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# timor

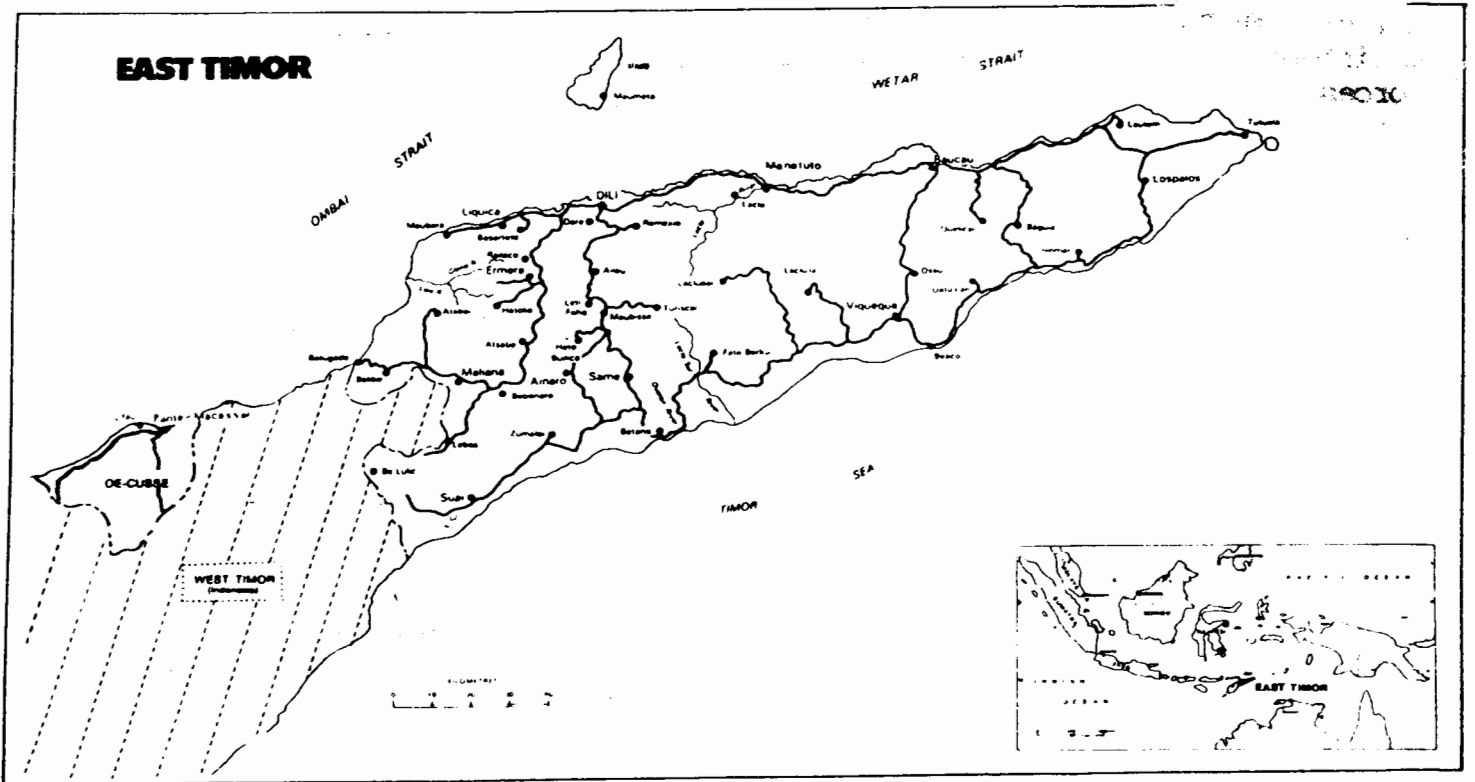
## LINK

em timor-leste  
*a paz é possível*

# CIIR



Since Indonesia invaded the Portuguese territory of East Timor in December 1975 over 100 000 Timorese - perhaps 20% of the population - have died. The Indonesian government claims that East Timor has been integrated into the Republic of Indonesia at the request of its people - a claim refuted by the people of East Timor through their constant resistance, carried on over nearly ten years, despite a massive Indonesian military presence and acute hunger, and mostly in isolation from the outside world. Their right to self-determination has been recognised formally by the United Nations General Assembly and by many of Indonesia's allies, including Britain. Nevertheless Indonesia maintains one of the world's tightest blockades around the territory, denying free access to the Red Cross and development agencies. One of the few links with the outside world is the Roman Catholic Church. TIMOR LINK is a response to the pleas of these Timorese Christians to make their situation better known.



## Contents

- East Timor since the invasion
- Letters from Timor
- UN postpones discussion on East Timor
- Portugal's crucial role
- International church concern
- Source material

## East Timor since the<sup>2</sup> invasion

Mgr Martinho da Costa Lopes, himself Timorese, was leader of the Roman Catholic Church in East Timor from 1977 to 1983. This is a statement he made in June 1984 to the Committee for Social Development and World Peace of the United States Catholic Conference.

A former Portuguese colony, East Timor is geographically distant from the United States, and since 1975, when Indonesia invaded the territory, we have been almost completely isolated from the outside world. It took more than two months for a letter from my successor, Mgr Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, to reach me in Portugal (where I now live), as the letter had to be sent by clandestine means. Because of the isolation of East Timor, it is my impression that until now the Catholic Church in America has generally known little about the Catholic Church in East Timor or of the unspeakable human suffering and oppression that have continued since the Indonesian invasion—an invasion that has claimed well over 100 000 East Timorese lives.

### The Church since the invasion

The Catholic Church in East Timor has a long history, dating back to the 16th century. But since the 1975 Indonesian invasion, our Church has seen its spiritual and material tasks greatly multiplied. We administer a wide range of programmes - from homes for 13 000 orphans, work projects for widows, to more than 70 schools of various levels with more than 20 000 students, as well as a variety of other activities too numerous to discuss here. Perhaps because of the sea of suffering that has engulfed us, the East Timorese people have increasingly turned to God and the Catholic Church (at 31 December 1982, 47% of East Timor's approximately 550 000 people were Catholic). We have ministered to those who have faced the atrocities committed by the Indonesian forces, the victims of torture, rape, beatings, inhuman prison conditions. In the face of the cultural and psychological genocide that the Indonesian Army has imposed on us, the large-scale deaths, whether directly from the war or indirectly from starvation and disease, the Catholic Church has emerged as the only organization that the East Timorese people trust. There is a special and profound respect for the Church. Everything the people know they tell to the priests. The East Timor Church has listened intently for the nearly nine years since the Indonesian invasion. With the highest authority the East Timorese Church can say that it knows the plight as well as the deepest aspirations of the people.

### The right to self-determination

And the conclusions we have reached are these. The East Timorese people must exercise their internationally-recognized right to self-determination, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and other international covenants. This right has not been exercised, as even the US State Department acknowledges. No matter how difficult the achievement of this right for the people of East Timor may now appear, the world must continue to insist that genuine self-determination be carried out. In the absence of genuine self-determination and independence for East Timor, the war and misery in East Timor will continue indefinitely.

We in the Church in East Timor live with the consequences of this war every day and while we are far from the centres of political power, we know what we see. What we see are battalion after battalion of fresh Indonesian troops sent to fight the deeply Catholic, nationalist guerillas of FRETILIN (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor). We see mass arrests, forced marches of thousands of villagers whom Indonesian troops try to use as human bait in the fight against their brothers, villagers who die miserable deaths often without even a decent burial. The fact that the Indonesian military finds it necessary to send thousand upon thousand of fresh troops and on top of this enlist the local population in their evil operations is but one sign that a strong nationalist resistance continues in East Timor. But we in the Church know that the resistance of the East Timorese people continues on all levels - in their hearts and souls, in their prayers to God.

I must say that I would have no objection if the East Timorese people, free of all pressure, internal and external, freely chose to be part of Indonesia. But I am convinced that more than 90%, if not 99%, would vote against it. It is my opinion that only through dialogue, and not through military means, can there be a lasting and just solution to the tragedy in East Timor. Western nations that proclaim the principles of justice, liberty and self-determination cannot fail to support such a process.

End the isolation

My second conclusion is that the isolation of East Timor must end immediately. Indonesia must be compelled to open East Timor to all international humanitarian and relief agencies that want to operate there, to foreign medical teams, to all independent journalists, international church groups and other independent information-gathering organizations, and access to East Timor should be completely unrestricted. Until now, there have been very few observers of this kind to visit the territory.

I must stress, however, that it would be a tragic illusion, or a cynical one, to believe that humanitarian aid and material things will by themselves solve the question of East Timor. The Indonesian military, which is responsible for many tens of thousands of deaths in East Timor, is brazen enough to boast of all the money it has spent in East Timor on roads, buildings and other facilities, which are frequently used in any case for military purposes or to otherwise facilitate their occupation of the territory. But no material goods can ever compensate for the denial of self-determination and independence, for the unending bloodshed and violence, which surely continues even as we meet. Pray for our deliverance.

Persecution of the Church

Finally, I move to a point of special gravity, namely that of the recent persecution of the Church in East Timor, as mentioned by my successor in his February 18 letter. I view these moves against the Church with the utmost seriousness, and would like to share a reflection based on my long experience. There is great resentment among certain elements of the Indonesian armed forces against the Church in East Timor, not only because of the Church's moral authority and independent organizational strength, but also because, despite constant pressure by the Indonesian military, the Church refuses to call upon the guerrillas of FRETILIN to lay down their arms. We refuse for one basic reason: in the past, many guerrillas who surrendered were executed. The East Timorese Church has no reason to trust Indonesian promises in this regard. For this refusal on our part we are now the target of retaliation. And in the final analysis, as I have stressed, the only crime the East Timorese who resist have committed is their fervent wish to be free and independent. This is the basic issue. Once again, I ask you to pray for us.

## Letters from Timor

January to June 1984

1. Massive presence of Indonesian battalions with tanks, assault vehicles and guns in Los Palos, Baucau, Laga, Ossu, Viqueque, Venilale, Venasse, Becoli, Dili, Remexio, Aileu, Maubisse, Ainaro, Same, Zumalai. Total estimated at 30 000-40 000 soldiers.

2. The people are corralled in towns and villages. They cannot go in search of food. They are subject to constant pressure and surveillance from the Indonesian military. In many towns and villages, for example Baguia and Los Palos, the people are summoned twice a day, individually, at 5.30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

3. In the months of March, April and May in various areas (Baucau, Laga, Quelicai, Fatumaca, Venilale, Ossu, Viqueque, Bobonaro, Ainaro and Same), men and youths have been forced to go with Indonesian troops to comb the mountains for the armed resistance. The troops gave them little more than a little maize. These operations used to last a week or a fortnight. The villagers would return starving, tired and ill. The military value of the operation was nil.

4. The situation of the people in many areas is very difficult. There are food shortages in Baguia, Quelicai, Los Palos, Viqueque, Maubisse, Bobonaro and Zumalai. In some parts of Viqueque district the people eat only leaves and roots.

## Letters from Timor (continued)

5. The Indonesian troops keep to towns, villages and the main roads and paths. They constantly interfere with the people. Any denunciation, even without a shred of evidence, leads immediately to imprisonment, torture and usually disappearance (murder).

6. In Baucau eight military aircraft are stationed at the airport: four Broncos and 4 jet fighters. They make daily bombing raids on various areas: Baucau, Los Palos, Viqueque, Watu-Lari, Watu-Carabau, Ainaro, Bobonaro and Zumalai.

7. At the military airport in Dili there are 12 military helicopters to transport troops, supplies and arms, and to evacuate the dead and wounded.

8. In some areas the inhabitants live in a constant state of anxiety about possible attacks from the armed resistance (Fretilin), who carry out reprisal raids or sorties to obtain food; they are also interfered with and put under pressure by the presence of the Indonesian troops, who do not defend or protect the people.

9. The armed resistance (Fretilin) is well organised and efficient in its attacks on Indonesian military posts.

10. From the middle of April to the middle of May, from the junction of the Baucau-Laga road in the direction of Quelicai, i.e. from the beach to Quelicai, military security units were placed every 20 metres. Each consisted of four Timorese hansips (auxiliaries) and an Indonesian Topi Merah (red beret).

11. In June 1984 there were 15 military checkpoints on the Dili-Baucau road. All travellers had to stop. Between Baucau and Fatumaca there were three checkpoints. Travellers were stopped, questioned and searched. The Venasse-Baucau road was patrolled by soldiers. There were soldiers every 20 metres.

12. Many political prisoners detained in August, September and October of 1983 were tortured in various ways. Some died as a result of the ill-treatment.

In May 1984 about 15 of these political prisoners were tried and sentenced, some to 17 years' imprisonment, some to 12 years and some to 7. Some of these prisoners were taken from Dili to an unknown destination. They were transported bound in a military Hercules aircraft. Among them was a Timorese woman who had given birth in prison. The baby had chains on its arms, attaching it to its mother, who carried it in her lap. Some Timorese who saw this were horrified at such cruelty.

### March to June 1984

1. In March 1984 in the region of Bobonaro some Timorese, incited by troops, lured three members of the armed resistance (Fretilin) into a trap and killed them. They took their heads to Bobonaro. The soldiers forced the people to dance for two nights in front of the heads and to kick the heads during the macabre dance. A high official then came from Dili to reward the 'heroes' who had brought the heads. The whole population was assembled, and the heroes of the episode were solemnly presented with a small sum of money.

2. Since March 1984 in the desa (area) of Hau Ba, near Bobonaro, many men and boys were arrested and killed. In the suku (district) of Kota Boot, near Hau Ba, almost all the men and boys disappeared. They were taken away by the soldiers, killed and thrown into the bush. There are eye-witnesses of the events. The witnesses speak of the total extermination of the population.

3. At the end of April 1984 two sacks containing human bodies were thrown into a gully on the Dili-Dare road at a place called Na'in. Some people noticed the smell and found the sacks with the bodies. By the middle of May the sacks had been taken away. The bodies are presumed to have been those of political prisoners.

4. In the early morning of 14 May Fretilin entered the desa of Caravela, near Venasse. On the day before they had sent word by Rekal to Battalion 401, which was stationed nearby, that they would enter Caravela on the 14th. And indeed, in the early morning of the 14th many Fretilin arrived. They killed two Indonesian soldiers, 3 Timorese hansips and two local people. Battalion 401 did not react. Fretilin took everything the people had, animals, clothes and food.

The people of Caravela have no church. The missionary from Baucau used to come from time to time and celebrate mass in one of the houses. One of the houses where the priest used to celebrate mass was burned down. On 15 May the apostolic administrator of the diocese of Dili and the governor were invited by the military command to visit the place and see that Fretilin was 'communist', since they went so far as to burn churches. But when the administrator got there on the 15th he found the remains of the house still burning. The Fretilin attack was on the 14th. How can an ordinary Timorese house, made entirely of grass and wood, take more than 24 hours to burn? The soldiers also alleged that Fretilin had burnt statues of the saints which had been in the church. In fact there were no statues at all because the building was a house, not a church, and had no statues of saints.

About the same date, 14 May, Fretilin entered the areas of Los Palos, Viqueque and Zumalai.

5. Between 19 and 20 May Fretilin entered the hamlet of Samalari, near Baucau. They killed one of the inhabitants.

6. On 21 May Fretilin entered the hamlet of Una Kerek, near Seical (Baucau). A number of civilians were killed, and one of the leaders of the community was taken into the bush.

7. On 24 May a woman called Teresa, aged 22, from the sucu of Malevru (Quelicai), who belonged to Fretilin, was caught in an ambush. She was wounded and taken, with her baby, to Baucau hospital. A few days later she was killed by the Indonesian troops.

8. On 30 May Tomas da Silva, Jacinto da Silva, Vicente Freitas, from Becoli, were arrested and taken to Baucau. They were killed in Baucau at midnight by the soldiers. The reason: they had contacts with Fretilin.

9. During May about 100 people from Allas, most of them men and boys, were arrested and taken to Same. Among them was the headman of Allas and his staff. In Same they were tortured terribly to make them confess that they had contact with Fretilin. A witness states that he heard the victims' piercing screams and could not sleep.

10. At the end of May and the beginning of June in the hamlet of Leoma, near Bazar-Tete, the soldiers began to arrest and kill many men and boys. Some managed to escape and hide in other hamlets or with relatives.

11. On 15 May, in the town of Laleia, an Indonesian soldier was seen openly kicking a head in the street; it seemed to be a boy's. All the people witnessed this in silence without saying a word or showing any reaction. Fear forces the people to hide their strongest feelings of revulsion.  
(Letter from a priest, 14 July 1984)

The greatest suffering now is that the people are confined to their villages, have nothing to eat, are ill-treated, tortured, detained, raped, killed. They are suffering from hunger, but they have no drugs

because the authorities will not allow drugs to circulate for fear that some may fall into the hands of the resistance. Illness and hunger are also carrying out their policy of exterminating the population. The diocese has been waiting since April to collect 12 boxes of drugs from the customs, and the invaders always create difficulties, and from April until now they have not allowed us to collect these drugs. It is another example of the way gifts from outside stay in the hands of the aggressors.  
(Letter from a priest, 2 July 1984)

## Portugal's crucial role

As the former colonial power in East Timor, Portugal is crucial to any solution to the problem. The 1975 Portuguese constitution formally commits the Portuguese authorities to decolonising East Timor, and its responsibility is recognised by the United Nations. Observers of the situation in East Timor, however, feel that Portugal, while formally maintaining the right of the Timorese to self-determination, has not pushed very hard to win diplomatic support in bodies such as the UN. One reason for this is the lack of support from Portugal's allies, notably the United States and the other NATO powers, who are interested in maintaining good relations with Indonesia.

A new Portuguese initiative?

Under the Portuguese constitution responsibility for East Timor lies specifically with the President, and President Eanes is generally regarded as more sympathetic to the Timorese cause than the government of Prime Minister Mario Soares, which is responsible for executing foreign policy. High hopes were therefore raised by two meetings between the President and the government in July and November 1984. The July meeting reaffirmed Portugal's position as administering power for East Timor, noted the concern expressed about the situation in the territory by various governments, by the Pope and by the bishops of Indonesia and Portugal. Most significantly, the meeting reaffirmed Portugal's commitment to 'implementing the East Timorese people's inalienable right to self-determination', and expressed determination 'to dialogue with all the parties directly involved'.

Consultation with the Timorese or compromise?

The last phrase was taken to imply a readiness on the part of Portugal to work more closely with FRETILIN, the party which governed Timor at the time of the invasion and which has since led political and military resistance to the Indonesian occupation. Previously supporters of East Timorese self-determination have feared that Portugal would be tempted to accept a face-saving compromise with Indonesia without consulting any representative body of East Timorese. A further welcome statement of the Portuguese position came in September from Foreign Minister Jaime Gama at a meeting with the UN deputy secretary general responsible for East Timor: 'Only a solution which respects the cultural identity and political self-determination of the Timorese people can provide a genuine basis for stability in that part of the world. Failure to respect these principles can only lead to the continuance of the present situation, which is utterly to be condemned.' However, later, at the UN General Assembly, Sr Gama limited himself to calling for 'a solution which respects international principles and human rights'.

# UN again postpones discussion on East Timor

The UN General Assembly's General (Agenda) Committee decided on 20 September to postpone further discussion of East Timor until the 40th General Assembly meeting in 1985. The proposal, submitted by Iceland, gave two reasons: the continuing uncertainty about actual conditions inside East Timor, and the consultations still taking place under the terms of the 1982 General Assembly resolution which instructed the UN Secretary General to conduct discussions with all parties directly concerned. In the past few months, the UN has produced two documents regarding East Timor, both of which have been strongly criticised.

The UN General Secretary's Progress Report (A/39/361, 25 July 1984) gives an account of his contacts with representatives of the Indonesian and Portuguese governments in pursuance of UN General Assembly Resolution 37/30 adopted on 23 November 1982, instructing the Secretary-General "to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem".

## UN consultations should include East Timor people.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Mr Perez-de Cuellar, on 10 August, Lord Avebury, chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group wrote:

As it stands, the report is essentially a log of contacts with representatives of the Indonesian government and the Portuguese government . . . What I did not find in the report, however, was any mention of consultations with the East Timorese themselves. There is no indication, for example, that any attempt was made to consult with the Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor (FRETILIN) or any other Timorese parties . . .

Would not the people of East Timor be considered as one of the "parties directly concerned?" And is a comprehensive settlement of the problem possible without the direct involvement of those most affected by any settlement, namely, the East Timorese? I submit that any negotiations that do not include representatives of the Timorese people will fail to produce a lasting solution to the East Timorese problem.

Frankly, I do not think you will succeed unless you follow the dictates of common sense and Resolution 37/30, and include the East Timorese themselves on your agenda of consultations . . .

## Bias in UN Working Paper attacked

The other UN document prepared for this year's General Assembly is a Working Paper written by the Secretariat (A/AC.109/783, 3 August 1984) for the Decolonisation Committee. This Working Paper was criticised by Roger Clark, Professor of Law at Rutgers School of Law, in a Petition made on behalf of the New York-based International League for Human Rights. He commends past documents from the UN Secretariat on East Timor, but expresses disappointment and concern with the tone and the selection of material for the present Report. "Too often, in our view, the Report gives undue emphasis to uncritically-presented Indonesian propaganda handouts." The Petition points out that "while Indonesian 'statistics' are reproduced extensively and uncritically, the Report downplays information coming from other sources". The Report refers casually to the letter of 16 February 1984 from the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, Mgr Belo\* whilst saying nothing of its contents.

It is instructive to compare the way in which the Belo letter is glossed over in the Secretariat document with the prominent place given to it in a letter of 6 July 1984 from 123 members of the US House of Representatives to the US Secretary of State. That letter which represents a telling indictment of the current situation in the territory and urges the US government to insist that it be alleviated, gives strong emphasis to the views of what the Congressmen refer to as a "well-regarded clergyman". What a different tone the Secretariat Report might have had if it had emphasised the words of the man of God rather than those of the governmental propaganda machine!

## FRETILIN criticism

The Working Paper and, more generally, the role of the UN and other international agencies was also criticised by the FRETILIN representative, Mr Jose Ramos Horta. The following are extracts from his statement:

Chapters V and VI deal with the "Food situation" and "Economic, Social and Educational Conditions" in East Timor. Anyone who reads these two chapters would be either impressed with the great things Indonesia has done in East Timor or would dismiss these claims as pure propaganda. What we cannot understand is how the authors of the so-called "Working paper" can be so daring in their pro-Indonesian bias to the point of reproducing in two full pages pure Indonesian propaganda. Indonesia, the aggressor responsible for the killing, famine and wanton destruction in East Timor, is presented as a generous benefactor of the East Timorese people. The authors of the "Working paper" used only two sources for the two chapters, V and VI: the Australian parliamentary delegation which visited East Timor in July of 1983 for no more than four days; and Indonesian government reports. The Australian parliamentary delegation was led by a certain Mr Morrison who is well-known for his pro-Indonesia and anti-East Timor views. Mr Morrison's report was completely discredited in Australia. The authors of the Secretariat chose to ignore other available information from more reliable sources that offer a different picture of the situation in East Timor.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been able to resume its humanitarian work in East Timor since July 1983. That I'm aware of, the ICRC has been able to make only two prison visitations in East Timor since July 1983: one in March 1984 and a second in June this year. These ICRC prison visitations are even more restricted than its activities prior to July 1983. It has been floated around the claim that ICRC has had uninterrupted activities in the Atauro island. This has been presented as a major concession by Indonesia. It hides the fact that Atauro is only a prison island and where ICRC presence is most needed is in the mainland where major military activities occur daily. The fact is that the Indonesian military authorities do not wish and do not allow the ICRC to be witness to its brutal war of aggression against the people of East Timor.

East Timor is the only case in the world where a major conflict is taking place with enormous human suffering and yet not one *single* international relief organisation is operating there. It is claimed that UNICEF is operating there. This is misleading because UNICEF's entire program is being handled by the Indonesian Red cross which is headed by a Brig.-General. Moreover, one of the most striking features of UNICEF/ Indonesian program there is to teach the Indonesian language to the East Timorese. In a letter to its Director General and in a statement before this Committee during its consideration of the East Timor question last year, I had the opportunity to express my outrage at UNICEF's involvement in spreading Indonesian language in East Timor. I repeat here again FRETILIN's firm objection to UNICEF and to any other international organisation working with the Indonesian Red Cross.

Source: TAPOL Bulletin, September 1984.

# International church concern

## Pope voices concern over Timor

Pope John Paul II used the occasion of accepting the credentials of Indonesia's new Ambassador to the Holy See in July to admonish the Indonesian Government on East Timor.

He told the Ambassador, Gen. Hardiman Sastrapoespita: 'The Holy See continues to follow the situation with preoccupation and with the hope that particular consideration will be given in every circumstance to the ethnic, religious and cultural identity of the people. It is the ardent wish of the Holy See that all the rights of individuals be respected and that every effort be made to lighten the sufferings of the people by facilitating the work of relief organisations and by assuring the access of humanitarian aid to those in need'. (*New York Times*, 8 July 1984)

This is the first time the Pope has made a public criticism of the situation in East Timor. His statement follows recent expressions of concern by the Vatican appointed Administrator of the Dili diocese, Mgr Belo and the Bishops Conferences of Indonesia and Portugal.

## Japanese Bishops appeal to Portugal

The Japanese Catholic Council for Justice and Peace raised the issue of East Timor with the Portuguese Prime Minister, Mario Soares, on the occasion of his visit to Tokyo in June.

In a letter dated June 19, 1984 the Council wrote: 'Out of Christian concern for our suffering brothers and sisters in East Timor, we wish to plead with Your Excellency to do all in your power to carry out the mandate in your new constitution to make every effort to work for the realization of self-determination for the East Timorese who, despite annexation and invasion by Indonesia, continue to struggle for their independence and for the survival of their culture.'

In its 1983 session, the UN Human Rights Commission passed a resolution affirming the 'inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), and for all interested parties, namely Portugal, as the administering power, and the representatives of the East Timorese people, as well as Indonesia, to cooperate fully with the UN with a view to guaranteeing the free and full exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of East Timor'.

Reports continue to come in about many arrests, human rights violations, and disappearances of East Timorese. There are also reports of recurring famine.

We are indeed saddened by the plight of the East Timorese people and pray that any efforts you make on their behalf will bring the fighting in East Timor to a stop and put an end to the suffering of the people there'.

The letter was signed by the Council's President, Bishop Aloisius Soma of Nagoya and Co-Moderator, Bishop Stephen Hamao of Yokohama.

Address: 10-1 Rokubancho, Chujoda-Ku, Tokyo 102, Japan.

## Australian religious support Timor

The heads of religious orders in Australia have reaffirmed their support for the church in East Timor and ask that the people of East Timor should be able to participate in decisions on their socio-political future and in ordinary economic, cultural and family affairs.

## Dutch bishops' statement

The bishops' conference of the Netherlands has written a letter to Mgr Belo expressing the support of the Dutch church for the church in East Timor.

The Netherlands, as the former colonial power in the territories which are now Indonesia, continues to maintain close relations in many fields with its former colony. It is therefore the country which is best informed about the situation in Indonesia, but economic and other interests make it difficult for it to take a position critical of the Indonesian government. In this context the solidarity shown by the Dutch bishops acquires a special importance. In the letter they say that peace and a just solution must respect the legitimate interests of both sides, and in particular respect for the the people of East Timor and its survival as a historical entity.

## Setúbal (Portugal) Justice and Peace Commission

'It is the firm conviction of this commission that the right to self-determination is one of the most fundamental rights of a people.... This right is being violently denied to the suffering people of East Timor by the Indonesian authorities.'

The Setubal commission also accuses the Portuguese government of 'accepting too passively the course of events in Timor.... The Portuguese authorities have a duty to use all possible means to support the people of East Timor in the defence of its survival and dignity.'

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## Portuguese Moslems appeal to Indonesia

The President of the Islamic community of Lisbon has contacted the Indonesian minister of religious affairs to ask that Indonesia should respect the cultural, religious and social identity of the people of East Timor.

According to press reports, the contact was made after a meeting between the President of the Islamic community and the bishop of Funchal at which relations between the Catholic Church and the Moslem world were discussed.

Sources: East Timor Report, A Paz é Possível



## 123 US Congress reps. urge settlement of Timor conflict

A bi-partisan group of 123 members of the US Congress urged Secretary of State, George Schultz to seek 'an equitable settlement of the conflict in East Timor' during his visit to Indonesia in July, the first by a US Secretary of State since the 1975 invasion.

Dated 6 July 1984 their letter to Schultz reads:

'We are keenly aware of the importance of Indonesia and the need to maintain good relations between our two countries. Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the situation in East Timor where, as in Afghanistan, a people are living under a military regime imposed by force, in violation of international law.'

In a move considered 'uncharacteristic for an administration that has taken a *soft* approach to human rights' (*Newsweek*, 30 July 1984), Schultz reportedly delivered the letter to Indonesia's Foreign Minister Mochtar. Mochtar dismissed it saying it contradicted the findings of other observers.

### African appeal to Portugal

At a meeting in Bissau at the beginning of July, the foreign ministers of Angola, Mozambique, Guine-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe expressed their support for the East Timorese people in their struggle for independence, and asked the Portuguese government to 'accept its responsibilities' as the former administering power for East Timor. (PP)

### International pressure renewed

To mark the ninth anniversary of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor on 7 December, a number of international agencies and solidarity groups issued a declaration calling for recognition of the wishes of the people of East Timor and consultation with the FRETILIN resistance movement. The declaration also appealed for a cease-fire, free access to East Timor for humanitarian organisations, churches, observers and independent journalists, and for international pressure for the application of the principles of international law.

Two international conferences are being organised by organisations concerned with East Timor to assess the present situation. Among the subjects for discussion are pressure on the 1985 UN General Assembly and lobbying the members of the Western aid consortium which finances projects in Indonesia. This group, IGGI, which includes Britain, France and the Netherlands among its members, is due to meet in the Netherlands in the summer of 1985.

### Indonesia admits strength of resistance

In an interview in Jakarta in the middle of December 1984, General Benny Murdani, the commander-in-chief of the Indonesian armed forces, admitted that Indonesia had a long way to go to defeat or win over the population of East Timor.

'I'm not saying there's no end in sight,' he was quoted as saying, 'but it will take some time to resolve.... In Westmoreland's words, this is a struggle for the hearts and minds of the people. This is not something you can achieve in one or two years.' The reference here is to the US military commander during the Vietnam war, and the 'hearts and minds' strategy is now notorious as one element in a sophisticated, and often brutal, campaign against a hostile local population.

General Murdani also admitted that fighting was likely to continue for some time in East Timor. 'We know that we cannot get away from being ambushed once in a while, and maybe some of our weapons and ammunition gets into their hands.' Estimating the strength of the FRETILIN guerrilla forces, the general said, 'The final number varies between 500 and 700. Let's be a little conservative and say 1 000 weapons and 1 000 armed men, which is not true at all because it's much less than 1 000.' He gave the number of Indonesian forces in East Timor as 7 000.

These figures are less significant than General Murdani's admission that resistance is continuing. Having abandoned their original claim that the people of East Timor had chosen integration into Indonesia, the Indonesian authorities have continually sought to minimise the extent of opposition to their presence in the territory. Recent Indonesian statements claimed that Timorese guerrillas numbered no more than 200-300.

### Publications on East Timor

CIIR Comment, 'East Timor' (1982)  
TAPOL bulletin, bimonthly  
East Timor Report, bimonthly  
James Dunn, Timor: A People Betrayed, Jacaranda Press, Milton, Queensland, Australia, 1983  
Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, The War Against East Timor, Zed Press, London, 1984.

### Organisations working on East Timor

CIIR, 22 Coleman Fields, London N1 7AF, UK.  
CDPM, Rua Pinheiro Chagas, 77-2 Esq., 1000 Lisboa, Portugal.  
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