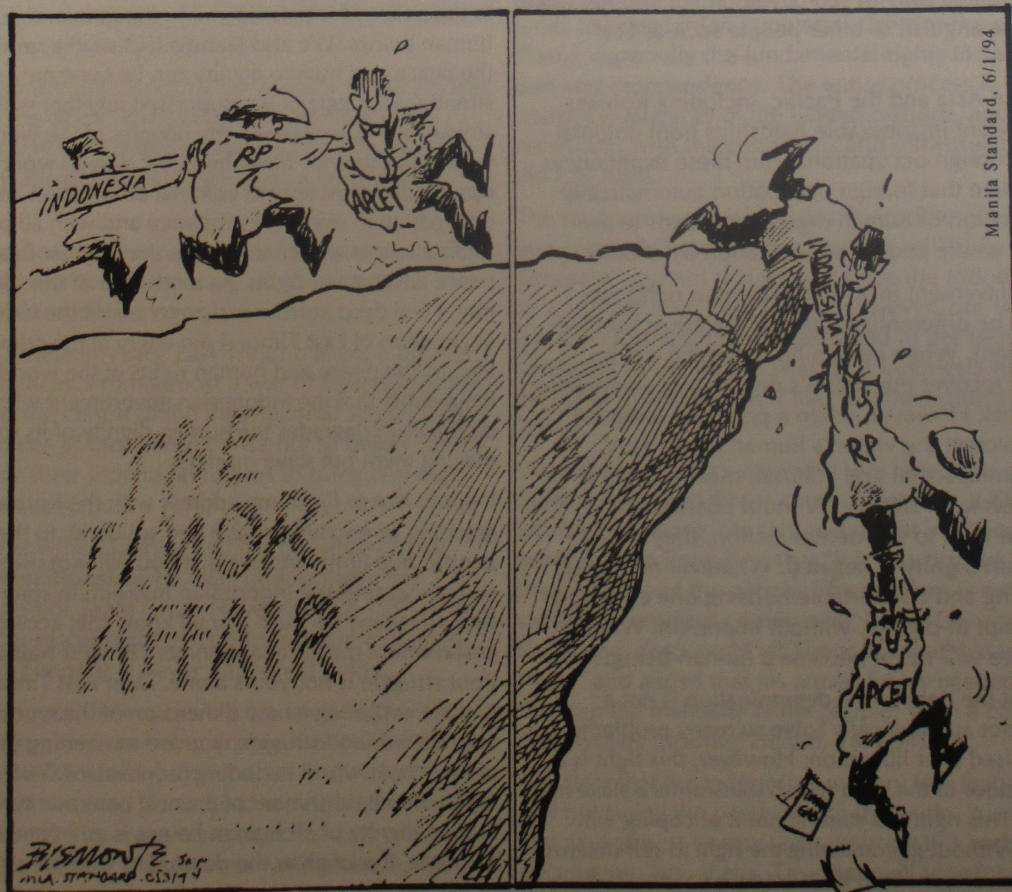
Let it suffice to say, in conclusion, however, that beyond the legal issues and our commitments to international legal duties and norms – each of us must face up with an irrevocable moral issue – what is good and just and right for all peoples, and not only for ourselves as individuals and as citizens of separate nations.

In the final analysis, individual conscience from which national conscience and spirits are borne will tell us that, indeed, nothing can ever justify the crime of robbing other people of their birthright to freedom and to determine their own destinies in the manner and through paths they alone have the right to choose.

Thank you and good day.

## Notes

- 1 See Declaration On the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, G.A. Res. 1541 (XV); Declaration On Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation Among States In Accordance with the Charter of the U.N., G.A. Res. 2625; Chen, *Self determination as a Human Right, Toward World Order and Human Dignity*, 198, 1976.
- 2 See Refs. above.
- 3 Decolonisation No. 7: Issue on East Timor, UN Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonisation, August, 1976.
- 4 Art. 1, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Dec. 16, 1966.
- 5 UN G.A. Res. 1541, Dec. 15, 1960.
- 6 Culled from Roger S. Clark's *The Decolonisation of East Timor and the United Nations Norms On Self Determination and Aggression*, *The Yale Journal Of Public Order*, Vol. 7., No. 1, 1980.
- 7 Indonesia Department of Information, *Process of Decolonisation in East Timor*(1976); Indonesia Department of Foreign Affairs, *Decolonisation in East Timor* (1976); Nahar, *Some Historical Notes on Timor island*, *Indonesian News and Views* (Nov. 8, 1975); *Indonesian News, Special Issue, East Timor: Debunking The Myths Around A Process of Decolonisation* (Remarks by Foreign Minister. Ali Alatas, Feb. 20, 1992).
- 8 Res. 3485 (XXX).





## Yong-Whan Cho: Asian Perspectives on Solidarity for East Timor

Attorney-At-Law, South Korea. Executive Member, KONUCH (Korea NGO's Network)

Before talking about our perspectives on solidarity for East Timor, I can not but start with the story of my own country. Korea underwent one of the worst form of colonial domination in the not-so-distant past. Just at the time of emerging from suzerain domination by China, my country was invaded and colonized by Japan which was equipped with advanced weapons. Our people fell into slavery. What this meant in those times was no right to object whatever cruelties were inflicted. Participation in the independence movement led to torture and death in addition to the endless pursuit and persecution of whole families. Representatives of the people who sought support of other countries had to become endless wanderers abroad and were often unwelcome visitors. Many powerful countries which preached the gospel of humanism were busy securing secret treaties with Japan. They thereby succeeded in grasping rights and privileges by selling the right to self-determination of the Korean people to Japan.

In this context, I must confess my shame to East Timorese who are in almost the same situation as we were in the past. Korean people are morally obliged to stand in solidarity with East Timorese people because we share the experience of foreign occupation. Our people, who are proud of their riches, forgot their past sufferings. I am ashamed that my country has indulged only in self-development and has been indifferent to the anguish of other people such as East Timorese.

Many peoples in Asia and the Pacific, including Koreans, similarly underwent unspeakable hardships from colonial domination or foreign occupation. From these experiences they keenly realize that foreign occupation automatically means total negation of human dignity and leads to the enslavement of whole people of one nation by another.

The state of enslavement in which all human rights are negated should be differentiated from the state of human rights infringement. When certain human rights are infringed, we can recover the victim's dignity by guaranteeing the violated rights. However, when a person is enslaved, every effort to protect the victim's human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural, means nothing without liberation from slavery. Without liberation and guaranteeing the right to self-determination, they are still slaves and human dignity is negated. Whatever rich food, luxurious clothing and comfortable housing one enjoys, it will be a contempt of dignity, without liberation. Without liberation, a slave will never become a human being.

We all know that the right to self-determination is not a panacea. It will not automatically solve so many problems which will be raised after liberation. However, this right is a key to open the door to the road which transforms a slave into a human being. This right is a starting point of coping with every problem. Without guaranteeing the right to self-determination, human development in its true sense cannot start.

No law can justify the enslavement. The 'law and order' imposed by the aggressor to the occupied people is not the law and order in its genuine meaning but the farce of a slave hunter. Any claims to justify foreign occupation or to support the aggressor are without grounds. Governing policies such as preventing the spread of different thoughts, setting friendly relations with a strong neighboring state, securing a market or economic interest from an oil field in a continental shelf, etc., can not justify deprivation of other people's right to self-determination. Invasion and occupation of an other country and people is nothing but a typical form of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Conniving at the atrocities practiced in support of the invader is, at best, merely a conspiracy of crimes against humanity.

In this context, all the nations and peoples have their own duty in solving this unjustifiable situation. Those who experienced colonization in the past and became independent are obliged to support other people who suffer similar hardships. Those who inflicted pain by invading and occupying other people and countries should rather make a greater effort to get rid of colonialism. By the same token, the country which, having experienced colonization, is now invading, occupying and colonizing its neighboring countries and peoples must be criticized much more strongly. This country commits more than the deprivation of whole human rights of the victimized people. It denies its people's past struggles and thereby negates their human dignity.

The first and most important lesson we have learned from the history of World War II is that any form of colonial domination or foreign occupation, without exception, poses serious threats to the peace of the world and to the human rights of whole human beings. We also learned that such a serious threat to the peace and human dignity can be overcome only by the strenuous struggle of the oppressed together with support and solidarity of the peace-loving peoples of the world. Therefore we believe that we have the moral duty to work together to oppose and fight against colonial domination and foreign occupation in every circumstance and with all our efforts. Our unified voices will contribute to the brighter future of world peace and human rights. As a member of this global community, I feel deep sorrow and anger about the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. I am angry at the crime of greed against the peace and human rights of the world. It is also lamentable that the Indonesian government with continued colonialism degrades the human dignity of its own people, by making them but slave masters.

I would like to finish my address with the Korean people's greetings of encouragement and solidarity to the East Timorese people. We firmly believe that you will not discontinue your struggle against the Indonesian invasion in spite of indescribable adversity, because you all know that acceptance of enslavement means abandonment of your human dignity. Your struggle is not yours alone. Dear East Timorese people, you are exploring a new dimension of the world history. With your determined struggle, you are awakening the conscience of the whole world including Indonesians. You are contributing to the establishment of a world community where the human dignity of all human beings is guaranteed. The darker the night, the brighter the dawn. On with the struggle.



## Ines Almeida (East Timor Relief Association)

I must confess that I've never had the opportunity to speak to such a big crowd like this. My experience throughout the period of my activism has been outside the Indonesian Embassy, outside the Australian parliament, on the microphone, screaming out loud "Free Xanana, Free East Timor, Indonesia out of East Timor." So I'll try my best to give you a speech – it's a very simple speech – and I hope even so that you will encourage me to do it.

### Let us continue the struggle because the light is clearly visible at the end of the tunnel...

So much has been said and written about East Timor in the Philippines in these last few days that one can be understood if one says: "What more can I add?"

As a Timorese, I must, at the outset, state here how happy am I am to be here. Indeed, with the solidarity I have experienced here, there are no words to accurately express how grateful we, as Timorese are. So I do feel so privileged to be here today, and above all, to now have had a golden opportunity to speak on behalf of my suffering people. Men, women and children have been killed in these last twenty years without even the chance to make the world hear their crying. We are here, therefore, to make sure that thousands of Timorese women being raped by barbarous men who call themselves soldiers and have been looting my country for the last nineteen years; we are here to echo the voices of those young women and children who have disappeared without a trace; we are here to raise the voices of these oppressed people... and let's do it as we have been doing in the last historical days: raise their voices to the point where no guns can silence them again!

And for that, I do not apologise for using every forum on this planet to make the voice of my people heard; and I will make sure their voices of freedom are heard; I will never ever allow the walls of the dictatorships to silence them. Never!

After all that has been written, it goes without saying that one must struggle continuously using whatever means possible to stop the suffering of my people.

Over these last nineteen years, East Timor has gone through traumatic experiences. From almost a war of extermination, we have risen to the centre of the international arena, largely due to the sacrifices of those who chose not to betray, but to give their lives or their individual futures to safeguard the interest of the entire nation.

One of the events which highlighted the question of East Timor in the international arena, was undoubtedly the infamous massacre of Santa Cruz, November 12 1991. The blood shed by those courageous Timorese has maintained the focus of East Timor as it never happened before.

The tragedy continues, however. As I am speaking to you here, I believe Timorese are being arrested somewhere in East Timor. On the 29 of May, newspapers in Portugal published a report received from the clandestine front in East Timor stating that 10 Timorese were captured and tortured by the Indonesian troops. Their names were given, and the

group was accused as having been responsible in the preparation of protests leading to the last May 6 talks in Geneva. According to the document, these were not the only arrests that took place. So, we can expect more bad news soon.

In another camp, *Journal de Noticias* in Portugal published another news saying that three Timorese were arrested and tortured in Jakarta.

Dr. George Aditjondro, an Indonesian scholar and university lecturer in research methodology, in his interview pertaining to this conference published by the Indonesian magazine, *The Editor*, said the following:

*The foreign ministry (of Indonesia) has recently signed a communiqué in Geneva (May 6 Talks) saying, that we (Indonesia) are ready to have dialogue with anti-integration groups. On the other hand, there have been arrests in Java of anti-integration people. The commander of Korem in Dili has said that if the clandestine emerge, 'I will crush them.' Crushing people is quite different from dialogue, isn't it? This week people were arrested in Malang.*

These are words of an Indonesian patriot who is clearly conscious of the need to look seriously into the question of a solution for East Timor.

This is perhaps, the point I will focus on today. There is a Peace Plan devised by the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM). It is a comprehensive plan which envisages several stages through which a gradual withdrawal of Indonesian armed forces and civil servants will be processed, and, ultimately, a referendum will be held in order to safeguard the universal rights of the people of East Timor, especially the fundamental rights to self-determination and independence. The entire process is to be held under the auspices of the United Nations, and, where necessary, with the conditions and infrastructures created by the UN itself.

The rationale upon which this Peace Plan was conceived was precisely based on the fact that militarily we, the Timorese, can not realistically force the Indonesian military to withdraw from East Timor. However, our national leader, Xanana Gusmão himself has stated in the fake trial he was subjected to in Dili last year, that Indonesia must now be prepared to accept that it had lost the political battle in East Timor.

Since then, Xanana's statement was recently supported by the Indonesian armed forces commander in East Timor, Colonel Johnny Lumintang. He said in a recent interview to the Jakarta-based foreign journalists that "it is true that we have not got the sympathy of the people. The problem is not settled." His senior, the regional commander, Major General Adang Ruchiatna, described East Timor "as a pebble in Indonesia's shoes" and added that his armed forces needed more time to "change the mentality of the people" from a climate of fear. (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18/4/94).

It is clear that the Indonesian military fear that a referendum will not swing the pendulum to their side. It is a matter of fact that after almost twenty years resisting this barbaric military occupation, few, if any, Timorese will vote for integration if it



is to be done through a genuine act of self-determination, whereby the people will freely be given the chance to choose their future.

The priority now is keep on exerting the necessary diplomatic pressure to force Indonesia out of its inflexible stand. Indonesia demands that Portugal rescind its right to claim the status of administrative power, as envisaged under the United Nations Charter. Prior to the last round of talks, May 6, Ali Alatas stated that if Portugal continues to claim this status, Indonesia will walk out of the talks. But he did not! Instead, as Dr. George Aditjondro has said, Alatas signed a communiqué whereby he agreed to receive a delegation of the Resistance of East Timor. This is so, because the pressure being exerted by all our friends in the broad spectrum of solidarity, has been effective in highlighting the illegality and the indefensibility of the occupation of East Timor by the Indonesian regime.

So, to get out of this impasse, the Peace Plan of the CNRM articulates and proposes the following:

*Consistent with the enhanced peace making role of the United Nations, CNRM has advanced a plan to assist the UN Secretary-General's mandate to find a solution to the East Timor conflict. The plan is congruous with statements by East Timor Catholic Church leader Bishop Belo, and consistent with current UN and Portuguese approaches. The plan has also received support in the U.S. Congress, Europe, Canada and Japan. Indonesia's friends have been able to perceive its value as a potential means of assisting Jakarta to conveniently extricate itself from its East Timor quagmire.*

*Phase One (one to two years): Indonesia-Portugal talks under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General with East Timorese participation, to achieve an end to armed activities in East Timor; release of political prisoners; reduction of Indonesian military personnel; removal of armaments; expansion of International Committee of the Red Cross activities; reduction of Indonesian civil servants; population census; access by UN Specialised Agencies for restoration and protection of the environment, resettlement, district development, women and children care and public health and immunisation; restoration of all human rights, removal of restrictions on Portuguese and Tetum languages; setting up of an independent Human Rights Commission. appointed of a UN Sec. Gen. Resident Representative in East Timor.*

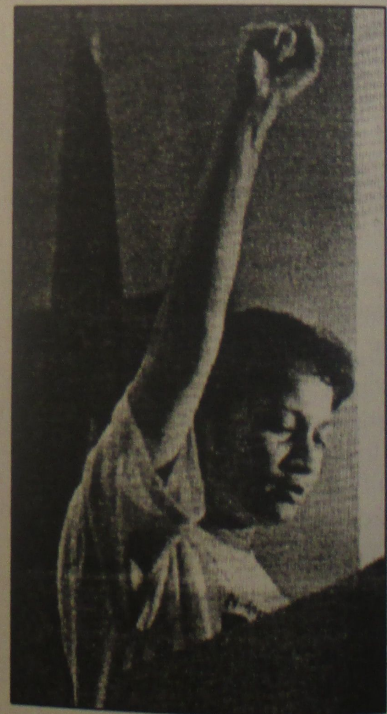
*Phase Two - autonomy (five years): This is a transition stage of autonomy in which East Timorese would govern themselves democratically through their own local institutions. This would require Democratic election of a local Assembly with a five-year mandate under UN supervision and assistance. Only East Timorese may vote and be elected; election of an East Timorese Governor for a five-year term by the Assembly; Assembly powers to include legislation concerning international trade relations, investment, property, immigration and others; withdrawal of all Indonesian troops and reduction in Indonesian civil servants; territorial police force organised by the UN placed under the command of the Governor, the territory is to have no army. Phase*

*two may be extended by mutual consent between Indonesia and the East Timorese population expressing its views through a referendum.*

*Phase Three - self-determination: Covers preparation for a self-determination referendum, to be held within one year of the commencement of this phase, whereby the population may choose between free association or integration into Indonesia, or independence.*

One day before the last May 6 talks in Geneva, Konis Santana, the leader of CNRM in the mountains of East Timor, sent a letter to the Secretary-General whereby he appealed to the Secretary-General to support the Peace Plan of CNRM. This is what I believe should also be done here, in this historical conference. Supporting this Peace Plan will enhance the fact that the struggle of the Timorese people is not against Indonesia, let alone against the Indonesian people; the struggle of the Timorese people is only against the illegal and barbaric occupation of our country and we demand the right to live the way we want, and to choose freely our future as the people of Indonesia did demand from the colonial master of Netherlands.

So long as this right is not met, we will continue to resist until we win. If we have lasted these nineteen years against all odds, we can now surely say to all of you that the light is indeed, clearly visible at the end of the tunnel. And all those who have added your sacrifice to ours, here, for the APCEC conference, my dear friends, all I can ask you is: for the sake of democracy and freedom for all of us, please don't allow this candle to fade away now!



The Struggle Continues on Every Front!  
To Resist is to Win!  
Long Live Xanana Gusmão!  
Long Live the Heroic Maubere People!  
Long Live the Solidarity Movement.



## Rachland Nashidik (PIJAR, Indonesia)

My friends, human rights advocates around the world,

It was not an easy decision at all for Indonesian citizens like us to decide to accept the invitation of the organisers of this Asia Pacific Conference on East Timor (APCET). East Timor is a very complex and difficult problem in the Indonesian context. It is a very sensitive issue for a certain group of army generals who can at any moment descend into reactionary activism. A labyrinth of ignorance among the Indonesian people combines with chauvinistic sentiments, with the openings for mega-capital projects and the career steps of certain Foreign Affairs Ministry officials. And so, because of these factors, our acceptance of the invitation to attend this conference - and I do not want to sound overly dramatic here - comes with very high risks. You all know the character of the regime in power in Indonesia today.

The New Order government has been able to manipulate the dominant way of interpreting the 1975 violent invasion of East Timor, condemned by the world as an annexation, into the dominant thinking in our society. They have partially succeeded in this. There are many people, perhaps even a majority, who believe that East Timor is the 27th province of Indonesia, who believe that what happened in East Timor was not an annexation paid for by the Timorese with blood and tears, but an "integration" accompanied by flowers and joy. It is this mythification that has caused Indonesian society to react in a very reactionary way to international criticism of East Timor. This mythification has also put the democratic elements in Indonesia in a difficult position. Criticism of events in East Timor, even the demand for more openness of information, can be construed as an act of treason.

We recently held, for example, a small ceremony to celebrate the release from Cipinang prison of Virgilio da Silva Guterres. This ceremony was dispersed by elements from the military and police. Gil is a student who was jailed for conducting a peaceful demonstration in protest against the tragic events in Dili. Democratic elements in Indonesia sympathetic with East Timorese self-determination can confront the condemnation and insults from our own society.

Indonesia's own history notes that there have been at least two figures who because of their dedication to democracy and human rights were forced to confront their own people. They are Joris Ivens and, of course, Haji Johannes Prinsen. They were both Dutch citizens. They both were accused of betraying their own nation, and were the objects of hostility from their own government, because they opposed Dutch colonialism in Indonesia and helped the Indonesian struggle for independence. This was a sacrifice whose nobility cannot be expressed in words.

But, as representatives of PIJAR, the decision to come here is not firstly a manifestation of any specific daring to risk the threat of violence. It must be hoped that people of our age have the boldness and courage of our convictions as did Prinsen and Ivens.

Our primary reason for coming to this conference is to extend our solidarity to the peoples of the world in winning justice and peace. Our first commitment is to justice: that the people of East Timor should have the opportunity to determine their own fate. Only then can there be peace between Indonesia and East Timor, and the violence which has cost so many lives can be ended.

To be truthful we are too clever to be bamboozled by nationalistic sentiment, under the slogan "my country right or wrong." We are a generation who understand that our task is to establish democracy and welcome the honoring of human rights. We do not accept the ways of our regime: to defend everything in the name of nationalism. We come here to this conference in the Philippines ignoring our government's dislike of this conference.

We are here in this conference because we cannot refuse to see that East Timor is part of the democratic and human rights struggle in Indonesia. Violence, repression and coercion in East Timor must be stopped in the name of our humanity, and of life itself, in the name of the victims that have fallen on both sides. The cries of children who have lost their fathers and mothers, their relatives, is the same everywhere: in East Timor and in Indonesia. We cannot let so many victims fall become of misunderstanding, hostility and revenge.

Our constitution states that "independence is the right of all peoples, and because of that colonialism must be wiped from the face of the earth, because it is in conflict with humanity and justice." The people of East Timor must have these rights that are so declared in our constitution.

Are we then traitors to our nation? You all, and especially our own people, must be able to answer that question clearly and without hesitation.

Finally, may we thank the Filipino people for organising this conference.

Democracy is the most precious possession of the Filipino people. Do not let it be lost. Do not let President Fidel Ramos stop this conference unless you are willing to become the 28th province of Indonesia!

Chairperson, PIJAR – Pusat Informasi Dan Jaringan Aksi Untuk Reformasi (Center for Information and Action Network for Democratic Reforms).



## John Otto Ondawane (OPM - Free Papua Movement)

First of all, on behalf of the colonised people of West Papua, I as representative of the Free Papua Movement (OPM) would like to express my warmest gratitude to the organising committee for giving me this opportunity to address this solidarity message in this historical conference in supporting national liberation struggles of the East Timorese people.

All peoples have rights to self-determination.

This means basically that the colonised and repressed peoples in the world in our region and in actual case in East Timor, have absolute rights to self-determination and independence.

It means that the presence of Indonesia occupation forces in the soil of East Timor is illegal and a crime against humanity. Therefore, the military regime in Jakarta should be prosecuted under the international laws.

Additionally it also means that the people and governments in the world and in Asia-Pacific region have a moral duty in defending the human rights and supporting the East Timorese people.

In this respect, as a member of the UN, the governments in ASEAN countries should be objective and apply these laws accordingly in favour of the majority interests of the people of East Timor, instead of denying political rights for the purpose of defending a few coins and dollars.

In the beginning of 1975, the people of East Timor believed that with the proclamation of independence under the leadership of the Fretilin, the country will end 500 years of Portuguese colonialism and then regain the respect and dignity that were denied for centuries, that the people will enjoy peace and justice, democracy and equality in a new-born democratic republic.

However, these hopes were destroyed. The military regime in Jakarta annexed the country and forcibly incorporated into Indonesia as its 27th province – an act against international laws and conventions.

One should ask what rights Indonesia has over East Timor. Logically, there is no appropriate answer that can legitimize the brutal act. The Maubere people have no any historical, ethnic, cultural links with Indonesia.

Since East Timor became the new colony of Indonesia, human rights abuses rapidly spread over the country as in all colonies of Indonesia.

The human rights abuses in East Timor is not an internal matter. With the bloody human slaughter that happened in Dili, 1991, where 200 innocent civilians lost their lives, the illegitimate and inhuman rule of Indonesia was shown to the world.

It is important to point out here that Dili massacre is only one part of many military atrocities that was imposed on the people in East Timor. The "Immigration" program and family program against the people in the country under scheme of population transfer in the entire Indonesian archipelago were introduced in 1967. Their land has been confiscated and the democratic movement has been violated.

This conference makes us aware about situation in East Timor. However, one of the forgotten countries that the Indonesian government committed human rights violations is in West Papua which was the first territory invaded by Indonesia. It is the western part of New Guinea Island, has 1.5 million Papuans – Melanesian ethnic group and majority being Christians.

Historically, West Papua has always been a separate nation even during the Dutch administration.

Since Indonesia invaded the country, human rights abuses have been committed and have increased. Foremost of these abuses is the transmigration program funded by the International Monetary Fund. This policy is threatening to make the West Papuans a minority in their own land.

These systematic human rights abuses can be pointed out that:

Firstly, the colonial regime imposes cultural imperialism on the entire society where the Papuans' values systems are strictly prohibited to develop and preserve it. The promoter of Papuan culture, Mr. Arnold Ab – the director of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Cendrawasih, Jayapura, Director of the folk music – Mambesak was brutally murdered in 1994 because his songs encouraged Papuan nationalism.

Secondly, our traditional land have been confiscated and given to immigrant and foreign companies and illegally exploited and plundered our natural resources such as oil, minerals and forests.

Thirdly, hundreds and thousands of innocent people have been forcibly put into prisons, detainees, concentration camps, resettlement camps and 130 political prisoners have been forcibly moved to isolated camps in Kalisosok, Tangerang and Cipinang in Java, an act against international laws that guarantees the right to visits by his or her relatives and family.

Fourthly, an apartheid system has systematically imposed and operated in the country, where discrimination, corruption, social injustice and violation of democratic freedom have effected human freedom, where internal pass-system is only secure matter if a Papuan escape from arrest or imprisonment.

Therefore, if we are serious in concerning human rights and the issue of self-determination, the people and governments in our region should be reeducated on the subject of democracy. Towards this direction, the idea of regionalisation of the issues of self-determination and human rights are important.

For these obvious reasons, our people pledge our total solidarity with the people of East Timor in their just struggle against Indonesian colonialism.

We also express our solidarity with liberation movements, democratic and progressive movement within Indonesia.

We also solidarity with democratic, liberation movement from Philippines and the entire peoples in Asia-Pacific region.

Finally, we are certain that this conference has given us greater encouragement and valuable inspiration.

Victory of East Timor is our victory!

The struggle continues!

Victory is certain!



## Bishop Alousius Nabuo Soma

It is a great honour to participate in this gathering called by NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region to address one of the most pressing issues of our day. I particularly wish to thank the Filipino sisters and brothers who have given us a very inspiring example of what it means to show solidarity in actions.

First of all I would like to recall the fact that one of the most important tasks of the United Nations since World War II has been furthering self-determination of peoples and the independence of former colonies. The Indonesian military's occupation of East Timor has made a mockery of this important mission and has deprived East Timor of independence and liberation from Portugal which it was to have obtained.

It is not surprising that in support of the liberation, self-determination and independence of East Timor, the United Nations General Assembly passed no fewer than eight resolutions since 1975 condemning the Indonesian occupation and calling for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops from the territory. The Indonesian Government, however, ignored all of these.

I would like to take this opportunity to appeal, with urgency, to the parties involved in this tragic conflict:

First and foremost I appeal to Indonesia. The Republic of Indonesia was founded on lofty principles, principles which I always hold in the highest esteem. The Indonesian military's reckless act of invading East Timor has done nothing but besmirch the honor of the good people, the peace-loving people, of Indonesia. It is my heartfelt wish that Indonesia, returning to the high ideals upon which it was founded, and sincerely embracing the universal principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, will respect the rights of the people of East Timor, withdraw its troops from the territory, and turn its efforts to establishing ties of friendship with its neighbor to the East.

The people of East Timor have had to walk down a long, terrible road of suffering. In spite of this they have indicated that bitterness will not get in the way of friendly relations with their Indonesian neighbors once independence has been achieved and that an independent East Timor will not pose a threat to Indonesia. I sincerely hope that Indonesia will listen with courage and respect to this magnanimous voice of the people of East Timor and will search for the concrete means to bring about a solution to the present conflict.

Next I would like to appeal to the United Nations. I sincerely hope that the United Nations will squarely face the injustice of the present situation, that it will listen to the perfectly reasonable hopes of the people of East Timor, and that it will do all in its power to secure freedom and independence for them. In August 1989 I spoke before a session of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation in support of a proposal that was made in a letter to the UN Secretary General from Bishop Belo of East Timor. The bishop said in his letter that the people of East Timor "have

not been consulted. Others speak in the name of the people. Indonesia says that the people of East Timor themselves have never said this ... I ask you, as Secretary General, to start in Timor the most normal and democratic process of decolonisation, i.e., the holding of a referendum."

When I went to the United Nations, I took a petition to the Secretary General supporting Bishop Belo's proposal signed by 1257 church leaders from the Asia-Pacific region, including five cardinals, 32 archbishops, and 80 bishops. Since then support has grown even greater among church people for the struggle to realize an act of self-determination by the East Timorese. I further pledge myself to do all in my power so that the United Nations will seriously listen to what we are saying, secure freedom for East Timor without further delay, and hold a fair referendum.

However, we also realize that the settlement of international issues is not easily achieved at the level of the United Nations or at the level of the governments of countries involved. This is because in most cases most countries in the world, as well as the United Nations, have as their primary concern selfish goals that they refer to as their national interest – goals which have little to do with justice, peace, or love for one's fellow human beings. Non-government organizations, groups of ordinary citizens, exist, do they not, for the purpose of making up for these shortcomings of official bodies. I have come to feel this way particularly in the light of recent happenings. I believe that it is up to us to make a powerful appeal to public opinion around the world on behalf of our sisters and brothers in East Timor who are prevented even from speaking. I have deeply engraved in my heart the words of Bishop Martinho da Costa, now deceased, when he visited Japan: "Don't forget East Timor."

I visited East Timor last year and was very warmly welcomed by Bishop Belo and many other East Timorese. I believed that what moved me more than anything else was to know that many East Timorese people, in the midst of so much suffering and hardship, are striving with great courage, without betraying their ideals, for justice, and justice alone. I would end my speech with a pledge of solidarity to these sisters and brothers in East Timor itself and to each and every East Timorese in exile devoting himself or herself to the struggle of the East Timorese people. May God give you the strength and wisdom needed for this hard but very precious struggle. May you walk in courage, without wavering and with one accord, toward the achievement of your goal, a goal which we too share with all our heart.



# Messages to APCET from those who couldn't be there

## Charles Scheiner: If I am deported

*This statement was written to be used if I was arrested, detained or deported from the Philippines. Since I didn't get to use it there, I wanted to at least include it here.*

I came to the Philippines to attend the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor and the meeting of the International Federation for East Timor. I had hoped to share information and ideas with people from the Philippines, Southeast Asia, and around the world on one of the most egregious violations of human rights and national sovereignty in the world today.

Unfortunately, the conference has been prevented by the Indonesian and Philippine governments. While this is personally disappointing to me, and a slap in the face of the people of East Timor and their supporters worldwide, the most tragic aspect is the eagerness of President Ramos to surrender the hard-won national sovereignty of the Republic of the Philippines.

The Indonesian invasion, occupation, and genocide in East Timor is a matter of historical fact, as are the continuing violations of the human rights. Every year, the United Nations Human Rights Commission demands that Indonesia comply with internationally-accepted standards of human rights in the occupied territory. And there are two Security Council and eight General Assembly resolutions on record calling for Indonesian military withdrawal and self-determination for the East Timorese people.

It is no surprise that Indonesia is trying to stifle free discussion of this situation. Inside East Timor, and inside Indonesia itself, conferences discussing Indonesian actions in East Timor are not allowed. Journalists are not free to describe the situation. Academics who speak out are harassed and threatened. And East Timorese who engage in peaceful expression of their opinions – or who are accused of desiring to engage in such expression – are arrested, tortured, and jailed. Jakarta's efforts to extend these restrictions to the Philippines are arrogant, unjust and ill-considered, but they are not inconsistent with what they do where the Indonesian military holds sway.

The most surprising aspect has been is the alacrity with which President Ramos has capitulated the demands of the regime from the South. It is a sorry day for the Philippines and for the people of the world when a democracy based on the peaceful "people's power" after centuries of colonization and decades of dictatorship can discard its democratic principles at the demand of a military regime responsible for the deaths of 200,000 East Timorese and countless more Indonesians.

I first came to the Philippines in January 1986 to learn from and support people who were struggling against the "US-Marcos Dictatorship." As an American, I wanted to do what I could to counter the presence of 40,000 American troops which had served to prop up the Marcos Regime. After the EDSA revolution, I continued to work in the United States for the withdrawal of Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Base. I returned here in November 1987, to participate in the Nuclear-Free and Independent Pacific conference. Several hundred delegates from throughout the Pacific region came together for lively, productive meetings. We were warmly welcomed by the Philippine people, and not harassed by the government – even though the rights of indigenous people of the Philippines were discussed, and despite the fact that many conference participants joined in a demonstration in front of the U.S. embassy to call for the removal of the military bases.

The Philippines could not be entirely independent of the United States as long as the U.S. military continued to occupy parts of the Philippines. I joined with the Philippine people in celebrating the removal of the bases a few years ago, and shared their hope for a new era of U.S.-RP relations based on equality and cooperation, for peaceful political, economic and human relations. After almost a hundred years of American domination, the Philippine people had finally won true independence.

Last month, I participated in a conference on U.S.-Indonesian relations in New York. After his keynote speech I asked Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas why Indonesia has not permitted the East Timorese people to enjoy national sovereignty and cultural identity, rights which the Indonesian people and government value very highly. His answer was a mixture of historical distortion and platitudes. Do recent developments mean that next time Indonesia will ask the U.S. government to prevent a conference at which Indonesian government officials might be asked embarrassing questions about East Timor? I would hope that Washington responds with more strength and dignity than Manila.

The events of the last week show that, unfortunately, hard-won Philippine sovereignty cannot be taken for granted. After a few words from the general in Jakarta, the general in Malacañang surrendered constitutional and political freedom. Nevertheless, I remain confident that the Philippine people's desire for freedom will soon triumph again, as will the twenty-year struggle of the East Timorese people for self-determination.

Manila, May 28, 1988



## Madame Danielle Mitterand

At the time of writing, I do not yet know if the Conference in Manila will be authorised or not.

What needs to be said, will be said, here or elsewhere.

As representatives of NGOs meeting in Manila, we speak for all those who are still capable of indignant reaction in the face of oppression and violence. All violence, including that which a government inflicts on the indigenous population of a country it has invaded.

We come from all over the world, but mainly from the ASEAN region, and we bear witness to the oppression under which the people of East Timor are suffering. We want to awaken the consciences of those who have power, or can exert political influence in favour of a peace process.

For a number of years, in France and Europe, many initiatives have been taken by humanitarian and civil rights associations, including FRANCE-LIBERTÉS.

Never before, however, had we been subjected to such pressure on the part of Indonesian authorities, who, probably, considered our activities to be too far away to be more than futile agitation.

What, then, has happened?

Is it the choice of venue, the Philippines, or the presence of many associations from ASEAN? Does Indonesia fear that public opinions in neighboring countries might question their respective governments, or put pressure on them to react to the exactions imposed on the people of Timor? What folly has made the authoritarian Indonesian regime to invoke the security of the people of the Philippines in order to pressure this young democracy that has made this conference possible, as an expression of a solidarity towards the people of East Timor?

Surely such action highlights the constant oppression exerted by the Indonesian authorities in the whole of the region.

And the most reprehensible methods are used that could well endanger the peace in this region where so many countries are striving to emerge from obscurantism.

Does Jakarta fear that solidarity for East Timor might spread? Do they fear to such a degree the incontrovertible reports emanating from the NGOs represented here?

Or do they fear that the calls that have been smothered since 1975 might at last be heard by political leaders in each country of the region?

Do they believe in Jakarta that they can continue indefinitely using the double talk that was heard in Geneva in the negotiations between Indonesia and Portugal under the aegis of Boutros Boutros Ghali when they expressed "good will," and agreed to "meet with the opposition," i.e. the Timor leaders struggling against integration? Such an attitude is totally contradicted by the way they advocate violence.

Are they counting on the lassitude and resignation of the international community?

But one has to keep up with the times.

Nowadays, news travels fast and reports are picked up and passed on: diplomats in Europe and the West can no longer

hide behind "the lack of information regarding the domestic situation" and be content with an alibi that justifies laxity - with guilt - or indifference - with dishonour.

The massacre at the Santa Cruz cemetery at Dili and the "integration" techniques are no longer confidential, unknown to most people, thanks to the bravery of the free press.

Now, the voices of the victims - there age ranging from 10 to 25 - are piercing the wall of silence, the bamboo fortresses, and no pressure, from any quarter, will prevent the facts from being known.

The conflict between Indonesia and East Timor cannot be resolved by the violence of the Indonesian army. Only by negotiation can a solution be found.

The Indonesian leaders do not seem to appreciate this, and they continue to practice terror, prohibition, gagging.

And yet, when one voice is silenced, another is ready to pick up the message. Each time a witness disappears, another rises up.

Mankind is accountable to all of us, and every one of us is concerned when a call of distress is heard.

We shall never forget the 250,000 missing.

That is why we are here today.

If we are capable of speaking out and saying what we know, thereby restoring the essential balance of information, we will mobilise world opinion so that effect be given to the condemnations pronounced by the UN General Assembly and Security Council, the Conference of unaligned States, the Interparliamentary Union, the European Parliament, the ACP/EEC Assembly, the UN Commission of Human Rights, the Council of Europe, the Western European Union, the Senate and Congress of the United States.

For this to happen there must be an international demonstration of political will.

Is that too much to ask?

Perhaps I should address myself, personally, to the men themselves, not the leaders and politicians, but the real person, who is capable of feeling, of indignation, who can forget for a moment economic interests and the complexities of alliances in order to weep with the woman whose son has been murdered, whose husband is missing.

Indonesia is a country that counts. No one denies this. But the Indonesian regime must also respect the elementary human rights that bind us together, and not flout all the conventions that give dignity and honour to the relations among States and people.

In closing, I shall quote a man who cannot speak for himself, because he has been arbitrarily thrown into prison. Xanana Gusmão:

*In Tibet or in Poland, in the Baltic States or in the South Pacific, in Africa or in the Caribbean, proof has been given that repression can never completely strafe that which represents the profound reason for any people's existence: its self-pride, the capacity of preserving everything that gives it its identity, the freedom to pass all this on to future generations, in other words the right to manage its own future.*



## José Ramos Horta: Indonesia's Great PR Blunder

*This article was published in several Philippine newspapers. Horta also made a videotaped message to the conference, which is not included here.*

Ninoy Aquino was gunned down on the tarmac of the airport now honouring his name. I first met Ninoy in the early 80's when he addressed a human rights meeting at Colombia University in New York. I was most impressed and pleasantly surprised that not only he knew that my little country, East Timor, existed at all but also expressed support for our struggle. I knew him as a most energetic and brilliant orator, a warm and caring person. I was one of the many people who phoned him in Boston before he undertook the fateful journey to martyrdom. "Ninoy, don't forget East Timor when you become President," I pleaded with him.

Ninoy was gunned down and his death swept away the Marcos dictatorship. The blood spilled on the tarmac has not dried yet but peoples from all over the world, including a Nobel Peace Laureate, are being blacklisted and turned back at Ninoy Aquino's international airport for travelling to Manila to share Ninoy's promises and vision of peace and democracy for the Philippines, the whole region, and East Timor.

The East Timor issue has once again prominently surfaced in the Asian and international news media. This time not because of further, and by now habitual, reports of atrocities perpetrated against innocent East Timorese. This time public opinion has been dismayed by Indonesia's coarse interference in Philippines' internal affairs, as it attempted to gag discussion and the free exchange of ideas among many of those most qualified to assist the search of a solution for the East Timor drama.

Betraying its despair at the prospect of being exposed yet once more, and this time in a neighbouring forum, Indonesia brought its weight to bear on the timorous Filipino President, Gen. Fidel Ramos, whose capitulation to Jakarta, ordering impediments to be put in the way of the conference, has led to tensions in the country, as fears arise for the respect of the Filipino people's hard won freedoms. The refusal of entry to the Philippines of academics, human rights defenders, public figures, and members of the clergy, plus obstacles raised domestically, including threats to basic academic freedoms, have gravely damaged Gen. Ramos government's image the world over.

From the East Timorese point of view, the outcry produced by Indonesia's clumsy trespasses has been highly positive. In particular, many sectors of Asian society and especially in the Philippines, have obtained a new exposure to and understanding of the drama faced by their East Timorese cousins, and of the dangers inherent in so-called "realist" policies of appeasement of the Suharto dictatorship. But that was not what we had set out to achieve when APCET was first conceived. We had expected to participate in a forum where experts on the topic could express their views and provide proposals for the search of a solution to the protracted issue. We envisaged a forum where Indonesians, including Foreign Minister Alatas, could contribute their views and perceptions on the problem.

Indonesia's hysterical response, its coarse efforts to blackmail the Philippines, trampling on its sovereignty and dignity, point

to Jakarta's bad faith. The Foreign Ministry's Information Director, Mr. Irawan Abidin, has acknowledged his government's "profound relief" to learn about a judicial order preventing the conference from being held. This revealing language betrays Indonesia's panic at the way its 20 year old campaign of lies and fabrication regarding East Timor has failed.

Looking at the APCET consequences I, and many others, ask ourselves why is all this necessary? Why should the East Timorese people continue to suffer, and why should basic freedoms and human rights be also denied to their neighbours in the Philippines? What will it take for the Indonesian leaders to finally make the necessary amends to their patently inappropriate and mistaken policies, and end a 20 year tragedy that has brought no victors but only losers? Will the Indonesian leaders stubbornly continue their brutal oppression of one of the peoples of the region, thus increasingly alienating their neighbours, as APCET has shown?

When I first visited Jakarta in June 1974, a young diplomat, I was full of respect and expectations for our large neighbouring brother. I had avidly read about Indonesia's struggle against colonialism and the significant contribution of leaders like President Sukarno, whose legacy I assumed had endured. The acknowledgment in Indonesia's Constitution that "Independence is the right of every people" and that "colonialism must be effaced from the face of the earth," together with the assurances given to me by the then Foreign Minister Adam Malik, about Indonesia's respect for East Timorese independence further strengthened my expectations. As I was leaving Adam Malik's private home in Jakarta after our meetings, I invited him to visit East Timor. He responded: "I'll come for the independence day." Adam Malik didn't show up. Instead, tanks were sent in on December 7, 1975.

Nonetheless, through all the intervening years we have continuously signalled our openness to Indonesia to enter into dialogue to seek a just solution to the East Timor problem and assist to remove the profound and tragic misunderstandings which must have been at the basis of Jakarta's past policies. My hopes that this would be possible were recently raised again in Geneva when, on 6 May, I accidentally ran into Foreign Minister Alatas at the United Nations. He greeted me warmly, saying "I will be seeing you soon." I interpreted this in the context of his undertakings at talks with Foreign Minister Durão Barroso of Portugal and the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on that day, that he would meet with the nationalist East Timorese leadership.

I looked forward to the opportunity to personally present to Minister Alatas the CNRM three-phase peace plan, widely acknowledged as a most viable path for a solution to the East Timor problem. We see it as a plan which would allow Indonesia to honourably disengage itself from our country in a progressive step-by-step manner. At the end, after 7 or even 12 years, a referendum would enable the people of East Timor to pronounce themselves on their preferred future, which could be integration into Indonesia, free association, or independence.

Respecting our wishes, and honouring basic international principles and norms would enable the restoration of the peace and harmony so desired and benefiting to our regional family.



## Konis Santana, Commander of CNRM

*Excerpts from speech video-taped inside East Timor*

The people of East Timor, the National Liberation Armed Forces, and the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM), the highest and non-partisan body which leads the resistance of the people of East Timor against Indonesia's occupation, are deeply grateful for this historic event.

In the name of everyone I greet the participants to this international conference on East Timor.

Special greetings to the Indonesian delegation present here representing the people of Indonesia.

Our two peoples have been the victim of a war imposed upon us by the Indonesian military regime. I greet with sincere gratitude the people of the Philippines. We share the same colonial experience, our two countries were colonised by two Iberian powers and we are the only two predominantly Catholic countries in the entire Asian region. We are inspired by the struggle of the Filipino people for freedom democracy and social justice.

Finally, I want to convey our special gratitude to the conference organisers. We thank you with all our heart for your sense of justice and generosity.

### **The Legal Basis of our struggle**

East Timor was colonised for almost 500 years by Portugal. The question of East Timor, as a non-self-governing territory has been on the agenda of the UN since the sixties. Our right to self-determination and independence is well established in several United Nations Resolutions.

The invasion of East Timor and the illegal occupation of our country are in breach of international law and in defiance of two United Nations Security Council resolutions.

### **Prospects for a Solution to the Problem of East Timor**

For the past 18 years, the situation in East Timor has been without a solution. In view of the inability of the United Nations to implement its own resolutions, since 1982, in accordance General Assembly resolution 37/30 the Secretary General was mandated to mediate the conflict through dialogue with all the parties to this conflict. However the people of East Timor remain on the sidelines of this diplomatic process.

History has its own development dynamic. The dynamics of the histories of conflict in the world point to dialogue as the most effective means to resolve the differences among countries. Friends and enemies resort to dialogue to resolve their conflicts.

The people of East Timor are aware that any attitude of inflexibility by the extremists will not favour a solution to the problem of East Timor. For this reason our method of struggle is based on moderation and flexibility, based on complete openness for dialogue. However the Indonesian regime remains defiant, inflexible and arrogant. We remain ready to enter into a process of dialogue without pre-conditions with a view to exploring every possible solution beneficial to all parties involved.

To overcome the deadlock, the CNRM, presented a comprehensive peace plan which offers Indonesia and honourable way out of the Timor quagmire. This peace plan articulated by the CNRM Special Representative José Ramos-Horta in an

address to the European Union in Brussels in April 1992, the Council on Foreign Relations in New York in May 1992 and to the United Nations.

The CNRM is conscious that acting in this manner it is making a serious contribution to the search for a realistic solution acceptable to all parties to the conflict. This peace plan contains all the elements that satisfy the needs and interests of everyone.

We therefore appeal to all participants to the Asia Pacific on East Timor to support this peace plan by disseminating it everywhere you can, by interesting your government in it. The conflict in East Timor is the result of the denial of our people of our right to self-determination and it is this right that feeds our people with new energies to continue the struggle against occupation. The people of East Timor believe that if there exists in the world freedom and justice and that only justice and freedom can guarantee peace among peoples then the international community cannot allow Indonesia to continue to violate the universal principles of Human Rights and International Law.

Where there is repression there is resistance. Peoples long for peace, nations long for independence, the oppressed long for social justice and freedom. The collapse of the dictatorial governments in the region, the persistent struggle of the Burmese people for freedom and social justice, the struggle of the people of Tibet for independence confirms this truth.

The people of East Timor know that democratization is a process that is born from the concerted action of the oppressed peoples and from all peoples that see democracy as the end of slavery. If the freedom of a citizen is the safeguard of human dignity then we have to say that the Timorese are not free citizens in their own country. The people of East Timor hope to build a society based on democracy and where the citizens are conscious of their responsibilities and will defend the democratic institutions.

The people of East Timor recognise the interest of the countries of the region and of Indonesia itself. On day one of independence East Timor will seek membership in ASEAN.

The struggle of the people of East Timor will continue. 1993 was a difficult year for the survival of the resistance. The year that went by witnessed yet another step forward in our struggle. The situation in East Timor remains dramatic, violations of human rights perpetrated by the Indonesian Army area daily occurrence.

To conclude, we call for the immediate and unconditional release of our leader Xanana Gusmão; the participation of East Timorese representatives in the dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations and as a transitional measure, in the impossibility of the direct participation of Xanana Gusmão, José Ramos-Horta should represent the CNRM in these talks. The CNRM rejects any form of dialogue outside the context of the UN and without the involvement of the administering power, Portugal; declares as null and void any decision taken in any of these meetings without the direct involvement of the fully accredited CNRM representatives; we declare as null and void any initiative by individuals that have not accepted the CNRM; we reaffirm the validity in its entirety of the CNRM peace plan.

Nino Konis Santana  
Head of the Executive Council/Armed Front