

EAST TIMOR: A WESTERN MADE TRAGEDY

presented by Danilo Henriques
East Timorese youth ambassador
tour of North America, April 1993

I speak with you today as one human being to another, at a time of great need for my people, the East Timorese. For the past seventeen years, my people have been the victims of war and atrocities perpetrated by the Indonesian military with the active support of past US administrations. Yet most North Americans have never even heard of East Timor, the eastern half of the island of Timor just north of Australia.

The Portuguese invaded East Timor in the sixteenth century, in the same period Europeans began colonizing the Americas. They introduced Christianity and traded the sandalwood and other natural resources of my country. Some time later the Dutch also arrived. Timor was formally divided between the two colonizing powers with a Treaty signed at the beginning of the twentieth century. When Indonesia won its independence from Holland, the western half of the island became part of the Republic of Indonesia; the eastern half however remained a Portuguese colony. Under international law, Portugal is still the administering power of East Timor.

The hundreds of years of Portuguese colonialism shaped a national identity in East Timor quite different from that in neighboring Indonesia. The impact of Portugal is mapped in

the lives of almost every East Timorese. My father's name, for example, is Abilio de Jesus do Rosario Afonso Henriques - a very Portuguese and very Roman Catholic name. My mother is Maria Natercia Correia de Lemos. Her grandfather had been a Lieutenant in the Portuguese army but was exiled to East Timor. Many East Timorese have both a Portuguese and an indigenous Timorese heritage.

In 1942, East Timor was invaded a second time. By both Australia and Japan. The mountains of East Timor had become a World War II battle ground and our capital city, Dili, was bombed to the ground. An estimated 40,000 of my people were killed because they supported the Australians rather than the Japanese. My mother's father died while being treated by Japanese doctors during this occupation of East Timor.

When I was four years old, my country was invaded a third time. This time not 40,000 but an estimated 200,000 of my people died. One third of the pre-1975 population.

The prelude to this invasion took place in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. In April 1974, the Portuguese people overthrew the fascist regime that had ruled their country for fifty years. One of the new government's first priorities was to decolonize its overseas territories. In far off Timor, indigenous political parties emerged and my people prepared for independence, democratic elections and an orderly hand over of power. But that orderly hand over never took place. In October 1974, Indonesia launched its Operasi Komodo to destabilize East Timor's decolonization process and integrate the Portuguese territory into Indonesia.

The East Timorese response was to unilaterally proclaim a hasty independence. On November 28 1975 the Republic of East Timor was born with the words:

Expressing the highest aspirations of the people of East Timor and to safeguard the most legitimate interests of national sovereignty, the Central Committee of Fretilin decrees by proclamation, unilaterally, the independence of East Timor from 0.00 hours today, declaring the state of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist.

Just as an aside, I'm reminded of your own Declaration of Independence two hundred years earlier, and of those now famous words expressed in Philadelphia in 1776 at a time when people in the US were fighting British colonialism:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness...

But Dili in 1975 was not Philadelphia in 1776. Our Republic was never recognized internationally and our freedom lasted only a few days. For on December 7, 1975, our big neighbor and your ally, Indonesia, invaded us. The next morning, Alarico Fernandes, East Timor's new Information Minister, transmitted the following message:

... Indonesian Forces have been landed in Dili by sea... They are flying over Dili dropping paratroopers... A lot of people have been killed indiscriminately... Women and children are going to be killed by Indonesian forces... We are going to be killed... SOS... We call for your help... This is an urgent call.

The genocide had begun.

I regret to have to tell you that many of the weapons used to kill and maim my people came from the United States. And while the people of the United States may not have known about the invasion, your leaders did. The day before the Indonesians landed, President Gerald Ford and his National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, were in Jakarta. At the CIA's request, the invasion had been delayed until after they left so the President wouldn't be embarrassed by it.

The United States had long been involved in the politics of the Southeast Asian region. In the 1950's your country worked to undermine the nationalism of Indonesia's President Sukarno. In 1965 it helped put General Suharto into power and supported the mass slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Indonesian communists and their allies. By the early 1970s Indonesia was a major recipient of US military aid.

And then there was the Wetar Strait, a channel of deep water directly north of Timor. This strait was the only possible direct passage of American naval submarines from the Pacific to the Indian Oceans and so of great strategic importance to the United States - especially while the US was fighting wars just north of Timor in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Washington could tolerate no threat to US access to those waters - and an independent East Timor was perceived as such a threat. So once again, American strategic interests were put above the interests of my people. US weapons, US helicopters and US logistical support were used to put us down.

The US also used its influence in the United Nations to ensure that no action was taken on the many resolutions condemning the Indonesian invasion. One cannot help comparing the US response to the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia with its response to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq.

Despite the pain of the last 17 years, we East Timorese have never accepted defeat. We have a well organized resistance movement and the young people especially, are determined to continue the struggle for our right to self-determination. We acknowledge however, that we are unlikely to win this battle militarily, and we will never win it alone. We need the world to know about what is happening in our country, and we need the world to help.

Since Indonesia re-opened East Timor to foreigners in 1989, the clandestine resistance movement within East Timor has taken every opportunity to demonstrate its opposition to Indonesian occupation. The most recent example of this was the peaceful demonstration at Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili which preceded the massacre there on November 12, 1991.

Soon after that massacre, the Washington Post ran an editorial about American policies towards East Timor. It accused the Ford administration of ignoring the genocide in East Timor for fear of 'complicating relations with its sturdy anti-Communist ally in Jakarta.' The editorial urged the US administration to 'dust off the question of East Timor' in this new post-Cold War climate and to intervene on the side of justice for the East Timorese people.

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A few weeks after this editorial was published, one of the men who served with the Central Intelligence Agency in Jakarta in the 1970s, Philip Liechty, reminded us that the events in my country over the last 17 years had been 'a western made tragedy'.

But even with western support, Indonesia has failed to completely subjugate the East Timorese people. Even with between 40,000 and 15,000 Indonesian troops still 'maintaining order' in our tiny country. Even with Indonesia's seventeen year old policy of arbitrary arrests, torture, disappearances, rape, enforced birth control, extra-judicial executions and general intimidation. After seventeen years, we are still fighting – for our right to self-determination, and for the inalienable rights of 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' which are so much part of what people in the United States aspire to.

For seventeen years, the United States has been a significant part of the problem in East Timor. We East Timorese are now here to urge the American people and your representatives in Washington to be part of the solution.

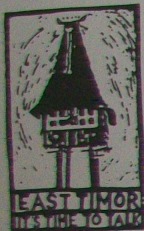
Please stop exporting weapons and other military equipment to Indonesia. And please halt economic aid to Indonesia until that country

- permits unrestricted access to East Timor by international human rights organizations;
- ends all forms of inhuman treatment including torture, extra-judicial executions, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment;
- withdraws its military forces from East Timor; and
- releases all political prisoners including captured resistance leader Xanana Gusmao;

We also ask the Clinton administration to use its influence in the United Nations to:

- ensure that the East Timorese are represented in all UN sponsored talks between Indonesia and Portugal about the future of our country; and to
- facilitate a referendum in East Timor to enable we the East Timorese people to determine our own political destiny.

Please let us too, in our own way, enjoy the rights of 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.'



Danilo Henriques is one of five East Timorese visiting North America in April 1993. Their speaking tour was initiated by the East Timorese community in Melbourne, Australia, with the support of the East Timor Talks Campaign. It is hosted and coordinated in North America by East Timor Action Network USA and East Timor Alert Network Canada. For more information, contact ETAN on 914 428 7299 or PO Box 1182 White Plains, New York 10602.

EAST TIMOR: TOWARDS 'LIFE, LIBERTY & THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS'

presented by Elizabeth Exposto
East Timorese youth ambassador
tour of North America, April 1993

My name is Elizabeth Exposto and I was born in Viqueque, East Timor. In 1975 I left East Timor in my mother's arms. I was just eight months old and completely unaware of the tragedy that had befallen my country.

My parents and I escaped as refugees aboard a Norwegian cargo ship bound for Darwin in northern Australia. For the past eighteen years I have been living in Melbourne, Australia.

I grew up on stories about what life was like for my parents and extended family back home in East Timor before 1975. These stories often made me feel envious and angry because I had been robbed of sharing the same experiences. I'd like to tell you a little about my family so you can get an insight into the lives of East Timorese people.

My mother's parents are from a small village called Lolotoi in the western part of East Timor. They were farmers who owned their own land and lived in a large bamboo house with a thatched grass roof. Their land was very precious to them and on it they grew corn, tapioca, coconut, rice, sweet potatoes, beans, peanuts, green vegetables and bananas.

They also had pigs, goats, buffalos and dogs. They were very self-sufficient. Grandfather would wake up at sunrise and before anything else, he would feed his beloved animals then walk to his fields to tend his land.

Grandmother spent much of her time at home taking care of their 19 children. Yes, nineteen. Sometimes she and the older children would help Grandfather harvest the corn or sow the seed for next season's crops. On Sundays the family rested because that day is reserved for the Lord. My grandparents are deeply religious and I believe it is this strong faith that has kept them going in the face of all their suffering.

As you have probably guessed, the Portuguese brought the Roman Catholic faith to East Timor when they colonized it nearly 500 years ago. Today 95% of East Timorese are Catholics and the Roman Catholic Church is the only East Timorese institutions that has survived the Indonesian invasion. Priests, nuns and lay teachers still play a very important role in our liberation struggle and in the preservation of our culture. Masses are said in Tetun, one of our indigenous languages for example, as a way of preserving our language. We have great hopes that the Pope, like his Bishop in East Timor and many of his priests and nuns, will support our struggle for self-determination.

But back to my maternal grandparents. When the Indonesians arrived, their life changed completely. The land that had been theirs for generations was stolen from them and became the property of a certain Indonesian general. With the land went all the livestock and their way of living for centuries. They were resettled in a concentration camp where my once young able bodied grandparents were transformed into living skeletons. Everything they had held sacred had been stolen from them. They could not even produce the food they needed for their own survival. They were luckier than many East Timorese at this time though- because at least they *did* survive.

My paternal grandparents fared little better after the invasion. They come from Dili the capital of East Timor. My grandfather was the son of a Portuguese soldier who had settled on the island in the early 1920s and married my grandmother, the daughter of a Portuguese sailor and a Timorese woman. My grandfather was one of fifteen children and became a clerk in the Portuguese administration. He and my grandmother had ten children and lived a very western lifestyle: I have pictures taken in the 1950s of my grandmother in very

fashionable dresses, pearls and high heel shoes looking as though she stepped out of a fashion magazine. Their house in Dili was constructed out of a mixture of western and traditional materials like bamboo and thatch.

I met my grandmother and other relatives when I was fourteen, but I never saw my paternal grandfather. He became very ill in 1987 and, because the hospitals in Dili had few drugs and few trained medical personnel, my uncle bribed an Indonesian customs officer to rush my grandfather go to a hospital in Jakarta. He died on arrival. I'm sure if he had been able to receive proper medication in Dili, he would be alive today.

Because they come from fairly privileged backgrounds, both my parents received an education. My mother attended a boarding school and became a primary school teacher. My father served three years in the Portuguese army and became a mechanic. When war broke out, both had relatively good jobs in East Timor. When they escaped to Australia they had to start again. My father could speak English so he found employment in his old trade. My mother had never studied English so, like many refugees, had to accept menial jobs in factories to help support the family. She made sure I received a good high school education though and is helping me through university. We younger East Timorese in the diaspora will now be able to use our tertiary education to help our people still in East Timor.

My pilgrimage back to Dili when I was fourteen years old made me realize what I privileged life I was living in Melbourne. My relatives who remained in East Timor had suffered terribly since the invasion of our country. Many had not survived - like an aunt and uncle and their six children who had fled to the mountains after the invasion. When they could no longer find any food, they surrendered to the Indonesians. They thought they would at least be given something to eat, but instead they were lined up along a river bank and shot.

In Dili, all the women I met seemed to be wearing black, and all the men had black arm bands. Everyone was in mourning. No-one smiled or spoke openly to us. This was very strange because my people have a reputation for being very friendly and happy. I got a glimpse of what their day to day lives must have been like when I went to buy an ice cream in a Dili shop - a fairly normal thing for a teenager to do. While I was waiting for the ice

cream at the counter, an Indonesian soldier came up beside me with a loaded M16 casually slung over his shoulder. I have never been so frightened in my life. But this was an everyday intimidation for people in East Timor.

I was very grateful then that I could escape; that I could go back to suburban Melbourne and resume my normal lifestyle. But my cousins, many of them my own age, could not. Every day they had to endure fear and intimidation from Indonesian soldiers and police. Even to protest peacefully was to risk their lives. I realized then that we young East Timorese in the diaspora had to be their voice in the outside world. Because we could speak out without the fear of death. That's when I made the commitment to work for my country of birth, for my family still in East Timor and for all East Timorese. For their right to determine their own political and cultural destiny.

East Timor, as you know, was colonized by the Portuguese nearly five hundred years ago. Later the Dutch colonized what became West Timor and the rest of Indonesia. To the north east of East Timor, the Spanish and later the United States colonized the Philippines; the French took Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia; and the British colonized Australia and Malaysia. All these former colonies in our region of Southeast Asia have since won their independence – except for East Timor.

In April 1974, the dictatorship in Portugal was overthrown in what was known as the Revolution of Flowers or the Carnation Revolution. Soon after, a process was initiated to give East Timor independence. At that time, Indonesia recognized our right to self-determination: the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Mr Adam Malik, clearly stated this in a letter to José Ramos Horta who is now the special representative for the resistance outside East Timor. But Mr Malik soon changed his mind. In July 1975, four months before the invasion, the President of Indonesia, General Suharto, was quoted in Melbourne's Age newspaper as saying that 'Timor shall not be independent.' (*The Age* 10.7.75) Indonesia and its allies had already decided that East Timor should be part of Indonesia, regardless of what the East Timorese people wanted.

Meanwhile a short civil war had broken out during the process of de-colonization in East Timor. This led to a unilateral declaration of Independence by one of the main political parties and the withdrawal of the Portuguese Governor to the island of Atauro. On the

December 7, 1975, the Indonesians invaded and forced the complete withdrawal of the Portuguese administration. So began a process of genocide that to date has killed over 200,000 East Timorese civilians - an estimated one third of the pre-1975 population. Every single East Timorese family has lost close relatives. This scale of genocide is unequalled anywhere in the modern world.

Many of the people killed during and after the invasion, were killed with US supplied weapons. US President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger were in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, just a few hours before the invasion was formally launched. They had already given their approval. And despite several UN and Congressional resolutions condemning the invasion and the violation of human rights in East Timor, the US administration continues to provide economic support to the Indonesian government, and allows the sale of US weapons to that regime.

In 1990 for example, US Congress permitted the delivery of more than \$200,000,000 worth of US military equipment to Indonesia. Some of this was doubtlessly used in Dili on November 12, 1991, to slaughter more than 270 unarmed civilians at the Santa Cruz cemetery.

Instead of immediately cutting all military and economic aid after that massacre, the Bush Administration proposed to increase military training for the Indonesian army. Fortunately Congress has since voted to end some of that assistance by cutting all training in the US of Indonesian military personnel under the US International Military Education and Training program (IMET). But a further \$84 million worth of military equipment will be exported from the US to Indonesia this year, unless Congress acts to stop these sales. Economic aid to Indonesia is now worth \$5 billion.

We believe that you as tax payers and residents of the United States, have a right to know what your government is doing to support the Indonesian occupation of East Timor and the oppression of the East Timorese people. Young people like me still have a simple faith in the goodness of the American people - that once you know how your government is involved in East Timor, you will pressure your elected representatives to end US complicity in the occupation of my country. You can do this by asking Congress to immediately cut all military aid to Indonesia and immediately insist on the total withdrawal of

all Indonesian troops from East Timor. Please also ask your members of Congress to cut all economic aid to Indonesia until that government:

- ends all forms of inhuman treatment including torture, extra-judicial executions, and arbitrary arrests and imprisonment;
- permits unrestricted access to East Timor by international human rights organizations;
- releases all political prisoners, including former leaders of the resistance Xanana Gusmao and Mau Huna;
- ensures that the East Timorese are credibly represented in all talks about the future of East Timor; and
- permits a UN-supervised referendum in East Timor as a definitive act of self-determination.

All the people of East Timor want is the right to experience the same freedoms that people in this country take for granted. These freedoms were expressed in your own Declaration of Independence over two hundred years ago. Please help make your dream of 1776 real for us. And please ask your new President and your members of Congress to stop supporting repressive military regimes like Indonesia. Ask them to support the people of the United States instead. Because as we have noticed, there are many people in this country too for whom the dream of 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' is still very far away



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EAST TIMOR: 460 YEARS OF RESISTANCE

presented by Maria Braz
East Timorese youth ambassador
tour of North America, April 1993

I was born in Dili, the capital of East Timor. On December 7, 1975, when I was just six years old, I escaped with my parents to Portugal. Because on that date, my country was invaded by Indonesia. I have not yet been back – but one day I hope I will return to a free and independent East Timor.

Like all East Timorese, I am part of a long and very complex history. My mother is descended from the Atsabe royal family. My great great grandfather was the Atsabe lurai or king who, I regret to say, supported the Portuguese against indigenous opposition to colonial rule. His son, my great grandfather, disagreed with the old man's policies and joined the revolutionaries to fight both his father and the Portuguese militia. His only son, my maternal grandfather, did not want to continue the conflict between his father and his grandfather, so adopted a neutral position. He spent his life raising cattle and growing coffee on the family plantation.

The Portuguese could not tolerate my grandfather's neutrality because their power depended upon support from the indigenous royal families. So they stripped my grandfather of his title and accompanying privileges and gave them to a cousin called Cipriano who was more accommodating to the Portuguese. The local people revolted against the new Portuguese-installed lurai and so to maintain law and order, Cipriano

arranged a marriage between his daughter and my grandfather. In that way, he was able to control the people who remained loyal to the former lurai.

That daughter, my grandmother, is still in Timor. She is a great woman and a great survivor. Since the invasion she has had to support her family so has built up her own small business. My close relatives now living in exile in both Portugal and Australia still maintains regular contact with her and with other members of our extended family in East Timor.

Like many East Timorese, I also have Portuguese blood in my veins. My paternal grandfather was born in Alentejo, Portugal, and did his compulsory military service in East Timor. He met my paternal grandmother there and they had five children. He refused to leave East Timor when the Japanese invaded in 1942 and was betrayed and executed for defending the Portuguese flag.

Little is known about my paternal grandmother because she disappeared. We do know however, that she was born in Aileu in eastern East Timor, and from all accounts, was very beautiful. People have speculated that she was taken to Indonesia by the Japanese. In 1982 some of my relatives met an old woman in Indonesia who spoke of being married once to a Portuguese man and of giving birth to five children - but by the time we heard the story and made fresh enquiries, the old woman had disappeared again.

So you see, our history - both our personal histories and the history of our nation - is very complex and very painful. But the stories of the past enrich our humanity; they give us identity, dignity, even though they speak of great suffering. Most of all, our history is a story of resistance - our resistance against all attempts to exterminate us as a people.

Sadly the tragedy of East Timor has not ended yet, for now the younger generation - in my family and thousands of other East Timorese families - have committed themselves to the struggle for self-determination. For contrary to what the Indonesians say, there has been little rapprochement between the Indonesian people and the people of East Timor since the invasion in 1975. Even economically there is little sign of integration for the economy is still dominated by monopolies run by a few Indonesian generals. There are few

opportunities for local people to earn a decent living, and few career opportunities for the younger generation.

The Indonesians boast about building roads and schools and clinics, but from our point of view, the Indonesian education system, health care, the road network and the imposed system of administration are but instruments of subjugation. My people look at them and say 'the Indonesians can't buy us with these things.' In many cases, this development only benefits the military and the Javanese and other Indonesians who have settled in East Timor as transmigrants. It does not benefit the indigenous people.

In East Timor, young people see little future for themselves while Indonesia remains in our country. They feel like foreigners in their own land. Although they've been educated in Indonesian schools and speak the Indonesian language and are forced to live by Indonesian laws, they have not become Indonesian. And they are protesting every way they can against having their identity taken from them. If you saw the news footage of the massacre at Santa Cruz cemetery in November 1991, you would have seen thousands of young people who were just babies (or not even born) when the Indonesians invaded; thousands of young men and women, even children, marching in peaceful protest. And then hundreds of them giving their lives in the front line as the Indonesians fired their M16s.

Because I am a woman, I have a particular interest in women and children, and in the role of my sisters in the resistance movement in East Timor. We women have a long history of resistance. Colonial and neocolonial invaders have always been amazed at us. Many women have become legendary. Like the Queen of Luca - known as Mary - who, in the eighteenth century commanded a rebellion for thirty years against the Portuguese. Today guerrilla detachments in the interior of East Timor are commanded by women who continue that proud tradition.

In the towns and villages, women assume vital political responsibilities and undertake secret but very dangerous assignments that link the military resistance in the mountains with the urban clandestine organisations. Health, education and production of many of the goods necessary to continue the struggle, are also women's responsibilities. In all these ways, East Timorese women work to liberate and transform their society.

Above all, through our noble mission of motherhood, we women guarantee the future of our country, and the continuity of the East Timorese people. This is the ultimate resistance against the ethnic and cultural genocide that is being committed against our people.

Women are easy targets though. As in all wars, they are victims of rape, torture, beatings, abuse, of degradation and humiliation of every kind. Every East Timorese woman, every East Timorese family, has been touched in some way by such brutality. But, as I have said, we are not just impotent spectators and victims of the atrocities that are perpetrated by the Indonesian military against us: we are also active participants in our own liberation.

The Indonesians must know this now. They must know that they have not been able to defeat us through military force, nor by degrading or humiliating us. This is the reality in East Timor. And until our country is free, until the East Timorese people are free to determine our own destiny, there will be women and men of all ages who are prepared to resist any way they can. Unless the international community can act decisively to end violence and intimidation, East Timorese people will continue to protest and resist; and East Timorese people will continue to die at the hands of the Indonesian military.

Young East Timorese like myself have a profound responsibility to speak out on behalf of our compatriots still in East Timor who cannot speak out for themselves.

And the international community has a profound responsibility too, particularly all those countries which voted for UN resolutions which condemned Indonesia's invasion of East Timor and called for a complete withdrawal of Indonesian troops. None of those countries have done anything so far, to ensure that their resolutions are acted upon. East Timor is not Kuwait – even though, like Kuwait, we do have potentially oil fields that Indonesia and Australia both covet.

Many of those governments which supported the resolutions passed in the UN General Assembly and Security Council since the Indonesian invasion have also acknowledged 'the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination.' But so far, they have done nothing so far to turn this much quoted right into a reality.

This lack of political will within the international community has led to genocide in my country on a scale unequalled in modern times. Between 1975 and 1982, one third of East Timor's population perished. Even Pol Pot and the Kymer Rouge did not wipe out such a large proportion of the population of Cambodia. The ongoing cultural genocide – the attempt to wipe out our language and customs – has been no less violent.

People in countries like the United States of America must accept much of the responsibility for this. After all, US corporations supplied many of the weapons that have been used to kill our people, and American economic aid has supported the Indonesian regime that has caused us so much misery.

We ask you now, in this new political climate, to be responsible global citizens and stop the export of military hardware to Indonesia; stop all economic aid to that country until it respects the basic human rights of the people of East Timor - including our right to self-determination. Please ask your members of Congress to pressure the Clinton administration to use its influence in the United Nations to push for a referendum and a real act of self-determination in East Timor, and to say 'no' to the arms manufacturers who want to ship more weapons to Indonesia.

Please help stop the cycle of violence in my country, so that young East Timorese men and women will no longer have to die fighting for basic human rights that you in the United States take for granted. So that we East Timorese, women and men, can at last determine our own political destiny.



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EAST TIMOR: THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

presented by Constancio Pinto
Executive Secretary for the Clandestine Front
National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM).
tour of North America, April, 1993

I was twelve years old when the Indonesian military invaded my country. I fled to the mountains with my family and for three years, hid in the jungle. We had little food, no medicine, and no weapons to defend ourselves with but we were not alone. Thousands of East Timorese families had fled into the mountains like us to escape the terror of the invasion; others fled to Australia or Portugal as refugees.

During those years in the mountains, people were dying all around me. Many were killed by the Indonesian military; others died more slowly through starvation or disease. It is hard for me to describe those years, but I can still see the Skyhawks and Bronco AV10 aircraft that the Indonesians used in their attempts to eliminate us. As you probably know, those aircraft are manufactured in the United States.

When I was fifteen years old I went to the front line as a guerrilla fighter. At that time, the Indonesians controlled all the food producing areas and people were starving in the mountains. We were fighting to protect and feed them - as well as for our right to self determination. I fought the Indonesians for eight months then I trained as a nurse because I wanted to help the sick and injured.

In September 1978, the Indonesian army's Battalion 410 arrested me and my family in Remxio village south of Dili. Again I watched my people die. I watched them die every

day. Many of the people I knew were interrogated, tortured - and then they disappeared. After our arrest, we were forced to learn the Indonesian language and sing the Indonesian national anthem. The first words we learned to pronounce were *salamat pagi bapak* and *salamat siang*. (Good morning and good afternoon.) For two months I studied this new language and then, to survive, I worked for a police commander as a *tenaga bantuan operasi* which is like a carrier or a very lowly servant.

On December 1978 I returned to Dili with my parents. Somehow we and the other families who survived the terror in the mountains had to reconstruct our lives again. My father and I worked as laborers to take care of our extended family. In January 1979 I was at last able to continue my education at Externasto de St. Jose, a Portuguese school run by Father Leao da Costa . At the time, this was the only Portuguese school still operating in Dili, but it too was closed by the Indonesian army after the massacre of November 12 1991.

I finished school in 1988 and became a teacher of religion at this school. This was my cover for my work in the resistance. I sent food and medicine to the fighters still in the mountains and kept them informed about what was happening in Dili and the other towns and villages occupied by the Indonesian army. I also monitored what was happening abroad.

One of my main tasks however was to develop the civilian resistance by uniting all the independent groups resisting the Indonesian occupation. I began this work in 1986 with a small cell of seven people. Our code was 007! The umbrella organization at the time was known as the Revolutionary Council of National Resistance (CRRN). In 1989, CRRN was transformed into CNRM - the National Council of Maubere Resistance. In effect, CNRM is a non-partisan clandestine coalition of all East Timorese nationalist groups including student organizations, our army Falantil plus the two major political parties Fretilin and UDT

In 1990 I was elected Secretary of the Executive Committee of the CNRM . My work as Executive Secretary included meeting with resistance leaders in the jungle and coordinating all clandestine activities in the towns and villages.

At this time, the leader of the resistance was Xanana Gusmao, a hero to a whole generation of young East Timorese both inside East Timor and in the diaspora. He was captured by the Indonesian military on November 20, 1992 and is still on trial in Dili.

In 1991, after Xanana Gusmao had made an offer to participate in UN sponsored talks without pre-conditions about the future of East Timor, we invited an Australian lawyer and journalist, Robert Domm, to secretly interview him for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. It was a very dangerous mission but we in East Timor were prepared to take the risk because it was so important that the rest of the world hear about our continuing struggle for self-determination. I organized the visit, escorted Domm through the mountains to Xanana's campsite, and acted as his translator. After Robert Domm had finished his interview, I talked all night with Xanana then escorted the Australian back to safety.

Three weeks later, Xanana's camp was surrounded by Indonesian troops. Xanana escaped but the Indonesians took everything he had left there, including a photograph of me and a copy of the taped interview with Robert Domm.

The Indonesians caught and arrested me on the morning of January 25, 1991, my birthday. I told them I would never forget the birthday present they gave me - for, after the police had finished with me at the station, I had blood coming out of my nose, my ears, my eyes and my mouth. My body was swollen all over.

The beating continued from 9 o'clock on the morning I was arrested until 10 o'clock at night. They stripped me, and after every question they kicked and punched me all over and jabbed me with their outstretched hands in the abdomen to purposely cause damage to my internal organs. They beat me even while I was bleeding. They repeatedly threatened to kill me, to throw me into the sea. They called it *mandi laut*. They threatened my family too. They said that if I didn't tell them what I was doing and where Xanana was, they would harm my parents and my wife. They told me I would be responsible for whatever happened to them.

After the beating at the police station, I was transferred to Senopato II prison where I was interrogated by Captain Edy Suprianto and Lieutenant Colonel Gatot, the head of

intelligence in East Timor. That interrogation continued for four days non stop. The Indonesians worked in shifts and rested - but they forced me to stay awake the whole time. When they finished with me, they threw me in a cell alone. There was no mattress, no blankets, so I slept on the bare cement. It was very cold.

There were thirteen other East Timorese political prisoners in that prison while I was there. These people had been detained three months earlier and had all been tortured: with electric shocks, cigarette burns to the skin and knife cuts. One, Abilio Sarmiento, had a broken jaw and another political prisoner, David Talofo, was suffering severe mental trauma when I saw him.

One week after my capture, I was released on condition that I present myself to Captain Edy and Colonel Gatot three times a week. Even then, my movements were monitored by Indonesian intelligence. Sometimes they came to my house and continued to interrogate me about the underground organization and about Xanana Gusmao. And each time I presented myself to the police station, the Indonesians threatened me and tried to force me into betraying Xanana and the resistance. People have to deal with this kind of intimidation every day in East Timor.

Each time I was interrogated, I told the officers that I could not give them any information because I didn't have any - I was no longer a leader. Anyway, I said, my people wouldn't tell me anything because they knew I had been arrested by the Indonesians.

Although I didn't know it at the time, Indonesian intelligence had lied to the international media after my capture and boasted that I was a double agent. This was another of their clumsy attempts to undermine the resistance in East Timor.

My capture in 1991 came at a time when the resistance was preparing for the proposed visit to East Timor of a Portuguese parliamentary delegation. Xanana Gusmao had given me instructions but I had been arrested before I could communicate these to all the other resistance leaders. It was urgent therefore that I continue my clandestine activities as soon as I got out of prison - even though I was officially under house arrest and being threatened continually by the Indonesian authorities.

We East Timorese had great expectations for the proposed visit by the Portuguese parliamentary delegation. We saw it as an opportunity to show the world what was happening in our country – for we knew there would be foreign journalists accompanying the delegation.

Meanwhile, the Indonesians were doing everything they could to intimidate the population into submission. On 29 October, the Indonesian army ambushed Motael church in Dili and killed Sebastiao Gomes, a 22 year old student who had sought sanctuary there. Soldiers surrounded the church, broke into it and shot Sebastiao in the stomach. He bled to death on the steps of the church.

I was to be next. The military knew of my role in the resistance because they had forced some of the detainees to admit, under torture, that I was still their leader. On November 1, Martino Alau, an Indonesian intelligence policeman, held a meeting at his house to plan my re-capture and possible execution. I was informed of this at three o'clock that afternoon on my way home to my family. Instead of going home, I immediately went into hiding. I could not even say goodbye to my wife nor my parents and I have not seen them since that day. To contact them would have been to risk their lives as well as my own. I heard later that the army had surrounded my house and interrogated my wife and parents, then waited for me to return. At the time, my wife was five months pregnant with our first child. He was born after I left Dili and is now one year old.

To our great disappointment, the Portuguese Parliamentary delegation never arrived. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Mr Pieter Kooijmans (who is now the Foreign Minister of Holland) was did visit Dili however; we desperately wanted to show him what we were suffering. On November 10, I met secretly with students and other members of the resistance and together we decided to organize a demonstration in his honor.

'We have to do something because Mr. Pieter Kooijmans is now here,' the young people told me that night.

'Don't you think that Indonesia will kill you?' I asked them.

'Never!' they said.

We held the demonstration on November 12 1991, a week after Sebastiao's funeral. It is our custom to remember our dead seven days after the funeral by placing flowers on the grave. In Tetun we call it *ai funan midar* which means 'sweet flowers'. The mourners not only brought flowers but banners too which they hid underneath their jackets then unfurled as they marched to the cemetery. Many believed the presence of foreign journalists would protect them from the direct vengeance of the Indonesian military.

Our plan was to demonstrate peacefully. None of the marchers did anything to provoke the Indonesian troops. But, as they passed one of the government buildings, the police *agents provocateurs* began throwing rocks, breaking windows and beating the demonstrators with sticks. When they arrived at the cemetery, it seemed like the Indonesian military had prepared an ambush. One, two, maybe five minutes after the marchers had entered the cemetery gates, the military opened fire. I was hiding in a house 500 meters away and could not see what was happening. But I heard the gun shots and screaming. I also saw the Indonesians throw the dead and wounded onto trucks for the drive to the military hospital. There were seven trucks.

Two American journalists, Amy Goodman and Alan Nairn, were in Dili at the time of the massacre. When they saw the Indonesians raise their M16s, they stood between the soldiers and the demonstrators in an attempt to prevent any bloodshed. But the soldiers just kept marching into the crowd firing their guns. After the killing, the soldiers arrested many of the demonstrators including some they had injured. Many of these young people have not been heard of since.

At noon – about two hours after the shooting – I told one of the mothers who was looking for her son, to go to the hospital to see if he was amongst the wounded. When she arrived, one of the Indonesian soldiers said to her 'please go to Tasi Tolu and see your son. The grave is still open for you.' She was not allowed inside the hospital.

Between December and February I collected the names of people who had been killed at the cemetery or had died from injuries received that day. Our official death toll was 271. Many more are still unaccounted for. If you have seen the television coverage from that massacre, you will know that the demonstrators were mostly young people, East Timor's

future. Their murder is further evidence of the genocide the Indonesian military is committing against our people.

After the Santa Cruz massacre, my photograph was circulated throughout East Timor and Indonesia on state run television and in the press. I was a hunted man. I remained in my country for a further seven months, sleeping in different houses every night or in the jungle. Any one of the people who gave me shelter could have betrayed me, but no-one did. This is proof, I believe, of the effectiveness of the resistance in East Timor.

I eventually escaped by car to Kupang in West Timor, and from there travelled to Jakarta where I remained in hiding for a further five months. I arrived in Lisbon in early November 1992 to continue my work for the East Timorese resistance in exile. I am now CNRM's representative in Portugal.

Not long after I arrived in Lisbon, Xanana Gusmao was captured in Dili. (November 20, 1992.) At that moment many people thought his capture marked the end of the resistance in East Timor. But I would like to tell you that the struggle does not depend on just one person: it depends on the determination of the East Timorese people. Xanana's successor Mau Huno has now also been arrested - but again he is just one man.

We East Timorese know that we can never win a military victory against the might of Indonesia; we are but half a million people against 180 million Indonesians. Our victory must be a political one based on international law and justice. Many of the decisions that will affect our future will be made in Washington and New York. That is why I am touring North America with this delegation of young East Timorese - to tell the North American people about what is happening in our country and urge you all to put pressure on your representatives in government to resolve the conflict in East Timor. To stop sending military hardware to Indonesia and to halt all economic aid to Indonesia until that country recognizes the basic human rights of the East Timorese people, including our right to self-determination. For there can be no peace in East Timor our right to self-determination is recognized and acted upon.

At the Human Rights Commission in Geneva earlier this year, I witnessed a significant shift in US foreign policy towards East Timor that gave me hope. On March 11, the

United States and Canada plus 22 other governments from the European Community, the Nordic states, with Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Costa Rica co-sponsored a resolution condemning the Indonesian government for its human rights violations in East Timor. The resolution was carried 22 votes in favour and 12 against, with 15 abstentions. This was the first time a resolution had been successful on East Timor at this important UN forum. For us East Timorese, it is a sign that at last the outside world is awakening to its responsibility.

One resolution in far off Geneva does not in itself stop the intimidation and human rights abuses in Dili and other parts of East Timor, nor does it facilitate a UN sponsored act of self-determination. Especially when there are an estimated 40,000 Indonesian troops still stationed on East Timorese soil as part of *Operasi Tuntas* (or Operation Once And For All). But the Geneva resolution is a sign of change and something for the international community to build upon.

There is another opportunity this month for the international community to act to resolve the conflict in East Timor. On April 21 the UN Secretary General is hosting talks between Portugal and Indonesia in Rome. So far, the East Timorese have not been invited to participate - although the UN secretary General's Special Envoy Mr Amos Waco, is in Dili as I speak. But since East Timor is *our* country, we believe we should be represented at all negotiations about our future. We are ready to participate in round table talks without pre-conditions at any time.

Like all East Timorese, I've suffered many difficulties since Indonesia invaded my country in 1975. I don't want my son whom I have never seen, to have to go through what my generation and my parents' generation have been through. Unless the international community acts decisively to facilitate an internationally supervised act of self-determination in East Timor, I'm afraid the pattern of the past seventeen years will be repeated over and over again: resistance to Indonesian occupation, intimidation by the Indonesian military, atrocities against the Timorese people. More resistance, more intimidation, more atrocities. I don't want my child to have to go through that, nor anyone else's child. And I want to be able to see my wife and my son some day.



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Founded in Rome 1892. Nobel Peace Prize 1910. Consultative Status with ECOSOC

Rue de Zurich 41 CH-1201 Geneva Switzerland

Email: lpb@gn.apc.org

Tel: +41 22 731 6429

Fax: 738 9419

Ibrahima FALL
Director
Centre for Human Rights
UN office at Geneva
8-14 avenue de la Paix
1211 Geneva 10

2 March, 1993

Dear Mr Fall

I am an East Timorese and I have come to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to speak out about the actions of the Indonesian forces against my people. I enclose a copy of my statement to the Commission, made under Item 12.

I am writing to you because I am very concerned about the repercussions my statement to the Commission will have for my relatives who are still living in East Timor. There have been many cases of violence perpetrated against the families of fellow East Timorese who have dared to speak out about atrocities, torture and death in East Timor.

I would like to ask you to use your goodwill and good offices to do everything within the power of your respected Centre for Human Rights to ensure the safety of my relatives in East Timor.

Thank you for your kind assistance and concern.

Yours sincerely

Barnabe Barreto Soares

List of relatives of Barnabe Barreto Soares in East Timor:

1. Mario da Silva Barreto, grandfather, living in Fohorem
2. Fransisco F. Barreto, uncle, living in Ainaro
3. Alarico L. Barreto, uncle, living in Ainaro
4. Sebastiao Soares, father, living in Manatuto
5. Elda Pereira Barreto, mother, living in Dili
6. Jacinta Barreto Soares, sister, living in Aileu
7. Maria Teresa Barreto Soares, sister, living in Dili
8. Sebastiana Barreto Soares, sister, living in Dili
9. Laurentina D. Barreto Soares, sister, living in Semarang
Java
10. Adelaide P. Barreto Soares, sister, living in Ainaro
11. Walter Vicente Jose Barreto Soares, brother, living in Dili
12. Edmundo Barreto Soares, brother, living in Dili
13. Betty Barreto Soares, sister, living in Kailako, Maliana.