

MAY 01 1990

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East Timor

monthly memo
news

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20 May 1990

MONTHLY MEMO No. 4 1990

(Information received during April 1990)

1. EAST TIMOR

a. Tape from Xanana revokes party non-alignment

Abílio Araújo, the FRETILIN leader, speaking at the 2nd Oporto University East Timor Seminar on April 28 revealed that he has received a cassette tape dated 1 March 1990 from the Resistance leader Xanana Gusmão in which the latter "requests the FRETILIN Central Committee to readmit him to the ranks of FRETILIN:"

"« As long as I, Xanana Gusmão, am alive, I affirm to the whole world that I will never consent to FRETILIN being killed by anyone; my place has to be with FRETILIN and with the Maubere People. (...)

(...)I request you to accept me once again as a FRETILIN militant. This is my most urgent request in this war.

(...) I request you once more to accept, with due formality, my readmission to FRETILIN because, in truth, I have never left FRETILIN.» " (ETN/256)

b. Xanana favours Portuguese visit:

"The conditions are ripe for a visit by a Portuguese parliamentary delegation; it can only be of benefit to our people" said the Resistance leader Xanana Gusmão in a letter to Abílio Araújo which arrived in Portugal in March of this year. According to the "Publico", the letter, which was handwritten and dated 11 November 1989, said that the only

condition which the Resistance would impose would be that the visit would be conducted in such a way as not to compromise the constitutional position of the territory, that is, that it should not signify an acceptance of Indonesian annexation. (Público 1 April 1990)

c. Resistance military activity:

Students in East Timor have claimed that 31 Indonesian soldiers were killed in an ambush by the East Timorese Liberation Army in February. The claim was made in a message to FRETILIN's Australian representative Mr Alfredo Ferreira. (Northern Territory News 15 March 1990)

d. Red Cross has visited prisoners in East Timor:

A spokesperson for the International Red Cross Committee revealed in Geneva that its delegations have visited 82 prisoners in East Timor between January and March this year in the course of visits to six centres of detention in the territory. The organization's information department said that these 82 prisoners were all listed as being imprisoned for reasons of security.

The organization did not comment on the conditions in which it found the Timorese political prisoners. (Diário de Notícias 20 April 1990)

e. Livestock epidemic in Los Palos

More than 5,000 of the 15,000 cattle in the Lautem district in Los Palos died because of lack of medicine according to the district head of animal breeding service, Alberto Lobato Soriano. (Jakarta Post March 1990)

f. Figures for Timorese emigration published:

The Indonesian Observer reports that during the 10 years from 1980 to the end of February 1990, 1,113 Timorese emigrated from E. Timor through the auspices of the Red Cross. 877 of these went to Portugal, 159 to Australia and a further 76 to Cape Verde. The paper does not cite a source for these figures (Indonesian Observer 21 March 1990)

g. Documents received:

1. Paper given by Dr Abílio Araújo at the 2nd Seminar on E. Timor at the University of Oporto, 28 April 1990, 3 p (Portuguese) ETN/256
2. Paper given by Ms Sasha Stepan at the 2nd Seminar on E.

- Timor at the University of Oporto, 28 April 1990, 8p (English) ETN/257
3. Paper given by Mr José Ramos-Horta at the 2nd Seminar on E. Timor at the University of Oporto, 28 April 1990, 17 p (Portuguese) ETN/258
 4. Speech by General Murdani, 3 Feb. 1990, Dili, 7p (English) ETN/259
 5. Manifesto by Cristiano Costa, spokesperson for UNJEPTIL, Sidney, 30 March 1990, 3p (Portuguese) ETN/260
 6. Extract from the Defence Plea at the trial of Ammarsyah, a student of the Bandung Institute of Technology, 31 Jan. 1990, 2p (English) ETN/261
 7. Resolutions on E. Timor passed by the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly in 1987, 1988 and 1989, Official Journal of the EC, 3p (French) ETN/262
 8. Proposed motion for the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, lodged by Ms Maria Belo, 1 p (Portuguese) ETN/263
 9. Proposed motion for the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, lodged by Mr Barros Moura et al, 1p (French) ETN/264
 10. Proposed motion for the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, lodged by Ms Van Putten, 1 p (French), ETN/265
 11. Proposed motion for the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, lodged by Mr Telkamper et al, 2 p (French) ETN/266
 12. Proposed Composite Motion for the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, 2p (French) ETN/267
 13. Backgrounder, Australian High Commission, Port Moresby, circulated at the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, 3p (English) ETN/268
 14. Memorandum from the Indonesian Embassy to Papua New Guinea, circulated at the ACP-EEC Paritary Assembly at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 19-23 March 1990, 5p (English) ETN/269

2. ADMINISTERING POWER: PORTUGAL

a. The Pope ignores E. Timor during presidential visit:

The Portuguese president, Mário Soares, on a visit to the Pope in the Vatican on April 27, included E. Timor among the issues in his official address to the Holy Father. Mr Soares, in his closing words, referred to the anxieties of the Maubere people concerning their cultural and religious identity and to their rights to self-determination and independence, "which are illegally denied them" and for which "we shall continue to press".

The Pope, in his reply spoke only about Portugal and the Portuguese Church and made no reference to E. Timor. (Diário de Notícias 28 April 1990)

3. INTERNATIONAL:

a. "East Timor, Land of Hope" - Seminar at the University of Oporto:

This year's Seminar on E. Timor at the University of Oporto took place from April 28 to May 1. The two principal themes were the tradition and culture of the Timorese people, on the one hand, and on the other, the possible roads to their achieving self-determination; the latter also gave rise to considerable discussion on the implications of the Timor Gap Treaty.

Among those present were the leaders of the Nationalist Convergence in Portugal and other invited Timorese, Portuguese MPs and members of solidarity groups, and the former Portuguese Governor of East Timor. Speakers from abroad were Sasha Stepan (Australia), John Taylor (UK), Liem Soei Liong (TAPOL UK) and Bishop Paul Moore (rtd.) (USA). A detailed list of participants and discussion themes will be included in the next ETN.

- Paul Moore Jnr., 71, former Anglican Bishop of New York, who led a peace-mission to Vietnam in 1970, and has also worked on missions to Moscow and Nicaragua, spoke of his visit to E. Timor in December 1989. He spoke of the "oppressive Indonesian military presence" he encountered there, and of the people living under in an "atmosphere of fear and terror".

He said he would be working in the US and lobbying the Congress to bring about an increased intervention on the part of his country on the E. Timor issue. Before returning to the US, he was received by the Portuguese President Mário Soares and Foreign Minister João de Deus Pinheiro. (Jornal de Notícias 30 April 1990, ibid. 2 May 1990)

- According to José Ramos-Horta, the former FRETILIN leader, the Timor Gap Treaty may not need to be ratified by the Australian parliament; it could be sufficient for it to be signed by the Governor General. If it should come before the parliament it is likely to be passed with little opposition.

- According to two other participants at Oporto, Pedro

Pinto and Sasha Stepan, experts in international law, based in the Hague and Melbourne respectively, Portugal needs to put aside its diplomatic considerations and take the case to the International Court in the Hague. (Público 30 April 1990; O Janeiro 30 April 1990; ETN/ 256,257,258)

b. Update on the events at the ACP-EEC Assembly in March

According to information given to the CDPM by the Portuguese MEP Barros Moura (a proposer of one of the original motions; see ETN MM 33) the four original motions from EEC representatives at the ACP-EEC Assembly at Port Moresby in March were linked by them into one composite motion. The pressure on the host country, Papua New Guinea, from Australia and Indonesia, was such that it became obvious that it would be difficult for the ACP countries to support this motion. Therefore the proposers decided to withdraw it out of respect for the host country and with the intention of proposing it at the next meeting which will take place in September of this year, in either Italy or Luxemburg.

An official protest was sent to the governments of Australia and Indonesia from the chair at the Port Moresby Assembly. Although neither country is a member of the ACP they had circulated papers concerning their actions regarding E. Timor, at the Assembly in an attempt to prevent motions concerning the issue being raised at the Assembly. (ETN 262 to 269)

East Timor News is a service which publishes information in three forms - the Monthly Memo (MM) and the occasional publications, Subject Memo (SM) and Urgent Communique (UC). It can also make available, on request, copies of all documents mentioned in these publications. It is produced by two Portuguese NGOs, CDPM (The Commission for the Rights of the Maubere People) and "Peace is possible in East Timor". The annual subscription is 100\$US. The text in East Timor News may be freely quoted but in the event of the quotation of a significant portion of its contents, ETN should be credited. Address all correspondence to East Timor News, R Pinheiro Chagas 77 2 E, 1000 Lisboa, Portugal; Tel. Lisbon (1) 574718 / 541308; Telex 64 062 CIDAC P.

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Dear Reader,

At the beginning of this year you may remember that we asked all our readers for a contribution towards the expenses of publishing and mailing East Timor News.

Some readers expressed surprise at the size of the amount we asked for; we would like to explain that ETN, given its content, is received by a relatively small number (120) of people concerned with the East Timor question, amongst whom are included a number of Timorese friends to whom it is offered free as a form of solidarity.

The expenses are therefore divided between a small number of readers which explains the rather high subscription cost. The sum requested (100\$ US) was arrived at by dividing equally the annual expenses by the number of readers (and assumed that all readers would be contributing). Knowing that some people are not in a position to pay the subscription, we asked all readers, either paying or not, to let us know if they still wish to receive ETN. As you can understand, we are keen to avoid unnecessary mailings caused by changed addresses or other changes of circumstances.

To date we have received 14 replies (either with or without payment) and subscriptions to the value of 1035\$ US. Our publishing expenses this year, up to the end of April, have already come to 2120\$ US.

Our thanks to all who have replied and if you haven't done so yet we'd like to hear from you. The letters we get let us know that our work is being found to be useful; our aim is to give you the best service we can within the means at our disposal.

If you need copies of the documents listed in our publications we can supply them on request.

Best wishes,

The East Timor News Collective

P.S. If you know of other individuals or groups who might be interested in this type of information please send us their address.

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