

NETWORK NEWS

EAST TIMOR ACTION NETWORK / US
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Call Senators Today **Senate Considers Arms Sales Ban**

An amendment proposed by Senator Russell Feingold (D-WI) would prohibit arms sales to Indonesia in two stages. His draft amendment to the foreign aid authorization bill would prohibit government to government sales under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program immediately. Licenses for commercial sales would end one year later. The arms flow would remain stopped until the President certifies that Indonesia has allowed international human rights groups to visit East Timor, has ended all forms of inhumane treatment (including torture), and has complied with Security Council resolutions calling for withdrawal of its troops from the territory and self-determination by the East Timorese.

A meeting of the International Economic Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee discussed the Feingold amendment on August 4, but deferred action to a meeting of the full committee scheduled for early September. Should a foreign aid authorization bill not pass at all this year, Feingold may attempt to offer an amendment to another bill on the Senate floor. Whatever happens in committee, there will be a vote of the full Senate, people should call both of their senators and tell them arms sales to Indonesia must end.

Deadly Trade

US arms sales to Indonesia were over \$100 million in 1991, but vary from year to year. They include high-tech aircraft as well as the M-16 automatic weapons used to massacre over 271 unarmed Timorese protesters at Santa Cruz cemetery on November 12, 1991.

The most recent Congressional Presentation Document estimates that in 1993 the US sold \$11 million worth of US weaponry to Jakarta through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, a government to government transaction. Indonesia bought another \$32 million in arms commercially. The US government must approve these transactions. For 1994 (barring the passage of the Feingold Amendment), Congress estimates \$15 million in US arms sales through FMS and \$16 million in commercial sales. These are estimates; the true figures could turn out to be significantly higher.

All members of the Foreign Relations Committee received a letter signed by 21 organizations, including the East Timor Action Network, calling on them to support Senator Feingold's efforts. Other signers of the letter included Friends Committee on National Legislation, Peace Action, the Washington Office of the Presbyterian Church/USA, Office for Church in Society of the United Church of Christ, War Resisters League and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

In December 1975, Indonesia invaded the tiny half-island of East Timor. Nearly one-third of the population has died as a direct result of the invasion. During 18 years of brutal military occupation, the East Timorese have never surrendered their wish to govern themselves. The United States government provided weapons and diplomatic support throughout the genocide, and approved the invasion in advance.

The East Timor Action Network/US was formed at the end of 1991, following a massacre in Dili, the capital of East Timor. Several foreign journalists witnessed the murder by Indonesian troops of over 271 young Timorese participating in a peaceful memorial demonstration. These journalists told the world that Timorese resistance — and Indonesian murder — continue. Since then, popular support for East Timor has resurged and US policy on East Timor has begun to change.

The East Timor Action Network/US supports genuine self-determination and human rights for the people of East Timor in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December, 1960 (on decolonization), and specific UN Security Council (384 and 389) and General Assembly resolutions on East Timor. ETAN's primary focuses are to change US policy and raise public awareness in support of self-determination for East Timor.

Network News is published approximately every two months and sent to members and supporters of ETAN/US.

Your financial contribution is crucial to ETAN's effectiveness and success. Please make a contribution today. Contributions over \$50 for ETAN's educational work can be made payable to WESPAC Foundation/ETAN.

Policy Shift

Passage of the amendment would signal a significant change in US policy on East Timor. In late 1992, over objections from the Bush administration and major corporations such as AT&T, Congress cut off International Military Education and Training (IMET) funds to Indonesia for fiscal year 1992-93. While the programs \$2.3 million cost represented only a small portion of total US aid, it was the first time that Congress has taken punitive action against Indonesia on the issue of East Timor. The Feingold amendment would prevent Indonesia from purchasing US military training to replace the IMET military training aid.

In March of this year, at the meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, passed a resolution condemning Indonesian human rights abuses in East Timor. The Clinton administration co-sponsored the resolution. This is a significant reversal of past US blocking of similar resolutions.

All Senators' offices can be reached through the Congressional switchboard at (202)224-3121 or write to them at US Senate, Washington, DC 20510. Contact both your Senators today.

Agio Pereira: "I'm Still Fighting," Says Activist Singer

by Anne Treseder

East Timorese activist and folk musician Agio Pereira toured the San Francisco Bay Area and the Pacific Northwest last July. The tour, sponsored by East Timor Action Network chapters in Seattle, Portland and the Bay Area, followed successful appearances in Canada.

A student in Lisbon when Indonesia invaded his homeland on December 7, 1975, Pereira has lived in exile ever since. Trained as an environmental biologist, he has spent much of the last 18 years traveling throughout the world championing Timorese self-determination. This was his first trip to the United States.

At each stop of his tour, Pereira gave interviews to mainstream and alternative media, met with local political figures and ETAN activists, and performed in a variety of venues. He spoke at a San Francisco rally against US arms sales to Indonesia, sang at a Mass for East Timor in Berkeley, and met with Indonesian and other students at the University of Washington.

At his concerts, Pereira used each song

as an opportunity to explain something more about East Timor or the experience of exile. He also showed a short video on the life of Timorese resistance leader Xanana Gusmão, now imprisoned by the Indonesian government. Questions and discussion followed.

At his July 30 appearance in San Francisco, Pereira discussed what has kept him going after 18 years: "Timor is just a part of my self. Fighting for Timor keeps me alive. My generation has been sacrificed to stand up for our country...if we don't, no one else will on our behalf."

Despite regular sad news from inside East Timor, Pereira, executive director of the East Timor Relief Association in Sydney, Australia, sees signs of hope on the international scene. And his optimism and energy are infectious. After interviewing Pereira, the foreign affairs editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle* headlined the resulting article: "East Timor's Day Is Coming."

"We [the Timorese] have won," Pereira said. "We are just waiting for the world to recognize it."

Pereira, also toured Canada and performed at the Winnipeg and Vancouver Folk Festivals.

His latest cassette, titled *I'm Still Fighting*, will be available from ETAN/US for \$15 plus \$1 postage.



Agio Pereira
Photo by Anne Treseder

Activists, Academics Meet in Oporto

by Matthew Jardine

For the fifth consecutive year, the University of Oporto (Portugal) organized a symposium on East Timor. This year's conference was titled "East Timor and Indonesia, Roads for Liberty, Self-Determination and Democracy" represented a unique opportunity for valuable interaction between East Timorese in exile, academics, and activists who share the common vision of an independent East Timor in which democracy and human rights are supreme.

Several pro-democracy activists from Indonesia took great risks to participate in the July symposium, which had a special emphasis on Indonesia. Members of the East Timorese diaspora, some from as far away as Angola and Macao also came to Oporto, as did representative from East Timorese solidarity groups in Mozambique, the US (ETAN), the Philippines

and elsewhere.

The diverse week-long gathering mixed the academic and political with the cultural. Most days featured "classes" in which prominent academics, researchers, and/or activists would speak on subjects pertinent to Indonesia and East Timor. Presenters included Benedict Anderson (Cornell University), Liem Soei Liong (Tapol), Ingrid Wessel (Humboldt - Berlin), Daniel Lev (University of Washington, Seattle), Akahisa Matsuno (University of Osaka - Japan) and Roger Clark of Rutgers Law School.

Featured prominently were top nationalist leaders Mari Alkatiri (FRETILIN), Zacarias da Costa (UDT), and National Council of Maubere Resistance head José Ramos-Horta. Formal and informal discussions between the East Timorese nationalist leaders and conference participants provided valuable insights into in formu-

lating political strategies.

During the evenings, there were films and some very beautiful and heartwarming artistic presentations by individual East Timorese and Timorese dance troupes.

Now available!

VIDEO BIO OF XANANA

Portrays the human side of the East Timor independence leader through the eyes of people who have known him.

Produced by Louis Crewe in Australia
(for noncommercial use only)
37 minutes

\$25 plus \$3 postage from
ETAN/US, PO Box 1182, White Plains,
NY 10602; (914)428-7299.

Xanana Speaks

In August, Indonesia's President Suharto reduced East Timor resistance leader Xanana Gusmão's life sentence to 20 years. Viewed by some as a major improvement, ETAN/US coordinator Charles Scheiner noted that a life sentence in Indonesia is "the same as 'life imprisonment without parole' in the US, and that 20 years (which probably is longer than Xanana will live, given his current prison- and torture-induced poor state of health) is longer than many Americans serving 'life' sentences spend in prison."

Amnesty International (AI) said that the sentence reduction was "merely to appease the international community in the wake of his widely criticized trial," which AI has described as "a travesty of justice." AI also expressed concerns about Xanana's health since the end of his trial.

In a statement, an Indonesian government spokesman said that Xanana sentence had been reduced because "Xanana has accepted East Timor's integration into Indonesia." However, in his defense pleas, which the court prevented him from reading more than a few pages Xanana said that "under international law I remain a Portuguese citizen ... before my conscience I am citizen of East Timor. I therefore reject the competence of any Indonesian court imposed upon my motherland, East Timor, by force of arms and crime, to judge me." After his original sentence was announced, Xanana stood up in court and shouted: "Viva Timor Leste!"

The statement, written by hand in Portuguese, was smuggled out of the country. Below are additional excerpts from a translation by Tapol, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign:

The question of East Timor is the responsibility of the international community, a question of international law. It is a case in which universal principles are at stake, a case where the decolonization norms of the UN have been manipulated, a case where Indonesia has disregarded the resolutions of the UN, a case therefore of the flagrant violation of the principles of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of the universal pattern of law, peace and justice....

The ones who should be standing before an international court are, in the first place,

- ♦ the Indonesian government for crimes committed in the past 17 years in East Timor;
- ♦ the US administration which gave the green light to the invasion on 7 December 1975 and have since given military aid and political support for Indonesia's genocide in East Timor...



The Indonesian generals should be made to realize that they have been defeated in East Timor. Here, today, as the commander of Falintil, the glorious armed forces of national liberation of East Timor, I acknowledge military defeat on the ground. I am not ashamed to say so. On the contrary, I am proud of the fact that a small guerrilla army was able to resist a large nation like Indonesia, a regional power which in a cowardly fashion invaded us and want to dominate us by the law of terror and crime...



Is it that because Portugal failed to develop East Timor for four hundred years, we Timorese have had to pay for the errors of one colonizer while also paying for the crimes of the other colonizer?



I appeal to the new generation of Indonesians to understand that the people of East Timor attach much more value to freedom, to justice and to peace than to the development which is carried out here with the assistance of Australia, the United States and other European countries who maintain close economic relations with Jakarta....

I appeal to all the friends of East Timor, parliamentarians from Europe, America, Japan and Australia, to go on pressing their own governments to change the double standards applied to similar cases where systematic violations of UN resolutions occur, as in the case of Indonesia's behavior regarding East Timor.

I appeal to President Bill Clinton to reconsider the problem of East Timor and to press Jakarta to accept dialogue with the Portuguese and the Timorese in the search for an internationally-acceptable solution....

News Briefs

President Clinton met with President Suharto in Tokyo before the G7 Summit in early July. A quarter of the meeting was reportedly taken up with a discussion of East Timor. Clinton was also said to have given Suharto a copy of the a letter signed by 43 Senators calling for a review of US policy on East Timor "with an eye toward facilitating serious negotiations ... in pursuit of the right of self-determination of the East Timorese people.... We believe that the United States should work ... to convince Indonesia by diplomatic means that it is not in Indonesia's long-term interest to pursue the policies it has followed in East Timor." After the meeting, Suharto said he had told Clinton "that we accepted the East Timor integration because we respect the human rights of the majority of East Timorese."

Indonesia has announced that it is withdrawing all "combat troops" from East Timor. However, 10 battalions (about 6500 soldiers) of "territorial military" forces will remain. They will "be engaged exclusively in development activities," according to the Indonesian military.

In a letter to the *London Times*, Tapol's Liem Soei Liong wrote that "Territorial troops are the means by which the Indonesian army exercises constant and heavy-handed control over the population. They are well armed and are present throughout the territory to prevent any manifestation of resistance, whether armed or peaceful, to Indonesian rule... Only by the demilitarization of the territory will the 18-year long reign of terror end."

The Washington Post published a strong editorial on East Timor on Friday, July 9, 1993. Its final paragraph read in part: "A raw colonial impulse is usually given as the source of Indonesia's intent to keep East Timor down. It may also matter that this archipelago of ethnically diverse islands is wary of setting a precedent for other separatist movements. But neither Indonesia's imperial pride nor its political convenience requires the 600,000 remaining East Timorese to forfeit their UN-endorsed right of self-determination.... President Suharto could leave his country a rich legacy by accepting the process for Timorese self-determination..."

Action Alert Follow-up F5 Sale Stopped; Trade Sanctions Possible

Recent victories provide hope that significant change in the long-standing US policy of assisting Jakarta's brutal occupation of East Timor is possible.

In late July, the State Department acknowledged that they denied the Jordanian government permission to sell four US-made F5E fighter jets to the Indonesian military. Under the terms of the original sale to Jordan, the State Department had final say on the transfer.

Several US companies — including Eidetics Corporation of Torrance, CA, supported the sale. Eidetics claimed that other countries would simply sell aircraft to Indonesia if the sale was blocked. Congressional champions of the sale reportedly included Representative Jane Harman (D-CA) and Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA).

However, the State Department felt compelled to block the sale due to strong congressional opposition and grassroots pressure. Four senators — Claiborne Pell (D-RI), Russell D. Feingold (D-WI), Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) — sent a letter in early June to Secretary of State Warren Christopher asking him reject the sale of the jets.

According to a State Department official,

UN Commission Condemns Treatment of Prisoners

On August 20, the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted a resolution on East Timor. The resolution's references to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 are a major political advance over previous resolutions. The convention concerns the protection of civilians in time of war and forbids the removal of prisoners from their homelands in international armed conflicts. The resolution also calls for implementation of the resolution adopted last March by its parent body, the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Australia's Melbourne Age called US support for the resolution "the latest in a series of mostly discreet but deliberate steps by the Clinton administration aimed at forcing a shift in Jakarta's policies in the former Portuguese territory.... While a reversal of the tacit acceptance by successive US adminis-

a "combination of sensitive issues, including human-rights concerns, made it impossible to approve the transfer."

Trade Sanctions

The rejection of the sale followed another recent defeat for Jakarta. In June, US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor announced that Indonesia risks suspension of tariff privileges it receives under the General System of Preferences (GSP). While the issues around the possible GSP suspension are larger than East Timor, Congressional anger over Timor reportedly played an important role in the Clinton administration's decision.

These defeats for Indonesia are the latest in a series of US rebukes of the Suharto regime's brutal occupation of East Timor. Given the rosy relations between Washington and Jakarta since Suharto came to power in 1965, these have proven to be quite embarrassing for the Indonesian government.

Since the December 1975 invasion of East Timor, the US has supported the Indonesian occupation through all administrations, whatever their political stripe. The US has provided Jakarta with hundreds of millions of dollars in economic and military assistance, along with diplomatic backing in the United Nations and other international fora.

trations of Indonesia's incorporation of East Timor is unlikely, a policy review being undertaken by the State Department is expected to reflect growing demands in the US Congress and from the American public for the Timorese to be allowed at least greater autonomy after a genuine act of self-determination."

The Sub-Commission also passed a no-action motion on a resolution concerning arbitrary and summary executions in the Indonesian province of Aceh. The resolution, the first ever introduced on Aceh, was defeated on technical grounds. Rarely, have two different resolutions criticizing the same country been introduced in the same year. A recent report by Amnesty International describes grave human rights violations and estimates "that 2000 civilians, including children and the very elderly, have been summarily killed by government troops" since

While the recent setbacks for Indonesia serve as a sign that the Clinton Administration is different from its predecessors, it is not at all clear that Clinton and Co. are willing to take sufficient action to force Jakarta to actually pull out of East Timor. In fact, we are seeing some signs that suggest quite the opposite.

At its June meeting, the Consultative Group on Indonesia (CGI) — a consortium of Western-donor countries and multilateral lending institutions that grant economic aid to Indonesia — the United States granted Jakarta \$90 million for Fiscal Year 1993-94, only \$3 million less than the previous year. In all, the CGI gave Indonesia over \$5 billion in loans and grants, mostly from Japan, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank.

Clearly, the attractiveness of Indonesia to the Pentagon and multinational corporations has not diminished. Much work lies ahead for the East Timor Action Network and our allies. Our recent victories should serve as strong encouragement, but should not delude us into thinking that we have won the struggle to end the US government's cooperation with the genocide committed by Jakarta in East Timor.

1989.

Meanwhile, talks between Portugal and Indonesia are scheduled to resume at the UN in New York under the sponsorship of the Secretary-General on September 17. Little has been accomplished by the talks in the past, due Indonesian intransigence but remain the only forum where the two countries officially discuss East Timor. Currently, there is no provision for direct participation by Timorese in the negotiations.



Book Review: Telling: Personal Testimonies 1942-1992

by Matthew Jardine

Within the last few years, several outstanding books have been published on East Timor. One of the more interesting, and the most unique, is Michelle Turner's *Telling: East Timor: Personal Testimonies 1942-1992*, published last year by New South Wales University Press in Australia.

A 218-page collection of oral histories gathered in Australia over a ten year period, *Telling* consists of three sections. The first covers the period of the Second World War (1941-August 1945) when 20,000 Japanese troops occupied East Timor. Much of the Japanese troops' time was spent pursuing several hundred Australian commandos who inflicted high casualties on the Japanese. Although the majority of the Australians fled the island after one year, small intelligence groups, along with East Timorese trained in Australia, operated in the territory until the end of the war. Interviews with former Australian soldiers and East Timorese elites, many of whom worked with the Portuguese administration, dominate.

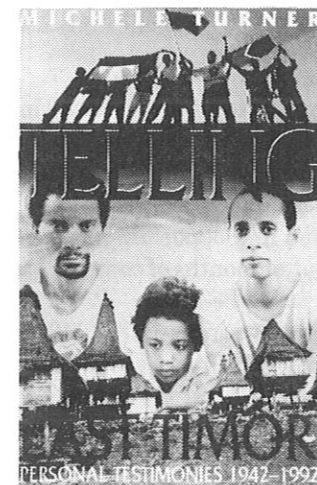
The second (and the briefest and weakest) section covers "Thirty Years of Peace, August 1945 to August 1975," from the return of the Portuguese administration to the beginning of the civil war between

FRETILIN (the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) and the UDT (Timorese Democratic Union).

The final section, and by far the longest, deals with the horrific experiences of the East Timorese since the beginning of Indonesian aggression in East Timor (at the end of the civil war). While the vast majority of the interviews are with East Timorese in exile in Australia, there are a few with former Australian commandos from the World War II era as well as one with Robert Domm, the Australian lawyer who visited and interviewed Xanana Gusmão in his mountain hideout in January 1990.

Telling is a valuable contribution to understanding East Timor. While there have been a number of first hand accounts of life under the Indonesian occupation, never have they been put together in as systematic and comprehensive a fashion. The fascinating section on East Timor during the Japanese occupation painfully reconstructs the brutal experiences of the East Timorese, when about 40,000 East Timorese lost their lives. While the North American reader might find the emphasis on Australia a bit excessive, the highly personal nature of the interviews is quite engrossing.

Here lies a major (perhaps unavoidable)



flaw of the whole book. By relying on interviews with individuals in Australia, there is a built-in bias to the collection. A number of important voices are not heard. Many of the East Timorese interviewees, for example, seem to come from the more privileged sectors of the colonial society — either the indigenous East Timorese elite or "civilizados" who achieved relative status under the Portuguese system. Thus, Portugal — whose presence in East Timor was often quite brutal — gets off relatively light.

Given the difficulty of getting out of East Timor, either in the aftermath of the civil war or since the Indonesian invasion, clearly those with greater financial resources and higher social status were better able to negotiate the difficult exit. In this sense, Turner cannot be blamed for the lack of representativeness of the interviews.

Many of the interviews are quite moving and, given their often graphic nature, very painful. The reader learns a great deal not only about East Timor's long and sorrowful history, but also about the personal struggles and triumphs experienced by courageous East Timorese individuals. I highly recommend *Telling* to well-studied observers of and newcomers to the issue of East Timor.

Copies of *Telling* are available from ETAN, PO Box 1182, White Plains, NY 10602. \$20 plus \$3 postage.

NOTICE

Due to summer vacations and incompetence at our post office, some mail sent to ETAN's White Plains box in late June and early July was not delivered or returned to the sender. If you send us something then and got it back, or if a check never cleared, please send it again.

EAST TIMOR TURNING A BLIND EYE

Produced by
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with

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Charles Scheiner, and others

Half-hour video focusing on the impact of the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, US policy, and the role of the media.

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ETAN Continental Conference Meets

by John M. Miller

Key activists from the East Timor Action Network/US and Canada's ETAN — the East Timor Alert Network — met in Westchester, New York, in July. For many, it was the first opportunity to meet face-to-face after months of communicating by phone, fax and e-mail.

Almost two dozen ETAN/US members and four from ETAN Canada attended the conference. Also at the meeting were observers from England, Portugal, the Netherlands and the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM) the umbrella organization of the East Timorese independence movement.

During the weekend we debated the implications of recent events and evaluated past projects, such as the New Generation of Resistance tour of young Timorese jointly undertaken by both ETANs. We also exchanged organizing tips and discussed possible projects and strategies. As the newer organization, ETAN/US worked on its structure and purpose. We agreed on a mission statement that affirms our commitment to self-determination and human rights for the East Timorese and our focus on changing US policy and educating the public. Stopping US arms sales received a high priority.

Leading off the meeting were briefings from Carmel Budiardjo of Tapol in England, journalist Allan Nairn, and José Amorim Dias of the CNRM. Budiardjo, a former political prisoner in Indonesia and a longtime activist on East Timor, told the group that ETAN/US added a "refreshing new dimension to the struggle for East Timor [that] could make a qualitative dif-

ference to the work internationally." East Timor is increasingly becoming an issue in Indonesian society and the US has a "key role in exerting pressure in making it as costly as possible for Indonesia to remain in East Timor."

Nairn, a correspondent for the *New Yorker* magazine, was beaten by Indonesian troops during the Dili massacre in November 1991, which led to the founding of ETAN/US. Nairn observed that since the massacre US policy "has shifted from rigid support of Jakarta's occupation of East Timor" because of grassroots pressure. He called current policy "somewhat incoherent and confused" as battle over its direction goes on in Congress and the Clinton administration. Mobilization at the grassroots, he said would decide the outcome.

Amorim described his own experiences growing up in East Timor and as a student in Jakarta. Once in the early 1980s, he watched as his father was tortured by Indonesian troops in front of his entire family. In Jakarta, Amorim worked to convince Indonesian student and pro-democracy activists of the parallels between Dutch colonization of Indonesia and its occupation of his homeland. Arrested at a protest by East Timorese in Jakarta after the Dili massacre, he later fled the country. He is now the CNRM's representative to the European Community.

Beginning steps were taken to help ETAN/US's structure catch up with the explosion of interest in East Timor. A steering committee was set up consisting of ETAN's coordinator, Charles Scheiner and representatives of ETAN's existing local groups in

Boston; Ithaca, NY; Los Angeles; Madison; New Jersey; Metro New York City; Portland, Oregon; Providence, RI; San Francisco Bay Area; Seattle; and Washington, DC area. Several responsibilities were decentralized. Over the coming months, the Steering Committee will further refine ETAN's decision-making and structure and work on such issues as the composition of an executive committee, what constitutes a chapter and guidelines for cosponsoring projects with other groups.

ETAN Speaks at UN Decolonization Meeting

Immediately following the ETAN meeting, Charles Scheiner — in a statement to the UN special committee on decolonization on behalf of ETAN/US — described the "tremendous increase in awareness and energy among the American people" on East Timor since ETAN's founding in 1991. "That energy has begun to change American policy," he said.

"The East Timorese people have suffered, died, and struggled for 18 years against Indonesian repression and, for years before that, against Portuguese colonization," Scheiner told the committee. "It is long past time for the international community to put action behind their paper principles and come to their support."

The committee heard from 21 petitioners from organizations and parliaments in eight countries. The committee, following its recent pattern took no action on East Timor, one of the 17 non-self-governing territories recognized by the UN.

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