

CNRM

conselho nacional da resistencia maubere
national council of maubere resistance
conseil national de la resistance maubere

Comissão Directiva da FRETILIN • Comando das FALINTIL • Resistência Nacional Estudantil de Timor Leste • RENETIL

ANNUAL REPORT (1992-1993)

Prepared by: Abé Barreto Soares+

October 1993

+)CNRM Representative to North America

Address:

I. INTRODUCTION

It is now a year and half I represent CNRM -- National Council of Maubere Resistance to North America.

There have been numbers of activities I took part individually as well as as a representative of CNRM since 1992 in Canada and USA. I only have been focusing much more attention in trying to raise the issue of East Timorese struggle to self-determination and independence in Canada so far due to the time constraint I face.

From the activities which I have been involving, I learn a lot culturally, politically, socially, etc. I get good response from North American society, specially Canadian society towards East Timorese cause.

As for Portuguese community, I have been trying to establish contacts with them since my moving to Toronto early this year. There has been a growing awareness about the issue of East Timor among the Portuguese community thanks to the hard work of some Portuguese activists joining ETAN.

ETAN/Canada and ETAN/USA have been supportive to me during my being in Canada individually as well as as a representative of CNRM.

II. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTIVITIES

1. Activities during 1992

- August 1 Attended a regional conference of ETAN/Canada. For the first time I delivered my speech as a CNRM representative in such a forum. After the conference, I participated in a Free East Timor demonstration. Both conference and demonstration were held in Toronto.
- August 3 Interviewed by Isabel Ricardo (a Portuguese born in East Timor) for her show at CHIN radio (FM) station in Toronto. The topics of the interview were Indonesian illegal occupation and invasion of East Timor in 1975 plus my activities in Canada as an exile.
- September 18 Gave a lecture on East Timor (two sessions) at a sociology class at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo.
- September 30 Had an audience with Portuguese Consul along with two ETAN members in Toronto.
- October 1 Attended a meeting held by York University Portuguese Students' Association in Toronto. I had a chance to talk a little bit about East Timor issue.
- Saw the documentary film, "Manufacturing Consent" at Euclid theatre in Toronto. I was invited to give a short speech on East Timor after the intermission and there were

questions and answers afterwards.

- October 7 Gave a talk on East Timor (the role of Catholic church in the resistance against Inonesian occupation) and showed the documentary film "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at a Catholic parish centre in Windsor
- October 8 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Assumption High School (a Catholic High school) in two sessions in Windsor
- October 13 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at McMaster University in Hamilton.
- October 14 Gave a lecture on East Timor at "Third World Politics" class at University of Windsor in Windsor
- Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Massey High School (a public high school) in Windsor.
- Gave a talk on East Timor and showed "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" to a group of high school students joining in a group called Global Awareness Group at Third World Resource Centre in Windsor
- Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Iona College in Windsor.
- October 15 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Walkerville High School (a public school) in Windsor
- Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at St. Anne High School in two sessions in Windsor
- Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" to a group of Amnesty International at University of Windsor
- October 20 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" to a group of Amnesty International at Brock University in St. Chaterine
- October 21 Attended an Eco-Ed conference in Toronto along with an ETAN member. I raised the issue of East Timor in connection with the so-called development conducted by Indonesian military government in the territory.
- Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at University of Waterloo in Waterloo.

- October 27 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at York University in Toronto
- October 28 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at University of Toronto in Toronto. The filmmaker of the footage of Santa Cruz massacre was present too.
- October 29 Presentation on East Timor at a public high school in Oakville
- November 1 Gave a short address at the intermission when the documentary film "Manufacturing Consent" was screened at a theatre in Guelph
- November 2 Gave a talk on East Timor and showed the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Queen's University in Kingston. Max Sthal, the filmmaker of the footage of Santa Cruz massacre spoke as well
- November 3 Talk on East Timor at University of Guelph in Guelph.
- November 6 Meeting with a representative of CCODP (Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace) in Montreal along with two ETAN members
- Talk on East Timor and the screening of the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at University of Concordia in Montreal
- November 7 Interviewed by a local radio station on East Timor called Radio Centreville in Montreal
- November 8 Attended a Mass in Portuguese. After the Mass, I had a chance to meet the priest and some members of Portuguese community who were sympathetic with the East Timorese struggle.
- Interviewed by McGill University radio station on East Timor. I had a chance to play two tunes in Tetum with the theme of resistance during the interview
- November 9 Talk on East Timor and the screening of the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at John Abbot College in Montreal
- November 10 Talk on East Timor and the screening of the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Carleton University in Ottawa
- The same event took place at a community centre
- November 12 Met some members of Parliamentarians for East Timor at Parliament Hill, followed by a press conference in Ottawa. It was a first time for me to speak at such a press conference as a CNRM representative
- Attended a rally (the commemoration of 1st anniversary of

the Santa Cruz massacre) in front of Parliament Hill

- November 17 Attended a rally held in front of McMaster University in Hamilton (the commemoration of the 1st anniversary of Santa Cruz massacre and the 10th anniversary of the killings of Jesuit priests in El Salvador). I had an opportunity to sing two East Timorese songs (all with the theme of resistance) with me playing a guitar during the rally.
- November 18 Talk on East Timor and the screening of the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at University of Western Ontario in London
- November 19 Talk on East Timor and the screening of "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at Catholic Centre High School in three sessions in Windsor
- Meeting with Father Jim (a Catholic priest) being sympathetic with the East Timorese struggle for social and justice at his residence in Windsor
- November 20 Talk on East Timor and the screening of the "Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor" at a Catholic high school in two sessions in Windsor
- November 22 Attended a national ETAN conference in Guelph. I heard the news of the capture of Xanana Gusmao as soon as the conference started. After the conference I joined a Free East Timor and Xanana Gusmao demonstration in front of the residence of the president of University of Guelph.
- November 24 Talk on East Timor and the screening of the footage of Santa Cruz massacre at a Catholic high school in two sessions in Windsor
- November 25 Talked to José Ramos-Horta, CNRM Special Representative while he was in New York regarding the capture of Xanana Gusmao and other matters
- Talk on East Timor and the screening of the footage of the Santa Cruz massacre for a group of students of University of Windsor (as a replacement of a formal class)
- November 26 Talk on East Timor and the screening of the video about Santa Cruz massacre at Assumption High School in two sessions in Windsor
- The same event took place at University of Windsor and a Catholic high school in Windsor
- November 27 Talk on East Timor for a number of ETAN activists at an Indian restaurant in Windsor. I was asked to sing some Timorese songs afterwards.

- November 28 Talked to José Ramos-Horta about the struggle of East Timor in diplomatic front while he was in New York
- December 1 Gave a lecture on East Timor at Cornell University in Ithaca, USA
Meeting with Indonesian students being sympathetic to East Timorese struggle
- December 2 Talk on East Timor for a group of students of South East Asian Studies at Cornell University

Discussion on East Timor issue with Indonesian students in an informal meeting
- December 3 Gave a talk on East Timor for a group of Indonesian students at Cornell University

Discussion on East Timor struggle with Indonesian students continued
- December 4 Meeting and discussion on East Timor struggle with Indonesian students continued
- December 6 Helped ETAN/Ottawa members in screening of "Manufacturing Consent" in Ottawa
- December 7 Attended ^{17th} a press conference at Parliament Hill in Ottawa
(the anniversary of the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia).
Met with the Charge d'Affaires of Portuguese Embassy after the press conference
- December 8 Talk on East Timor at Octopus bookstore in Ottawa
- December 16 Met with Rev. Bishop Paul Moore and his wife at their residence in New York
- December 17 Met with Arnold Kohen (an American journalist and an activist for East Timor in USA) at UN Plaza in New York

Met with José Ramos-Horta at UN Headquarter. It was the first time for me to visit UN.

Had a meeting with Luso-phone African UN Permanent Mission representatives along with José Ramos-Horta
- December 18 Had an audience with Portuguese Ambassador to USA along with José Ramos-Horta

2. Activities during 1993

- January 9 Moved to Toronto from Kitchener
- January 11 Attended an ETAN/Toronto meeting
- January 12 - 20 Helped ETAN members in setting up the table (providing information on East Timor) at National Film Board (Toronto) when "Manufacturing Consent" was screened
- January 31 The same activity went on at a theatre near my apartment
- February 2 Talk on East Timor and the screening of " Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor at a film festival at McMaster University in Hamilton
- February 3 The same activity carried outⁱⁿ a public high school in Hamilton
- February 7 Helped ETAN members in setting up the table (providing information on East Timor) at a theatre when "Manufacturing Consent" was screened in Guelph
- February 15 Attended an ETAN/Toronto meeting (discussion on monthly activities
- February 23 Left for Geneva for attending UNCHR annual session
- February 25 Meeting with José Ramos-Horta and other East Timorese colleagues at UN building, Geneva.
- February 26 - March 8 Attended UNCHR sessions
- March 9 Flew back to Toronto
- March 22 Talk on East Timor at a Catholic high school in Windsor
- March 23 Talk on East Timor (two sessions) at University of Windsor
- Attended an " American History" class where one of ETAN/Windsor members gave a presentation on East Timor at University of Windsor
- March 24 Gave a lecture on East Timor at International Law. class and Political Sociology class at University of Windsor
- March 25 Panel discussion on East Timor at University of Windsor
- March 26 Talk on East Timor at St. Anne High School in Windsor
- ETAN/Windsor meeting and a social gathering (I had a chance

to sing Timorese songs for ETAN/Windsor activists)

- March 27 Left for New York for participating in a Timorese UN tour
- March 28 Meeting and Pot Luck with ETAN/US members and three other Timorese colleagues taking part in Timorese UN tour in White Plains, NY, USA
- March 29 The first day of Timorese UN tour started

It was the first time for me to deliver a press conference at the Parliament Hill, Ottawa in December 1992 when the 17th anniversary of invasion of East Timor was marked. ETAN/Ottawa arranged the press conference. Unfortunately, not many media came to cover the event.

The lobbying work became intensified in US and UN as the Timorese Youth Tour took place in New York State in Spring of 1993. It was an interesting thing to do along with other four fellow East Timorese.

Coming back from New York State after the tour with the four fellow Timorese, I began lobbying the Church groups based in Toronto thanks to the effort of Max Surdjadinata, an Indonesian pastor living in New York city.

When Constancio Pinto was doing his tour to Canada in Spring 1993, along with other ETAN members, I lobbied the Canadian Foreign Ministry and its Development Agency, CIDA.

From 1993 to 1994, most of the lobby work were focused more on NGOs, specially the church groups.

Because of the close contact that I established with the church groups, I managed to meet with Mgr. Belo when he came to visit Canada in June 1993. My meeting with Mgr. Belo was merely as a shepherd and his sheep.

Most of the high level lobby work with the government of Canada had been done by CNRM Special Representative when he came to visit Ottawa in 1993 and 1994. Because of the limit of the funds and other restrictions, I was not able to come to Ottawa to do the lobby work in a regular basis.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF CANADIAN GOVERNMENT

At the time when I was appointed as CNRM representative, the administration of Canadian government was under the leadership of Primer Minister, Brian Mulroney of Conservative party alias Tory. This administration strongly supported Indonesia in economics and diplomacy. ETAN had a hard time to lobby this administration.

Liberal party came to power in late 1993 under the leadership of Primer Minister Jean Cretien. While he was still the leader of opposition party, he strongly raised the issue of East Timor and supported its self-determination and independence. Now that he is in power, there is not much change. Let us see whether he wants to show his good political will to be consistent with what he said in the past.

GIVING WORKSHOPS

I started giving workshops on East Timor before I became the CNRM representative. That was when I was about to apply for political asylum in late 1991 and early 1992.

The topic of my workshop was "The Role of Young People in the Struggle for A free East Timor".

I expanded my workshop more on the role of CNRM and its peace- plan when the first speaking tour I carried out as mentioned above. Workshops were given mostly at high schools, universities, church groups, community centres and and human right groups.

dialogue with them in a frank manner, I got a great insight in how to build a better future for East Timor. Let us see how things go.

CNRM AND OTHER EAST TIMORESE POLITICAL PARTIES

I do not have regular and formal contact with any East Timorese political parties leaders, both FRETILIN and UDT. I only met Jose Luis Guterres of Fretilin while I was in Geneva for UNCHR session in 1993.

It will be nice to have a regular contact with these two parties in the future. I only follow their activities through electronic media. UDT has been keeping me informed about its activities through the publication of KAEBUK since 1993. Because of technical reasons, I have not managed to contribute my writings to KAEBUK as requested.

DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

Because of the technical problem dealing with Australian visa and financial problem, I cancelled my trip to take DTP in Sydney in January 1993. It was the Special Representative who encouraged me to take this program. I was not able to take the program in the following year because I was not ready mentally to do so. Finally, I was able to manage to raise funds here and there and go to Bangkok for taking part in DTP session in mid January 1995. I was late for the sessions for a week for I faced problems in connection with my Hongkong visa (I planned to visit Macau on my back to Canada).

The program was very helpful for it gave me a good evaluation of what I have done so far as CNRM representative. There were new materials I got during the course. It provided me a great insight and direction in how to continue the struggle of East Timor in diplomatic field. I hope I can do my best with what I have got.

It was great to meet other participants from Asia Pacific countries. The sense of solidarity among the participants for working for human rights was really amazingly felt.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It seems what I have accomplished so far is so little. There are so many things to be done and to improve in the future. Let us see how things go.

Special thanks are due to ETAN members and its supporters. Their patience, sensitivity and tenacity greatly contribute to what I have accomplished. To all members of CNRM, I thank you for your moral support you have given me to continue the struggle for the liberation of our homeland, Timor-Lorosa'e. Last but not least, you people of East Timor, I am grateful for your courage; you inspire me to keep on fighting in diplomatic level for our country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To carry out my duty as CNRM representative in a proper manner, it is urgent to have a certain amount of funds. I desperately need help.
- To have a two-way communication among the members of CNRM, it needs to have a regular circulation of the reports of each.
- To revitalize the spirit of Portuguese community in solidarity with East Timor in Canada, there should be a visit of CNRM top leaders once in a while.
- Matebian News as CNRM publication has to be distributed in a regular basis to all CNRM members, specially the CNRM representatives.
- There has to be CNRM general meeting twice in a year, if not once in a year.

PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY

After my appointment as CNRM representative, I sent a letter of self-introduction to Portuguese embassy. I managed to have a regular contact with its first secretary. I have not managed to contact the new ambassador of Portugal.

Portuguese consul in Toronto has been supportive for East Timor cause as well. He manages to attend any event on East Timor conducted within the community.

The issue of East Timor has been kept alive within the community thanks to the effort made by the small group of East Timor Alert Network/Portuguese committee and the Portuguese community media. East Timor became focus of attention during the parade of Portuguese day in 1993 and 1994.

Portuguese National Congress adopted a resolution on East Timor in 1993. It submitted a submission on East Timor to Canadian foreign policy review committee in 1994. I attended the forum when the submission was delivered.

The Portuguese bands, Xutos Pontapeia and Jose Cid did raise the issue of East Timor in public during the Portuguese day of 1993. And the well-known Portuguese singer, Fernando Ferreira did too during the Portuguese day of 1994.

I have been in close contact with Portuguese community and its media since I moved to Toronto in early 1993.

Perhaps it is because of the lack of interest in politics among the Portuguese, not many Portuguese came to any event held on East Timor.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENT

Tibetan issue is similar to the issue of East Timor. As we all know that both countries have been brutally occupied by repressive regimes of foreign countries. Seeing the similarities of the situation of both countries, ETAN initiated to conduct a public forum on East Timor and Tibet in October 1993. I was invited as the guest speaker for the forum. Since then, the two groups, both ETAN and Tibetan Committee has been establishing a good network.

I become more interested in Burmese issues after being in Thailand for taking Diplomacy Training Program. There are quite a few Burmese community in Toronto. I plan to have meetings with them when I come back from Portugal in April 1995.

MEDIA (Mainstream and Alternative)

I rarely establish close contact with mainstream media. I have been in low profile in this matter due to some reasons. I only appeared twice in main stream media, both radio and television in 1993 and 1994.

Alternative media; radio, tv and newspaper has been very helpful to the cause of East Timor. I have been regularly on community radio across Ontario and Montreal whenever I conducted my official visit. Students' newspapers has been quite vocal on East Timor in campuses.

I have been on line with e-mail -- following the development of the struggle for freedom of East Timor and democracy in Indonesia since 1993. It is much cheaper to use the system as we all know.

To keep the issue of East Timor alive, I contributed an item on East Timor in a weekly basis to Brazilian community newspaper in Toronto during 1993 and 1994.

Press releases were not sent out at all to the mainstream and alternative media during the periode of 1992 to 1995. I realize it was a big mistake. Press releases of all activities which I involved were mostly prepared by ETAN.

I am keen on following the news on East Timor through CNRM publication, Matebian News . So far, I did not receive the publication in a monthly basis.

INDONESIAN ACADEMICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

At the invitation of the Indonesian students and Prof. Ben Anderson at Cornell university, I went to Itacha, NY to give a talk on East Timor in December 1992. I delivered a formal lecture on East Timor at one of the classes of Prof. Ben Anderson and two formal talks for Indonesian and American students.

While in Itacha, I met with small numbers of Indonesian students strongly support the independence of East Timor. From this friends, I got moral support. I have been in regular contact with them since then. It is one of these friends who encouraged me to publish my poetry in Indonesian this year.

I also established close contact with Indonesian human rights activists living abroad and in Indonesia. I met Liem Soie Liong of TAPOL when he was in Toronto for attending ETAN national conference in Summer of 1992. While being in Thailand for APCET meeting in February this year, I met with a student /human rights activist from Pijar Foundation. From this activist, I obtained information about the activities of East Timor students in Indonesian and other matters in relation with East Timor struggle. In mid February, I met with Saleh Abdullah of INFIGHT in Toronto when he was doing his speaking tour sponsored by Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace across Ontario.

As it is known that not many Indonesian academics dare to speak out publicly about the real situation in East Timor. In one hand, it is understandable that hey are fear they might lose their carrier if they speak out but on the other hand it is very bothering. So far I only manage keep in touch with an Indonesian academic living in Calgary, Manitoba, Canada. He has been active in campaigning for East Timor and a member of ETAN/Calgary.

EAST TIMORESE 'NEW INTELLEGENTIA'

East Timorese students play a significant role in the struggle of East Timor. Being a student myself in the past, I had a wonderful experience in creating strong solidarity among East Timorese students. In creating solidarity among the students, there were alywas trust and mistrust because the nature of the struggle demanded to be so.

I am grateful for the moral support I get from my fellow East Timorese students studying abroad and Indonesia. I am proud of being part of this generation. I consider my generation as the new intellegentia of East Timor. We all are candle in the darkness. We would like to embrace the darkness with the enchanting flicker we have. Perhaps this sounds too rethoric?

My meeting with my ex school mates and other young fellow East Timorese in Macau recently gave me a tremendous moral energy. While in Macau, I had a meeting with some fellow East Timorese which I consider the elders in East Timorese society. Having