

# EAST TIMOR

## The Inside Story

FEB/MAR 93 No. 6

### Operasi Tuntas on the rampage

*The capture of Xanana Gusmao was a major aim of the present Indonesian military operation in East Timor. But Operasi Tuntas (Thoroughgoing or Complete) has not yet reached its climax. With unprecedented ferocity Timorese guerillas are being hunted down in the mountains and hundreds of arrests have taken place in the towns.*

*Operasi Tuntas*, the code name for the present military operation, was originally to have been called *Operasi Naga Merah* (Operation Red Dragon) but military commander Brig. General Theo Syafei realised that this sounded too ferocious and settled for the milder-sounding name. As a military operation, *Operasi Tuntas* has new elements with a new thrust. The main difference is that it reasserts the *security approach* as the army's strategy while the key thrust is to crush the clandestine movement.

#### "Two-faced" Timorese

The clandestine movement has usually been taken as meaning the young activists who created organisations like *Renetil*, *Fitun*, and *Ojetil*. These organisations were primarily responsible for the anti-Indonesia actions in Dili and Baucau. The Santa Cruz procession of 12 November 1991 was largely organised by the youth. But *Operasi Tuntas* has gone further than just hunting down and arresting the youth. Several months ago, Syafei and Governor Abilio Osorio Soares issued a warning to the so-called two-faced Timorese, people who work within the Indonesian system while being involved in clandestine work for independence. Syafei and Soares are both well aware of the realities in East Timor and know that these 'two-faced' people are the bottom line. It is not enough to wipe out the armed resistance and destroy the clandestine youth organisations; any operation to break the back of the resistance must also 'cleanse' the Indonesian administrative apparatus in East Timor.

Some of the defendants in the trials held in Dili last year were civil servants. The latest waves of arrests show that one major aim of *Operasi Tuntas* is to break up the clandestine network within the administration. Most detainees named in recent Amnesty International urgent actions are civil servants.

Indonesian press reports since Xanana's arrest reveal the extent of this clandestine network. Xanana's visits from the mountains to Dili were partly organised by Timorese working in the administration, including a village head. Xanana's arrest took place in the house of police first corporal Augusto Pereira, another 'loyal' Timorese. Independent sources in East Timor say that six of the thirteen *hupatis* are suspected of complicity. It is clear that Xanana's arrest was not the result of betrayal but resulted from a massive hunt by the army last November. They discovered Xanana's whereabouts after inflicting the most horrific torture on detainees who they thought could inform on Xanana. One of those captured a few days before Xanana was found broke down and revealed his whereabouts after all his finger-nails and toe-nails had been pulled out, his ears slashed and both his arms broken.

#### The security approach

Since January 1992, when Syafei was appointed military commander, much has changed in East Timor. His predecessor Brig. General Warouw favoured the *prosperity approach*, trying to convince the Timorese to accept integration. The *security approach* of *Operasi Tuntas* regards every Timorese as a suspect.

#### Low intensity conflict

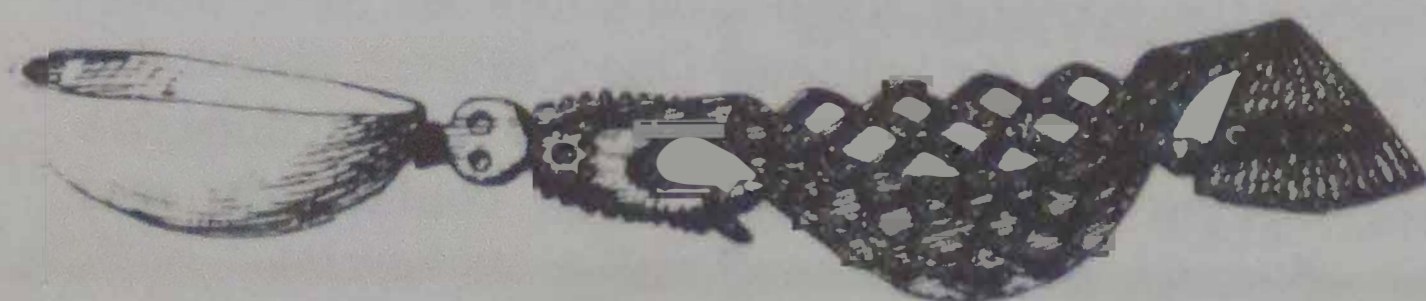
Central to the strategy currently being employed is an attempt to thoroughly demoralise the people of East Timor, so as to destroy their will to oppose integration. In Central America this counter-insurgency strategy is known as low-intensity conflict, total war against the entire population. It uses many methods, extrajudicial killings to terrify the population, mass arrests and psychological warfare through the media to spread lies and demoralise the people.

A key element in the campaign is the staging of 'loyalty ceremonies'. [See separate item] It is noteworthy that an old Timor hand has reappeared on the scene, Colonel Willem da Costa, now Territorial Assistant for *KOLAKOPS*, the special military command for East Timor. Da Costa was a crucial figure in the early eighties in resettling the Timorese population in camps. Captured military documents in 1983 revealed the Indonesian military strategy; several of the documents were signed by then Lt. Colonel Willem da Costa. The military reshuffle after the Santa Cruz bloodbath brought him back to Dili. Da Costa feels obviously more at home in war-like East Timor than in quiet Java.

Throughout the current operations, 'surrender' is the key word. Once an entire nation has 'surrendered', what more is there to talk about? This is why Indonesia was so inflexible at the UN-sponsored talks on 17 December. The delay of four months till the next round of talks should give the army the time it needs to end, once and for all, any remnants of East Timorese resistance.

The ceremonies of surrender are intended to demoralise the population while propaganda in the press is also part of the psy-war. Xanana Gusmao, very much respected by the Timorese, is portrayed as a criminal, a rapist, an alcoholic and a big-money spender. The televised 'interview' of Xanana, accepting all the blame and urging the Timorese to cooperate with the Indonesians, was shown over and over again in the villages and villagers were compelled to look at their 'defeated' leader.

*continued on page 2*



# The illegality of Xanana's trial

Jurists at a conference in London on legal aspects of the East Timor question wrote to the UN Secretary-General challenging the legality of the forthcoming trial of Xanana Gusmao and other East Timorese arrested in Dili. The jurists based their case on the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. Specifically with regard to the legal aspects of the trial, they wrote:

We recall that there are certain non-derogable human rights which appear in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and are part of customary international law. Under international humanitarian law and under international human rights law, every East Timorese is entitled to due process and fair trial rights.

"We have received reports concerning the arrest and detention of Xanana Gusmao on 20 November 1992 and of many other East Timorese both before and after his arrest, as detailed in Amnesty International's urgent actions nos. 366 and 367/92. The reports strongly suggest that Indonesia has violated the following rights:

"1. The right not to be arrested under any legal provision introduced by Indonesia which does not comply with Articles 64 and 65 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and not to be removed from the territory of East Timor. Indonesia's Anti-Subversion law under which, we understand, he is being held, is not essential to enable Indonesia to fulfil its obligations under the Convention.")

"2. The right to be promptly informed, in writing, in a language which he understands, of the particulars of the charges preferred against him.

"3. The right

(a) not to be subjected to physical or moral coercion, in particular to obtain information from him or from third parties; and not to be subjected to any measure of such a character as to cause physical suffering, including torture and any other measures of brutality whether applied by

civilian or military agents; and

(b) the concomitant right not to be compelled to testify against oneself or to confess guilt.

"We are most perturbed that Mr Gusmao has been presented on television, evidently speaking under duress. Moreover members of his family are being held hostage contrary to Article 34 of the Convention, and subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment.

"4. The right to all necessary rights and means of defence, in particular:

(a) The right to present evidence necessary to his defence and call witnesses; and

(b) The right to be assisted by a qualified advocate or counsel of his own choice, who shall be able to visit him freely and shall enjoy the necessary facilities for preparing the defence. Mr Gusmao has been held incommunicado since his arrest.

"Given the breaches of the above rights, we demand the immediate release of Mr Gusmao and all other detained East Timorese. Such breaches make it impossible for any of the individuals detained to receive a fair trial. Therefore any such trials will be unlawful.

"We ask you to use your good offices to make it plain to Indonesia that these matters constitute grave breaches of Indonesia's international obligations, and that the individuals responsible for them have corresponding international criminal liability."

\*) The likelihood that the Anti-Subversion Law will not be used against Xanana does not negate this argument: Whatever law is used, it will be Indonesian law and this is probably unlawful because the existing (ie. pre-invasion, Portuguese) laws are supposed to remain in place and may only be repealed or added to in limited circumstances. Moreover any new laws must be properly promulgated and made available to the general public in their own language.

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continuation from page 1

## The dissolution of KOLAKOPS

*Kolakops* is the special military structure for East Timor. It is a special operations command, unlike command structures anywhere else, designed for a region still in a state of war. It has powers to deploy fresh troops from all over Indonesia at a moment's notice. Last year Syafei announced that *Kolakops* would be dissolved in September, then he postponed it till the end of the year. Now it has again been put back, this time to March 1993. The huge operations under way suggest that the army hopes to be able to disband *Kolakops* before Suharto's appointment for a sixth term as president. The date fixed for the next talks between Indonesia and Portugal also fits in with this timetable.

The whole discussion about disbanding the special military structure is largely a sham. In today's Indonesian military structure, the *Korems* - the regional military command structure - have been greatly enhanced because, in addition to being territorial commands, they also include combat troops. Hence East Timor will remain a special territory for the army regardless of whether *Kolakops* continues to exist. In the present style of military operation - terrorising the population - the presence of combat troops is less necessary. A large number of troops are there simply to have a presence in the villages. One Timorese claims that every Timorese family is 'protected' by two Indonesian soldiers. Recent visitors to East Timor confirm the vast number of troops in every town, village or hamlet.

Whether Syafei can achieve his mission is another matter; even Indonesian press reports suggest that East Timorese resistance is still widespread. To achieve their aim, the army would need to wipe out practically the entire population. The arrest of Xanana Gusmao and the way he has been manipulated is a heavy blow for the Timorese but there is no sign of the collapse of the resistance.

In many ways the situation in East Timor can be compared with the late seventies and early eighties. Army practices, in particular after the arrest of Xanana, can only exacerbate anti-Indonesia feelings. The amnesty offer to people who surrender is not a serious gesture. It is a repeat of Suharto's amnesty in 1977. Many who surrendered then were incarcerated or extrajudicially executed. The Timorese haven't forgotten that gruesome period.

Since 1975, the Timorese have experienced many phases of Indonesian rule, always developing new ways to overcome their oppressors. The present wave of terror under *Operasi Tuntas* is possibly the most difficult period of all for the Timorese, but their will to overcome and to resist is sure to prevail.

TAPOL ★

THE INSIDE STORY

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# Blood-drinking oath ceremonies

*In a campaign to demoralise the population in the wake of Xanana's capture, Indonesian troops in occupied East Timor have compelled hundreds to swear allegiance in blood-drinking ceremonies. Army claims about hundreds of surrenders are groundless. The forces of occupation want to convince world opinion that the entire population has abandoned its opposition to Indonesian rule.*

## Bogus surrenders

From late November to mid-December, when the UN-sponsored talks on East Timor took place in New York, there were many army-inspired reports about the alleged surrender of hundreds of 'GPK' (ie. armed resistance fighters, always referred to as 'security disruptor gangs') members. Army intel officers seemed untroubled by the fact that the 'surrenders' far out-numbered their estimate of the number of fighters in the bush. Our sources inside East Timor insist that not a single surrender has occurred. On the contrary, the armed resistance under its new leader, Ma'Huno Bukar, has launched a wave of military operations to engage the occupying forces in armed combat.

The military commander, Brig.Gen. Theo Syafei has tried to implicate the Catholic church, claiming that it had named seven parish churches where 'GPK' members could surrender. This was strongly denied by Bishop Belo who said in an interview with the Portuguese press that the church had no guarantee about how people surrendering would be treated. The Indonesian press did not bother to seek Belo's views and have persisted in reporting Syafei's claims. Syafei even alleged that Bishop Belo would issue a Christmas Pastoral Letter calling on fighters in the bush to surrender. In the event, he did no such thing.

## Perverting traditional practices

Military commands have also held oath-taking ceremonies in many places. East Timorese, mostly young people, are required to attend. Blood taken from each one, using a single syringe, is squirted into a bowl and mixed with wine. The Timorese must then drink the mixture and swear allegiance to the Suharto regime. In one such ceremony on 19 December, troops randomly arrested sixty people and forced them to take part in the blood-drinking ceremony. [The Observer, 17.I.1993]

In a ceremony in Ainaro, reported in the Indonesian press, 294 people took part. The event was staged in the football stadium with about a thousand people packed into the stadium to watch. Local elders were used to officiate and a priest was on hand as well. In this instance, the people's blood was mixed with the blood of a chicken and a bottle of whiskey. In a final act of public humiliation, the oath-takers were required to cover their faces with an Indonesian flag and kiss it. [Jawa Pos, 19.XII.1992]

The mutual taking of blood is a tradition among East Timorese tribes, when entering into peace accords. For the forces of occupation to use it to cow the population into submission shows the strength of Indonesia's obsession to force an entire population to its knees. But it is not likely to succeed. An article by two sociologists in Yogyakarta, one of them an East Timorese, dismisses the oath-taking as futile. "Experience shows that symbolic expressions of support ... will never be effective." [Kedaulatan Rakyat,

30.XII.1992]

Another form of forced allegiance occurred when three East Timorese were filmed by a Portuguese cameraman who was on a one-day visit to Dili. In the presence of a number of soldiers, they said to camera, "we admit the error of our ways". One of the three was Talofo Moniz Alin, 25, who was so severely tortured in October 1990 while in custody that he had to be hospitalised. Released in February 1991, he was re-arrested in September 1992. The 'confession' was clearly staged for the benefit of the Portuguese. In fact, Talofo (whose case has been reported in *TAPOL Bulletin*) managed to say, in Tetum, that "17 of us were indoctrinated by the Indonesians". The other two who appeared were Estanislau Cáceres and Gil Vicente Maria Simoes, 24, who was wounded during the Santa Cruz massacre in November 1991.

## Forcing Timorese to hunt guerrillas

Another ceremony was reported in Baucau where 250 people swore allegiance in a stadium filled to capacity by three thousand people. On this occasion, the oath-takers pledged to dishand their organisation, referred to simply as 'the clandestine'. There was no reference to blood-drinking on this occasion, but Syafei announced that "several hundred East Timorese" in Baucau had "voluntarily" decided to go into the bush "to persuade their relatives" to surrender. No-one has produced anyone but the people who were obliged to go on this mission fear for their lives if they return empty-handed.

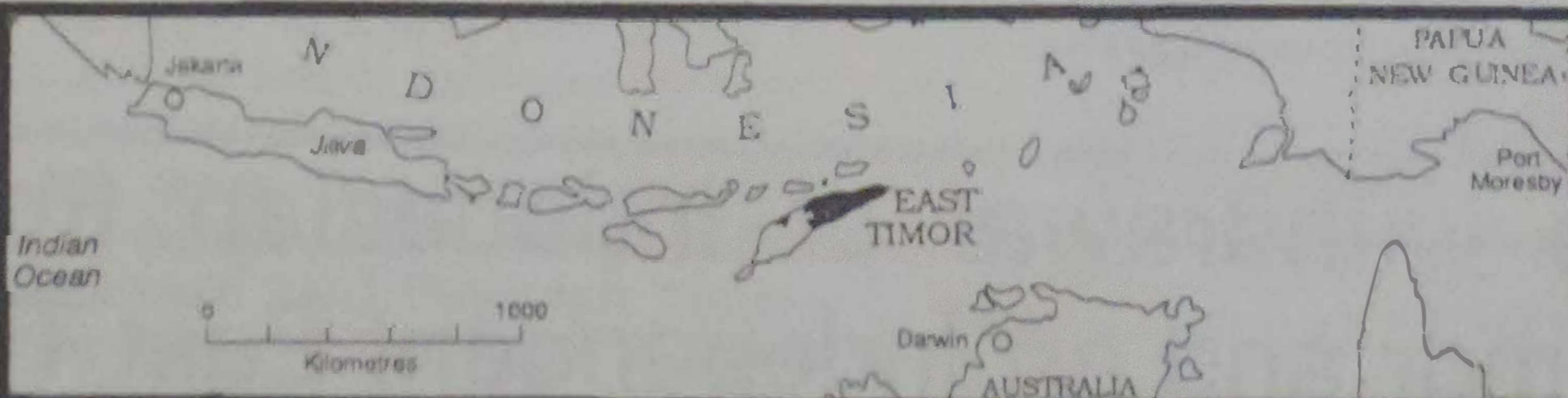
Territorial assistant of the military command, Colonel Wilhem da Costa, said these missions were not orchestrated by the army; the people who went were not escorted by troops. But the governor, Abilio Soares, said that such a venture could be life-threatening. "What if they are resisted by the guerrillas?" [Suara Merdeka, 18.XII.1992]

## Renewed armed combat

As we were going to press, it was reported that two young women in Vikeke accused of being in contact with the guerrillas were raped by soldiers in front of the population, as a warning not to support the guerrillas. The following day, Falintil forces struck back against the army unit, killing 42 Indonesian soldiers.

Other guerrilla attacks reported from inside speak of two trucks of soldiers being attacked, with the loss of 60 lives on the side of the occupying forces. With the territory sealed off from foreign observers and journalists, there have been no agency reports of these activities. ★

**FRIENDS  
OF  
EAST  
TIMOR**



**P.O. BOX 661  
DOUBLEVIEW 6018  
WEST AUSTRALIA**

## UN-sponsored talks get nowhere

THE INSIDE STORY  
FEB/MAR 1993 NO. 6

*On 17 December 1992, the Portuguese and Indonesian foreign ministers met at the UN Secretariat in New York to discuss East Timor. The UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, also took part.*

Despite hopes for new departures and an initiative on the part of Boutros-Ghali to consult the East Timorese, the talks proved unproductive. The only decision taken was to hold another round of talks on 20 April 1993 in Rome. It is not clear why Rome was chosen as the venue.

Portugal was represented by its new foreign minister, Durao Barroso. Unlike his predecessor who never commented on the talks, Barroso spoke his mind. He said little progress had been made. "So far, I have seen no flexibility from Indonesia. There were no significant results except that we had a frank exchange of views." Asked if he felt positive about the talks in April, he said: "My hopes are low because Indonesia is refusing to budge." [UPI, 17.XI.1993]

It is understood that Portugal sought assurances from Indonesia about the captured resistance leader, Xanana Gusmao, and proposed that there be an exchange of journalists between the two countries, with Portuguese journalists being allowed to visit East Timor.

The prospect for progress were set back by Xanana's arrest and the internal situation in East Timor where the military had greatly intensified their clampdown. The day before the talks, military commander Syafei claimed that hundreds of East Timorese had gone to search for relatives who are fighting in the bush, to persuade them to come down. He even claimed that 1,147 "members" had surrendered since Xanana's arrest.

José Ramos-Horta, representative abroad of the resistance, said that the stalemate in the talks had left Portugal and the East Timorese with no alternative but to wage "all-out diplomatic war (because) Indonesia understands only the language of strength." What Jakarta had achieved, he said, was to enable Portugal to raise the stakes to dramatise the problem, forcing the Americans and the Europeans to take sides." [Jakarta Post, 22.XII.1992, filed from Melbourne]

### Syafei rejects talks with Portugal

In an unprecedented move, Brig.General Theo Syafei has called for an end to negotiations with Portugal and said it was preferable to discuss East Timor with the Vatican. Normally, the military who operate in the field never interfere, publicly at least, with diplomatic strategy. This intervention suggests a deep rift between those directly responsible for operations in East Timor and President Suharto along with his foreign minister, Ali Alatas.

Syafei, speaking to Indonesian journalists, did not mince his words. "Indonesia has wasted too much time and energy in negotiations with Portugal over these years. We don't want to be treated like a donkey which keeps on falling in the same hole." [UPI, 19.I.1993]

Suharto's decision last September, during the Non-Aligned Summit, to accept Boutros-Ghali's proposal for UN-sponsored talks is likely to have angered the military. Suharto was no doubt motivated by a wish not to appear to be against negotiations and sully his stature as leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. Syafei's words indicate however

that negotiations with Portugal are seen as a humiliation for Indonesia. The flood of reports about 'surrenders' and 'allegiance oaths' in East Timor which preceded the 17 December talks were clearly intended to persuade the international community that the entire population is now pro-integration so what more is there to talk about?

The forces of occupation feel impatient about the stalemate at the UN. As long as East Timor remains on the UN agenda, the military on the ground know that the world is watching. This imposes constraints on their strategy to crush the resistance and keeps alive the hope among East Timorese that the UN will extricate them from Indonesian rule.

It is not clear why he thinks the Vatican can help to resolve the issue. However amenable the Vatican may be to Indonesia's case, it has no diplomatic standing on the question. Whatever Syafei may think, it will require a resolution of the General Assembly to remove East Timor from the UN agenda.

TAPOL ★

### Australian Catholic Relief

If you would like to know more about the history and current situation in East Timor, there are two new publications which may be of interest to you. "East Timor - An International Responsibility", published by the Catholic Institute for International Relations, looks at the history of Timor, the role of the Catholic Church, UN and international responsibility, and the implications of the Santa Cruz Massacre on East Timor's future. The cost is \$2.00, plus postage. The second publication, "East Timor: Just a political question?" by Dr. Geoffrey Hull is an occasional paper from the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council. It costs \$2.50, plus postage. Both publications may be ordered through the ACR National Office at North Sydney.

ACR NATIONAL  
19 MACKENZIE ST.  
NTH. SYDNEY  
AUSTRALIA 2600  
Ph. (02) 956 5799



Support the withdrawal of Indonesian troops  
from East Timor and an Independent East Timor

## UN Human rights workshop held in Jakarta

*Disregarding many protests, including TAPOL, the UN Centre for Human Rights held an Asia-Pacific Human Rights Workshop in Jakarta. The Workshop was originally scheduled for December 1991 but was cancelled because of international outrage at the Dili Massacre in November that year.*

The Workshop, jointly run by the UN Centre and the Indonesian Government, took place from 26 - 28 January and was opened by President Suharto.

The Indonesian Government was in a position to determine which non-governmental human rights organisations would be invited to the Workshop. It extended an invitation to Amnesty International but refused to invite Asia Watch which is currently petitioning the US government to punish Indonesia because of its labour rights policy.

Amnesty has been refused entry into Indonesia for many years. Only last November, it was refused permission to visit East Timor to observe conditions there on the first anniversary of the Dili Massacre. AI representative Geoffrey Robinson was given a five-day visa and told to arrive in Jakarta no earlier than the morning of 26 January.

### Defining new human rights strategies

The Indonesian government has already given notice of its intention to campaign for a revision of human rights principles as formulated by the international community since 1948 in numerous UN documents. It argues that these principles are based on western beliefs which attach primacy to the rights of the individual as against communal and group rights. It also challenges the basic principle of the universality of human rights by arguing that account must be taken of national characteristics and the sovereignty of nation states. In other words, the right of the nation state to treat its citizens with impunity should take primacy over the rights of the individual.

In furtherance of this campaign, Foreign Minister Ali Alatas announced in December that Indonesia would set up a "commission to promote human rights" which, unlike the inter-departmental human rights group already established, "would be an independent one". The new body would come into being after the Asia-Pacific workshop in January and would be based on its recommendations. [*Jakarta Post*, 12.XII.1992] Alatas apparently sees no contradiction between his public advocacy of this commission and his insistence that it will be 'independent'.

The Jakarta Asia-Pacific workshop is taking place at a time when Asian governments have failed to convene an Asia-Pacific regional meeting in preparation for the UN's World Conference on Human Rights to be held in Vienna in June this year. All other regional preparatory meetings have already taken place. These regional meetings must be held according to the criteria thrashed out internationally; in particular, there are no restrictions on the participation of human rights NGOs. The Asian group led by India tried unsuccessfully at a World Conference preparatory committee in Geneva last September to restrict participation to NGOs that are active in *both* human rights and development. This would have excluded the vast majority of human rights NGOs. The Asia group did however succeed in preventing agreement on the agenda of the World Conference. [See "World Conference: Third Preparatory Committee ends in Failure" by Adrien-Claude Zoller, in *Human Rights Monitor*, September 1992]

### EC statement on East Timor

The following statement was made by the UK on behalf of the European Community, at the UN General Assembly's Third Committee in November 1992:

The European Community and its Member States continue to follow closely the situation of human rights in East Timor. We have done so with special concern after the violent incident last year at Dili, which we strongly condemned, in which many defenceless civilians died at the hands of the Indonesian Armed Forces. We acknowledged the prompt investigation of the Indonesian authorities, but we remain concerned over the lack of clear information about the number of people killed and over the persons still unaccounted for, about the disparity of sentences given to civilians on the one hand and the military on the other, and by the denial of access to the territory by human rights organisations. We urge the Indonesian authorities to honour their commitments and to respond fully to the consensus statement on East Timor at this year's session of the Commission on Human Rights, in advance of consideration of this item at the Commission's next session. In particular we trust that all those in custody including all opposition figures, will be treated humanely and with their rights fully respected. The community and its Member States fully support the Secretary-General's recent initiative to achieve a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement of the question of East Timor, with full respect for the legitimate interests and aspirations of the East Timorese, in line with the principles of the UN Charter."



Santa Cruz cemetery: the killing ground.

DEATH TOLL: 273 MISSING: 255 WOUNDED: 376

# Keeping up the pressure

The last three months of 1992 saw a period of intense campaigning by Amnesty International Australia over human rights violations in East Timor. National Campaign Co-ordinator, **Patrick Earle** reports.

**I**N October an Australian Parliamentary delegation visited Indonesia to review relations between the two countries. AI Australia provided a briefing to the all-party committee on the organisation's human rights concerns in Indonesia and East Timor.

Although denied access to East Timor on "security" grounds the delegation agreed to take up both Amnesty International's general concerns and also a number of individual cases with the Indonesian authorities.

Responding to reports of arrests in East Timor filtering through to the outside world and fears that the occasion of the anniversary would be marked by further violations of human rights AI Australia wrote to the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, Mr Sabam Siagian. We requested his personal intervention to allow an AI delegation to visit East Timor over the period of the anniversary. The refusal, given in a letter from their Foreign Affairs Ministry, included the view that visits "...occasion some excitement among the people ... who need more time to recover from the traumatic event of 12 November last year."

Three days before this anniversary AI Australia issued a media release detailing our concerns and listing tortures, trials, imprisonments, disappearances and arrests over the preceding twelve months.

East Timor all but sealed off from the outside

world for the anniversary. However, the arrest later in November of East Timorese resistance leader, Xanana Gusmao, again focussed world attention on Indonesia's human rights record. By denying access to Gusmao, the Indonesian Government gave credence to fears that he was being ill-treated or tortured. AI information indicates that torture in Indonesian custody, while illegal, is routine.

Following his appearance on Indonesian TV, AI Australia issued a statement saying these fears had only been heightened and repeated the call for the Red Cross representatives, lawyers and family members to be allowed access to Gusmao.

Efforts to ensure the location and safety of those arrested and "disappeared" in the continuing crackdown in East Timor were maintained through briefings to the media and representations to the Australian and Indonesian governments.

In the midst of this crisis the record of the Australian Government in pursuing its human rights concerns with Indonesia came under fresh scrutiny with the release of the first annual report of the Human Rights sub-committee of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade launched by sub-committee Chairperson, Senator Chris Schacht, at the Canberra Press Club.

The Report was highly critical of the Australian Government's response to the Dili massacre.

The need for more effective action was underscored by an AI document released on the same day giving details of the reported death by torture in Indonesian custody of one East Timorese detainee, the hospitalisation of another and the rape of two women detainees in front of family members.

This report received wide coverage through the presence at the launch of National Director, Harris van Beek who commented on both reports.

Urgent Actions continued to arrive through December detailing fresh arrests – the scale of arrests are implicit acknowledgment of the scale of opposition Indonesia believes exists to its rule in East Timor.

These arrests emphasised the need for independent access to the territory and to the detainees.

The detention of a further 25 people, named in an Urgent Action at the end of December, received widespread coverage. The eventual granting of access by representatives of the Red Cross to Gusmao was accompanied by Indonesian commitments to allow access to the detainees in East Timor. Such visits are an important step in ensuring the safety of the detainees although inadequate as a safeguard against torture and ill-treatment.

Amnesty International is continuing to press for detainee access to lawyers and family members and the immediate unconditional release of all detained for the peaceful expression of their beliefs. □

Commenting on Ambassador Siagian's position, André Frankovits said: "This denial of access to East Timor, together with the suggestion that the motives of the Australian parliamentary delegation also recently denied access were to 'stir up trouble', puts in question Indonesia's commitment to the decisions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights".

The human rights situation in East Timor has not improved in the year since the Dili massacre and it will inevitably deteriorate further without fundamental changes in the Indonesian Government's policies and practices.

Torture and ill-treatment of political detainees continues to be both common and routine and, despite promises to do so, the Government has made little apparent effort to implement the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, whose report was published earlier this year.



## FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION PLEASE/FAX: WRITE.

**-EXPRESSING URGENT CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF THE EAST TIMORESE ARRESTED SINCE EARLY NOVEMBER, AND OF ALL POLITICAL DETAINEES IN EAST TIMOR &**

**INDONESIA; CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT ICRC(RED CROSS) REPS. INDEPENDENT LAWYERS, DOCTORS AND RELATIVES IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO THEIR PLACE OF DETENTION;**

**-URGING THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW AID AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO EAST TIMOR.**

**\* H.E. MR. SABAM SIAGIAN, AMBASSADOR, EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA, 8 DARWIN AVE., YARRALUMLA, ACT 2600.**