

# EAST TIMOR NEWS DOSSIER

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## Editorial

January, 1988

Dear Friends,

It has probably been a long time since you last received copies of our "News Dossiers". This has been caused by many human-power problems; unfortunately we had overestimated our ability to produce the "Dossier" on a number of issues when other issues of importance to Hong Kong and Asia as well demanded our attention. We hope that we can better estimate ourselves in future. Do not worry, we will carry on - "better late than never".

In this our fifth issue of the "Dossier" we include the usual news items and a statement of the recent Asia-Pacific Consultation on East Timor held in Manila in late November 1987.

This was an important step in the continuing development of support/solidarity work in the Asia/Pacific region. A member of our East Timor Concern Group attended the Consultation. On this we also wish to thank the organisers of the Consultation, the "Christians in Solidarity with East Timor" for a good effort in organising the Consultation and also the invitation to our group. Thanks!!

We also wish to send our best regards to all the other participants of the Consultation, especially our Filipino hosts. Hope that we can develop those contacts made in Manila and be more effective, coordinated and supportive of each other in our work. Finally (but not leastly) we wish to send our best to our East Timorese friends whose friendship is already such a great (and undeserved) reward to our solidarity/support work.

We have undertaken an evaluation of the group and the "Dossier". We hope to synthesise these thoughts and discussions and present them to you when complete. We welcome any comments/suggestions/thoughts that you may have on our group and the "Dossier". We need all your help to plan for the future of our group.

Thank-you for your continued patience (in our delays in despatch) and that you have bothered to read this far. New Year Greetings to you all and best regards to your work.

In Solidarity with the East Timorese People,  
East Timor Concern Group in Hong Kong.

# Asian Pacific East Timor Consultation

## The Full Text of the Statement:

Delegates from 13 countries attended the first Asia/Pacific Consultation on East Timor, held in Manila, Philippines, 16-18 November 1987. Participants included representatives of the two Timorese political parties, UDT (Democratic Union of East Timor) and Frelin, officials of several International Church networks, human rights and development agencies and delegates from Asia, Pacific and European solidarity groups.

The Consultation was convened to consolidate and expand emerging concerns on the issue within Asian and Pacific Church and Community Organisations.

## Analysis

In its analysis of the issue the Consultation highlighted the following points:

1. East Timor remains a major military problem for Indonesia. This is clear from the number of combat troops in the territory, the special command structures directly controlled from Jakarta, the tight internal security situation and the continued denial of external access.
2. The Indonesian presence in East Timor is not just a military occupation but is increasingly colonial in character. The economy is controlled by monopolies dominated by the Indonesian elite and social, cultural and political life has been structured to serve Indonesian interests at the expense of the East Timorese people who are systematically excluded, marginalised and powerless.
3. Gross human rights violations continue with varying intensity. However it also needs to be recognised that the ever-present climate of fear, restrictions on free communication, legal rights, assembly and travel are now institutionalised in East Timor. The suppression of East Timorese culture and the systematic Indonesianisation of Timorese society also constitute an abuse of rights fundamental to the preservation of Timorese identity.
4. Timorese armed resistance to integration remains seemingly indestructible and is a powerful symbol of East Timorese opposition to the annexation. However, it also should be recognised that the less well-known attitudes of East Timorese at all levels of society including clergy, civil servants, students, and village people are testimony that opposition to integration remains entrenched throughout East Timor. This is also reflected in the decision of the two major Timorese political parties, UDT and Frelin to work together in the political struggle for independence.
5. The local Catholic Church has grown rapidly to become a mass organisation to which most Timorese adhere. It is administered directly from the Vatican through an Apostolic Administrator and is not formally part of the Indonesian Church. The Timorese Church continues to call for an end to conflict and human rights abuses and for a just settlement, and for greater freedom to fulfil its heavy pastoral responsibilities. The Church is subjected to considerable political pressure, both externally and internally, and keenly feels its isolation. It needs increased support and contact particularly from the international church community.
6. Western and regional economic, political, military and security ties with Indonesia constitute a major barrier to the advancement of the Timorese cause. Regionally this is exemplified in the interdependence of the Japanese and Indonesian economies, ASEAN political commitments to Indonesia, the active cooperation with Indonesia of other governments in the region particularly Australia and Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia's increasing drive to extend its political influence in the South Pacific.

7. East Timor has not been voted on at the United Nations General Assembly since 1982 and Indonesia continues a major diplomatic and disinformation campaign to quash any discussions on the issue. Nevertheless East Timor remains an issue of active concern to a range of United Nations bodies and to many international and national forums, involving governments, political parties, parliaments, churches and non-governmental organisations.

#### Key Areas of Action

##### 1. United Nations

- a. At its session in Geneva in February 1988 the United Nations Commission on Human Rights will consider the human rights situation in East Timor. It is recommended that member states of the Commission, particularly those from Asia, be urged:

- \* To support a continuing review by the Commission of the human rights situation in East Timor and
- \* To endorse calls for the full participation of the East Timorese people in future United Nations sponsored talks on the issue.

- b. Talks on East Timor held between Indonesia and Portugal under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General have not allowed for formal East Timorese participation.

It is recommended that representations to the Secretary-General urging full Timorese participation be intensified. There will be no lasting settlement without Timorese cooperation.

Such representations should also express dismay at the inadequacy of official United Nations reports on the issue.

##### 2. Portugal

Ambiguity in recent statements on East Timor by the Portuguese Government, which has a major responsibility for ensuring a just settlement of the issue, is cause for alarm, as is Portugal's failure to ensure Timorese participation in the talks process.

It is recommended that representations be made to the Portuguese Government on these failures.

It is further recommended that expressions of concern on Portugal's role be made to Portuguese Church bodies, political parties and the Parliamentary Commission on East Timor.

It is also recommended that Portugal be urged to recognise UDT and Fretilin and to materially support their work.

##### 3. The Church

Because of the disputed political status of the territory, the Holy See has assumed direct responsibility for the Catholic Church of East Timor.

It is recommended that the Holy See be urged at every opportunity, particularly by Catholic bodies, to maintain its direct jurisdiction over the Diocese of Dili until a just solution has been achieved based on the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination.

It is further recommended that the World Council of Churches and the International Protestant Community be urged to dialogue directly with the Christian community in East Timor in a spirit of solidarity and common commitment to justice and peace.

It is also recommended that churches be urged to sign the document, "East Timor: A Christian Reflection" as part of their overall effort of Christian education and advocacy on East Timor.

### Implementation

The following broad action proposals were agreed to by the Consultation participants:

1. The provision of basic information on the issue for the wider community;
2. The regular information servicing of key non-governmental networks in Asia and the Pacific;
3. The establishment of support networks in Papua New Guinea and the Philippines;
4. Monitoring and lobbying of the principal non-UN political forums;
5. The documentation of the effects of the Indonesian occupation and colonisation of East Timor on women and on children;
6. The encouragement of human rights, humanitarian and other organisations to seek independent access to East Timor.

The Consultation participants sent messages of concern regarding East Timor to the Japanese, Philippines and Portuguese Governments and the United Nations Secretary-General. Messages of solidarity were sent to Timorese people and the European and North American support network. It was resolved to reconvene at an appropriate time in the future.

St. Theresa's College, Manila, The Philippines.  
November 18, 1987.



## 1 STATEMENT OF THE U.S. COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The United States National Council of Churches (NCC) Division of Overseas Ministries has issued a statement entitled "The Question of East Timor".

Is is the first formal statement by the U.S. Protestant Churches and is open to further revision after presentation to the NCC International Affairs Commission and Governing Board.

As it stands it is an important, interesting but still somewhat non-committal statement. This is beacuse this document mostly describes the background of the issue in a strictly factual manner. As a result, it gives readers little guide as to how the U.S. Churches will deal in practice with the very evident gap which separates them from their partner churches in Indonesia.

The following is a summary of the final section of the document:

### "An Appropriate Response"

"By appropriate we mean: 1) in the interest of truth, justice, human rights, compassion and reconcilliation: and 2) realistic achievable in the light of US-Indonesia government and church relationships."

1) There is concern that ample food and other basic life-sustaining resources for the East Timorese can only be achieved by supporting the provision of such assistance through different agencies and at the same time make sure that it is not used for "partisan or oppressive ends".

2) Full and free access be given to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

3) There is concern that people from different countries be given greater and freer access to East Timor - including church people, journalists and those interested in supplying humanitarian aid.

4) Continuous efforts be undertaken on the issue of East Timor so as to achieve a comprehensive and mutually acceptable resolution of the issues of human rights, political prisoners and the ending of military hostilities between contending forces.

### "Proposed Activities"

1) Regular consultation with partner churches in and outside Indonesia, including those concerned with East Timor's church bodies.

2) Practical support to East Timor's people in health, social welfare, culture, etc.

3) Cooperate in such development work with Indonesian and international church agencies.

4) Support and work with the East Timor Emergency Research Project and develop working relations with other credible human rights organisations which are concerned with East Timor.

5) Gather Information from the International Committee for the Red Cross and the Catholic Relief Service.

6) Initiate a programme of constituency education on East Timor in the various churches in the U.S., utilising existing networks as well as building new ones.

7) Establish a public profile on the issue, advocate the cause of those being exploited, oppressed or denied baisc human rights with appropriate U.S. government agencies and with other influential people and organisations in the U.S.

Whether or not these proposals are adopted or implemented actively, it must be recognised that the statement is indeed a strong and courageous commitment of the NCC U.S.A.

The most important result of the statement could be how the dialogue between the U.S. churches and the Indonesian churches is conducted and what emerges as a result.

Source: "Timor Link"

## 2 U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS CALL FOR PEACE IN TIMOR

At the end of March 1987, the Administrative Board of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a public statement about East Timor. This is the first time that the Bishops as a body have published such a statement of concern.



The statement started by referring to the "brutal invasion" of the territory and the fact that it was finally receiving the attention it deserved, though this had not been "translated in to the action needed to right the wrongs which continue to this day".

The statement mentioned the statements of concern, support and sympathy for East Timorese from Western European Bishops' Conferences and the Pope.

It referred to the pressing need to guarantee freedom of expression for the Roman Catholic Church in East Timor, which had the heavy responsibility of attending to the spiritual needs of people that had suffered grievous losses since 1975 and to bring a just and authentic peace in East Timor.

It also referred to the birth control measures introduced by Indonesia which takes on the "character of genocide" given great loss of life that has already taken place among a largely Catholic people. This impelled the Bishops to call for an immediate end to this policy.

The statement states that the issue still exists far from the great political debates of the day and that it is crucial that the "East Timor tragedy" be highlighted whenever possible to enhance the dignity of life and the right of the territory's inhabitants to live in peace.

The statements ends by stating that since the U.S. has had friendly relations with the Indonesian government, contributing much economic and military assistance since 1965, "Appropriate representations by the U.S. could influence the government of Indonesia to take measures that would help bring a just and authentic peace to the territory, end any policies of forced birth control in East Timor, and in other ways ameliorate the suffering of these unfortunate people.

Source : "Timor Link"

### **3 THE RESISTANCE'S RESPONSE TO ANACORETA CORREIA**

This is a response to the Portuguese parliamentarian's report. It is signed simply "the Resistance" and dated January 1987.

The letter said that 1986 was a year of high and low for the resistance, but all Timorese knew that the few rights they enjoyed were due to the continued armed resistance. It also mentioned the recent arrest of the UDT and Apodeti supporters.

Fretilin's actions in November and December, 1986 resulted in high casualties to the Indonesian military. The letter also reported that the situation of political prisoners has improved with the assistance of the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC).

A section of the letter is devoted to rebutting claims (made by Anacoreta Correia in his own report) that Indonesian economic development in Timor has been "significant":

"We don't say that Indonesia has done nothing during the eleven-year occupation. But .... this economic development has cost 200,000 lives. For this, any person of good sense will radically reject the false theory or economic development."

The letter ends with an impassioned appeal. "Senhor Deputy, beloved brother people of Portugal, you yourselves suffered in your flesh and blood during the fascism of Salazar/Caetano .... Many party leaders were martyred by imprisonment .... Their courage was an example to the Timorese inspiring them to continue fighting."

Source: "Timor Link"

### **4 LETTERS TO THE BBC AND RADIO NETHERLANDS**

There were letters to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Radio Netherlands. They told more about the resistance's struggle than all other previous papers.

The rank and file soldiers who wrote them talked of the difficulties which prevent them from listening regularly to their favourite programmes. They were constantly on the move and it was difficult for them to hear the late night programmes because they needed sleep after a long march. But the 4:30am transmission is better for them because it is a normal hour of alert in a situation of war.

Source: "Timor Link"

Church authorities have reportedly decided to remove from East Timor two priests, Joao Felgueiras and Jose Martins, who support Timorese opposition to Indonesian rule.

The move follows the successful removal of the former Apostolic Administrator, Mgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes, in 1983, and that of the Salesian superior, Fr. Magalhaes, in 1985. Both men were strong defenders of the rights of the East Timorese, the vast majority of whom are Catholic.

Some observers believe that church authorities want Felgueiras and Martins recalled to Portugal because they are frustrating plans to integrate the Indonesian and East Timorese churches. Whatever the truth of this, there is no doubt that the authorities are increasingly worried by the influence of the two Jesuits on East Timor's future priests and would prefer a more compromising "hand to rock" this particular "cradle".

Source: "Timor Link"

## 6 FRANCE'S ATTITUDE ON THE EAST TIMOR QUESTION

President Mitterand of France visited Lisbon between April 4 and 8, 1987 and discussed the issue of East Timor with his hosts.

In his answer to journalists about the current position of France on the East Timor issue, he said, "My impression following these conversations is that we are unfortunately very far from bringing together the conflicting points of view. This said, the United Nations has not said all it has say. If a solution should take shape, France would examine it, taking into account the principles to which it is attached, that is human rights, or community solidarity."

He also made it clear that the French government cannot be expected to lobby publicly on the behalf of East Timor, or its ally Portugal. (Editor's note: An odd situation for a country avowed to base its actions on principles of "human rights and community solidarity.")

Source: "Timor Link"

United States Senators Daniel P. Moynihan and Dave Durenberger are circulating a new letter on East Timor. Dated June 5, 1987, which is addressed to George Schultz.

The letter described the occupation of East Timor as "invaded and forcibly annexed by the Indonesians", and thanked Schultz for raising the issue of alleged human rights violations in East Timor when he met the Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar during President Reagan's visit to Bali last May.

The letter told of the renewal of Indonesian military offensives and the disastrous results of such offensives in the past.

The Senators urged that "at the very least, international humanitarian organisations should have full access to East Timor so as to ensure the maximum degree of relief and protection to the civilian population and political detainees".

Furthermore, the Senators also expressed their concerns about the coercive birth control programme, the situation of individuals seeking to leave East Timor to join family members in Portugal and the case of the four Timorese students who are seeking for permission to leave Indonesia.

Finally, they urged the US government to take a more active role in the East Timor issue by using her influence on the Jakarta government.

Source: "Timor Link"



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