

*Estafeta*Voice of the East Timor *Action Network/U.S.*

Vol. 7, No. 3/Winter 2001-2002

East Timor Elects Constituent Assembly

by *Charles Scheiner*

On August 30, 2001, nearly 400,000 East Timorese people went to the polls. Patiently waiting for hours under the hot sun, they cast ballots to choose a Constituent Assembly that will write their constitution, establishing the foundation of their soon-to-be-independent nation. When the votes were counted, the FRETILIN party received 57%, short of the two-thirds majority needed to unilaterally enact articles of the constitution. East Timor has now entered a new era – partisan political negotiations to select a government and pass legislation, and lively efforts by civil society to influence the process.

By all accounts, the campaign and elections were peaceful. Nearly all of the sixteen political parties had signed a “Pact of National Unity” prior to the vote, agreeing that East Timor was separate from Indonesia and promising to forego violence or personal attacks against other parties and candidates. The votes were freely and fairly cast and counted, and the results reflected the will of the 91 percent of the registered voters who turned out.

The peaceful atmosphere during the election contrasted sharply with the referendum two years ago, when courageous people risked their lives to vote overwhelmingly for independence. Now, however, there are no Indonesian troops in East Timor, and the mi-

litias they created have been disbanded or relocated to Indonesia. Nobody was kidnapped or murdered after the results were announced, no houses were burned, and no international troops had to be called in.

Nevertheless, some parts of the electoral process raised concerns about East Timor’s democratic future. Observers pointed out problems with using civil registration lists as voter rolls (not their intended purpose), which forced some people to vote far from where they lived. In addition, there were widespread deficiencies in training of international electoral officers, and efforts to meet the UN’s stated goal of transferring skills to
(continued on page 10)

Ashes to Ashes Reflections on Terror

by *John M. Miller*

Two different election days will forever be seared in my memory.

On August 30, 1999, the UN held East Timor’s historic independence vote. Standing near a polling station in the mountains west of Dili, I felt the ashes, still warm, of a home burned to the ground that morning. Soldiers from the military post nearby did it as a warning, I was told. In the coming weeks, that destruction would be magnified many thousand times.

On September 11, 2001, I was serving as a poll worker at a more

mundane election: New York’s municipal primary. As we waited in a Brooklyn elementary school for a decision on postponing the vote, I watched bits of paper and ash floating to the ground, remnants of the World Trade Center, blown away by hijacked planes just across the river from where I live in Brooklyn.

Each attack was a unique expression of vicious political terror.

The first official act of East Timor’s newly elected assembly was to mourn for the dead and missing from the awful attacks on New York and Washington. The East Timorese know much about
(continued on page 11)



For decades, East Timorese have grieved for missing or murdered family and friends whose bodies could not be recovered at this cross in the center of the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili. After the September 11 killings in the United States, hundreds of people spontaneously brought flowers and lit candles at this traditional mourning place.

Charles Scheiner

About East Timor and the East Timor *Action* Network

Estafeta is the Portuguese word for messenger. In East Timor, it identifies people who, with great courage and ingenuity, carried messages throughout the resistance and civilian underground during the Indonesian occupation.

East Timor is a half-island the size of Massachusetts, 400 miles northwest of Australia. It was a Portuguese colony for four centuries, and its 600,000 people briefly tasted independence following the anti-fascist Portuguese revolution in 1974.

On December 7, 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor after getting the "green light" from President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger. Indonesian armed forces occupied East Timor until October 1999, with essential military and diplomatic support provided by the United States.

Between 1975 and mid-1999, more than 200,000 East Timorese people (one-third of the pre-invasion population) were killed by massacre, forced starvation and disease. Systematic campaigns of rape, murder, torture and arbitrary arrest terrorized the population. Natural resources (including oil, coffee and marble) were pillaged by Indonesian dictator Suharto's military-business complex.

Suharto ruled Indonesia brutally for 32 years (and oversaw genocide in East Timor for 23). But the Indonesian people forced him to resign in 1998, and the Habibie government allowed the East Timorese to vote. On August 30, 1999, after nearly a quarter-century of brutal Indonesian rule, 78.5% chose independence.

Following the vote, the Indonesian military and their militias carried out their threats of retaliation. Thousands were killed. More than three-quarters of the people were displaced from their homes, more than a quarter-million taken forcibly to Indonesia. Most towns and houses in East Timor were leveled.

East Timor is now under a UN-administered transition to nationhood. But around 100,000 people have still not been able to return, and those who have face a mammoth task of reconstructing their country from scratch. Not only must they design their political system, they have to find their families, build their homes, salvage their society, and travel the difficult road from occupation through

aid-dependency to self-sufficiency.

International awareness of the horror of East Timor increased after November 12, 1991, when Indonesian soldiers acting under high-level orders killed more than 270 nonviolent demonstrators at Santa Cruz Cemetery in Dili. Unlike many previous massacres, this one was witnessed by foreign journalists, who documented the incredible courage of the demonstrators — and the horrific inhumanity of the Indonesian army.

The East Timor *Action* Network was created in response to the Dili massacre. ETAN is a grassroots movement of more than 10,000

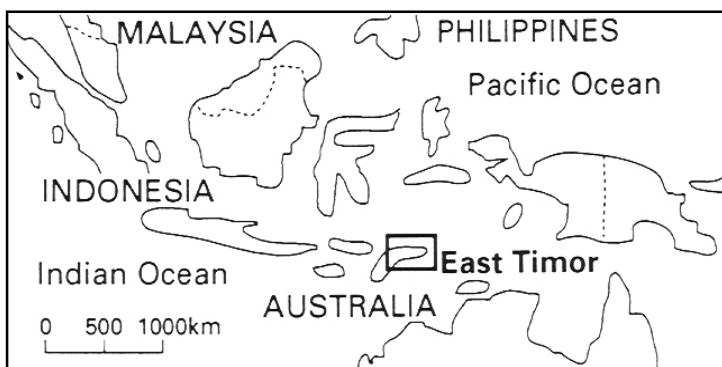
members, with local chapters in 27 cities and states. We have worked for human and political rights for the people of East Timor and for Indonesians who are struggling for democracy in their country.

East Timor is now under UN administration on the way to self-government and will declare independence on May 20, 2002. ETAN is supporting the transition and working to enhance empowerment, de-

mocracy, and development in East Timor, as well as supporting efforts to advance democracy in Indonesia.

ETAN embraces tactics from public education to protest, lobbying to local organizing, diplomacy to development, resource production to media work. Our pressure was instrumental in beginning to stem the flow of U.S. military support to Indonesia in 1992, and we have worked to maintain limitations on such aid since then. Our grassroots pressure blocked numerous weapons sales to Indonesia, and President Clinton's belated cutoff of all U.S. military support in September 1999 opened the way for the Indonesian military's withdrawal. We will continue to pressure Indonesia until all East Timorese have been allowed to return home, the Indonesian military has allowed democracy in areas remaining under its influence, and those responsible for crimes in East Timor from 1975 to 1999 have been held accountable.

ETAN is made up of people just like you who contact their representatives in Washington, protest, and educate others in the community about the situation in East Timor and Indonesia. We survive on your generous donations of time, talent and money. Please join us. And thank you. ■



The East Timor *Estafeta* is the newsletter of the East Timor *Action* Network of the United States. We welcome your comments and suggestions on improving its layout or content.

Editors: Chris Lundry
John M. Miller
Diane Farsetta

Layout: Eric S. Piotrowski

ETAN National Offices

Washington Representative

Karen Orenstein
PO Box 15774
Washington, DC 20003
202-544-6911, fax 202-544-6118
karen@etan.org

Field Organizer

Diane Farsetta
1202 Williamson Street
Madison, WI 53703
608-663-5431; fax: 608-227-0141
cell phone 608-347-4598
diane@etan.org

Outreach/Media Coordinator

John M. Miller
48 Duffield Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-596-7668; fax 718-222-4097
cell phone 917-690-4391
john@etan.org

ETAN to Kissinger: No Justice, No Peace!

by *Diane Farsetta*

Even before Christopher Hitchens' well-researched book *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, which details the crimes against humanity committed by the former U.S. Secretary of State, ETAN members knew of Kissinger's bloody past. Just one day before the Indonesian military invasion of East Timor in 1975, Kissinger and Gerald Ford gave then-Indonesian president Suharto the green light to go ahead with his brutal plans. So what better way to welcome Henry the K to your town than with some good old-fashioned ruckus-raising? And what better way to educate people about one of the more sordid episodes of U.S. foreign policy?

That's exactly what ETAN activists in Philadelphia and San Francisco did. On June 28, the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia hosted America's most notorious war criminal. With only three days notice, ETAN/Philadelphia created several large banners with messages such as "Kissinger's Monstrous Crimes Cannot Be White-washed Here!" Some people stood outside with the banners while others handed out fliers at the event entrances. The fliers were designed to look like a welcome on one side, but on the reverse they asked, "Why does Dr. Kissinger still express no remorse for sanctioning Indonesia's genocidal policy in East Timor? Can we stomach such slaughters as 'collateral damage,' an inevitable sacrifice others must pay for the sake of U.S. financial interests abroad?"

On July 19, Kissinger traveled to that bastion of realpolitik, San Francisco, at the invitation of the Commonwealth Club. A 100-strong crowd welcomed him with a rally co-organized by ETAN/San Francisco that focused on the East Timorese and Chilean blood on his hands. Demonstrators distributed leaflets with suggested questions for Henry, which many attending the event read. Some protestors entered the event. One Chilean activist unfurled a

banner reading "Arrest Henry Kissinger for Crimes Against Humanity" and yelled "Remember Chile!" before leaving the talk of his own accord. Others were able to submit written questions about Kissinger's various murderous escapades. After seeing several such pointed queries, the moderator asked Henry, "How do you respond to recent articles and charges that you should be tried for crimes against humanity?" Kissinger responded by calling the discourse on his bloody past "cheap political points" and cryptically claiming his critics are "undermining the very principle they're interested in."

Betraying a predilection for the left coast, Kissinger came to Sacramento on September 21 at the invitation of the local chamber of commerce. ETAN/SF and other members of the ad hoc Committee to Greet Kissinger did just that, with signs and ETAN/Philadelphia's banners. Reports indicate that support of the demonstration by passers-by was inversely proportional to the value of their automobiles.

In mid-August, New York's Village Voice pondered whether it's possible to place Henry under a citizen's arrest. The article notes: "Activists from the East Timor *Action* Network have repeatedly sought to question Kissinger during his book tours, but he didn't answer or disappeared." Let's keep the welcome wagon going!

For more information on Kissinger's record and ETAN's protests, see www.etan.org/news/kissinger/default.html. ■



David Hanks/Global Exchange

San Francisco

ETAN Marks Anniversaries with Nationwide Actions

by *John M. Miller and Diane Farsetta*

On September 6, ETAN chapters marked two dark anniversaries for East Timor with vigils and other actions, including a press conference with members of Congress in Washington, DC. These actions drew attention to the ongoing refugee crisis and the need for an international tribunal, and demonstrated the continued commitment of rights activists and supportive Congressional offices to justice and security for East Timor.

September 6 is the anniversary of the Indonesian military-led massacre in 1999 in the town of Suai, East Timor, one of the worst

after East Timor voted overwhelmingly for independence. The date is also the anniversary of the murder — a year later — of three United Nations refugee workers and others by military-backed militia in Atambua, West Timor.

Across the country, ETAN chapters and members organized actions in 21 cities. Demonstrations took place at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, DC, and the Indonesian consulates in Chicago and San Francisco. Vigils for the refugees were held in Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Green Bay, and Atlanta. In Tempe (AZ), Seattle, Bloomington (IN), St. Louis, Ithaca and

Stony Brook (NY), Providence (RI), and New Orleans, ETAN members did local outreach and education and urged members of Congress to co-sponsor resolutions calling for an international tribunal for East Timor. ETANers also wrote letters to the editor and op-eds, which were published in the Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Capital Times (WI), Hartford Courant (CT), and elsewhere. ETAN staff and members also spoke to various media on the day's historical context and its contemporary relevance.

Senator Tom Harkin (IA) and Repre-
(continued on page 8)

September 11 Aftermath Brings Shifts in Washington

by Karen Orenstein

Just as the people of East Timor were peacefully awaiting the results of their historic first election for a Constituent Assembly, members of the United States Senate and House were returning from their August recess to finish the 2001 congressional session. Passage of appropriations and authorization bills was high on their agenda. Then hijacked planes hit the Pentagon and World Trade Center on September 11 and everything changed.

Riding on a wave of congressional support, President Bush sought authority “to waive all existing restrictions on U.S. military assistance and weapons exports for the next five years to any country if he determines the aid will help the fight against international terrorism,” according to the Washington Post. Concerned that such a waiver would set back our efforts on many fronts, ETAN worked with the Indonesia Human Rights Network (IHRN) and other members of the Arms Transfers Working Group to urge members of Congress to reject this dangerous initiative. Bush backed down on his blanket request but received waivers for India and Pakistan.

In a bid to gain Indonesian support, Bush maintained a scheduled meeting with Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri on September 19. The White House announced the U.S. would lift the embargo on commercial sales of non-lethal defense articles and expand contact between the U.S. and Indonesian militaries. These commitments, while incremental changes reflecting prior Bush

administration policies, are nonetheless very disturbing. They were freely given without any commitment from Megawati to attend to rights abuses of the military and police — serious issues she is unlikely to address without substantial international pressure given her reportedly close ties to the armed forces.

As of this writing, the Foreign Operations Appropriation bill, the only bill to contain restrictions on relations with the Indonesian military, has not yet passed. The bill’s “Leahy conditions” restrict International Military Education and Training and Foreign Military Financing programs for the Indonesian military contingent on resolution of refugee, security and justice issues in East Timor and Indonesia. None of these very reasonable conditions have been met. While some in the administration — particularly the Pentagon — would like a free hand to fully engage with the TNI, the chances of successful renewal of the conditions are good. Congratulations to ETAN and IHRN activists who kept up pressure to maintain these protections! Many members of Congress joined ETAN and IHRN in opposing closer military ties, as evident from letters, statements and provisions in the appropriations bill. However, it is important to keep up this pressure in the months ahead.

The Foreign Operations Appropriations bills in both the House and Senate provide \$25 million in U.S. assistance for civil society in East Timor. The Senate version contains strong report language expressing disappointment with the Indonesian government’s failure “to prosecute and punish mili-

tary officers and militia leaders responsible for planning and carrying out atrocities in East Timor” and the September 2000 murder of UN refugee workers. It also expresses support for the new country of East Timor, condemns the refugee crisis in West Timor, and expresses concern over the increase of HIV/AIDS infection and the rise of prostitution.

Despite the objections of ETAN and IHRN, this year’s bills include language allowing for U.S. military training of some Indonesian civilians under the Expanded International Military Education and Training program.

The Senate has yet to pass its version of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act. Like the House bill passed in May, it is expected to authorize the appropriation of \$25 million in assistance. The bill will likely include an amendment offered by Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) covering many aspects of U.S. relations with East Timor, including the establishment of official diplomatic ties, trade relations, and security assistance. Final passage of the appropriations and authorization acts has been delayed as a result of September 11 and consequent U.S. actions.

Other challenges to U.S.-East Timor relations include the blocking of administration requests to establish a fully-accredited U.S. diplomatic facility in Dili by Senators Judd Gregg (R-NH) and Ernest Hollings (D-SC), ranking member and chair, respectively, of the Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations Subcommittee. After pressure from friends of East Timor in Congress, they finally agreed to excise damaging and inaccurate language they had originally inserted in the Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations bill. On the positive side, holds by Hollings and Gregg on funds to pay for the United States’ share of funding for the UN peacekeeping mission in East Timor for Fiscal Year 2001 were lifted. Administration-wide problems, however, still exist with funding for post-independence UN assistance to East Timor. The Bush administration remains reluctant to fully fund the civilian component of the UN’s post-independence peacekeeping mission. At the initiative of Tony Hall (D-OH), members of Congress wrote the administration in late October urging it to agree to the UN and East Timor’s request to pay for needed civilian advisors to the young government from assessed contributions and to adequately fund the Serious Crimes Unit.

ETAN Needs Your Support

East Timor will celebrate its independence on May 20, 2002, a day that will be an important transition point in this long-suffering people’s struggle for true self-determination. International solidarity continues to be essential — and ETAN needs your support to continue our work to bring the East Timorese refugees home, to hold accountable those responsible for the genocidal occupation of East Timor, and to build powerful partnerships between the grassroots in the U.S. and East Timor. As East Timor’s chief minister Mari Alkatiri stated during the August 2001 Constituent Assembly election, “We struggled for more than 24 years for independence. We’ve learned the lesson that even small people have a voice.” Add your voice today!

Please remember ETAN in your year-end givings. Donations of any size for ETAN’s political and advocacy work should be made out to ETAN (these are not tax-deductible). Tax-deductible donations over \$50 can be made out to “The Foundation for International Scientific Cooperation” with “ETAN/U.S.” in the check memo line; these support our educational work. All donations should be mailed to ETAN at 1202 Williamson St., Madison, WI 53703. You can also give securely online at www.etan.org/do/donate.htm. Thank you for your support!

Concurrent congressional resolutions calling for “the establishment of an international war crimes tribunal to prosecute crimes against humanity” carried out by the Indonesian military in East Timor, H. Con. Res. 60 and S. Con. Res. 9, continued to gain support. H. Con. Res. 60 is now up to 59 co-sponsors, and S. Con. Res. 9 is up to 11. While this commendable progress is the direct result of constituent pressure, we desperately need to get more Republicans on both bills, especially the Senate version. These resolutions will carry over into 2002.

In a press conference organized by ETAN on September 6, several senators and representatives stressed the necessity of an international tribunal on East Timor and addressed the ongoing East Timorese refugee crisis (see page 3).

Pressure for an international tribunal on East Timor is particularly important now as the Megawati administration attempts to pacify the international community with a revised version of the decree establishing an Indonesian ad hoc human rights court on East Timor. The changes actually make it even more unlikely that high-ranking military will be tried for their crimes. The decree limits the court’s jurisdiction to crimes committed in April and September of 1999 and in just three of the thirteen districts of East Timor. This excludes many atrocities, including the mass displacement and deportation of three-fourths of East Timor’s population and the high-level coordination of the scorched earth campaign by Indonesian security forces and political leaders. It also excludes all cases of the extensive use of violence against East Timorese women.

In June, the Senate passed Senate Resolution 91 introduced by Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) “condemning the murder of a United States citizen and other civilians, and expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the failure of the Indonesian judicial system to hold accountable those responsible for the killings.” The resolution further recommends that the Bush administration consider judicial reform and accountability when determining bilateral and multilateral financial assistance for Indonesia.

Also this summer, under the leadership of Rep. Nita Lowey (D-

NY), 44 representatives wrote Secretary of State Powell urging him not to give credibility to the June registration of refugees and requesting that he address worsening humanitarian conditions, widespread violence against women, and the forced separation of children from their parents by militia-run organizations. The Senate, led by Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI), sent a similar letter with 17 co-signers. In late summer, 22 representatives joined Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) in a letter to Megawati conveying strong congressional concern about respect for human rights, military reform, and accountability for human rights violations in her new administration.

Staff members of Reps. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) and Jim Leach (R-IA) visited East Timor and Indonesia in early July. Their visit led to a letter by Reps. Henry Hyde (R-IL), Leach, McKinney, Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Tom Lantos (D-CA) to then-President Wahid and Major General Willem da Costa concerning the safety of 1250 East Timorese refugees who requested repatriation during the refugee registration in early June. Rep. Tony Hall also visited East Timor after decades of strong support. Upon his return to Washington, DC, he encouraged both the U.S. and the UN to make a long-term commitment to East Timor.

In early November, eight members of Congress wrote the U.S. representative to the Consultative Group on Indonesia (its international donors) to emphasize resolution of human rights and refugee issues in any pledges of non-humanitarian assistance.

Congressional, administration, and other governments’ reactions to the September 11 attacks present a serious risk of compromise on the rights of East Timorese, Indonesians, and others throughout the world. As U.S. government and media attention shifts further away from East Timor and human rights in general, we must be as vigilant as ever to ensure that years of human rights work are not lost, but maintained and strengthened. The long duration of East Timor’s refugee crisis and lack of justice for the East Timorese people warn us against complacency. Keep those visits, phone calls, faxes, Os, and letters to Congress and the administration coming.

For more information, see www.etan.org/legislation. ■

Phillips Petroleum and Canberra Play an Old Game

by *Matthew Jardine*

Once again, greedy oil companies and their allies in the Australian government are trying to take advantage of East Timor. And, once again, they are wrong.

The latest controversy concerns an announcement on July 26 by Phillips Petroleum, a U.S.-based oil company, and its fellow investors in the Timor Gap. In a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Phillips expressed its dismay that East Timorese leaders will not guarantee them the same tax rates they received from the Indonesian occupation authorities. For this reason, Phillips and its partners are delaying “indefinitely” the construction of a \$500 million pipeline that would carry natural gas from the Bayu-Undan field to Darwin.

A spokesperson for Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer criticized the

East Timorese position for reportedly trying to extract a further \$500 million from oil companies involved in the Timor Gap. While acknowledging East Timor’s right to decide its own tax policies, he claimed that East Timor’s position contradicts a signed promise by East Timorese leaders Xanana Gusmão, José Ramos Horta and Mari Alkatiri in October 1999. Reportedly, this agreement stated that taxation rates would be no higher than those under the Indonesian authorities. “We think it’s important that [East Timor] holds up its original commitment,” stated Downer’s spokesperson.

Rightfully, UN administrator Sergio Vieira de Mello publicly expressed strong disapproval of Phillips Petroleum and various Australian government officials. And lead negotiators for the recently-signed Timor Gap Treaty, Mari Alkatiri and Peter

Galbraith, voiced their support for de Mello’s position, with Minister Alkatiri characterizing the concerns of the oil companies and Canberra as “misdirected.”

Phillips and Canberra are attempting to hold East Timor hostage to supposed “promises” made in the immediate aftermath of 1999’s campaign of widespread murder and destruction by the Indonesian military and its militia proxies. In doing so, they are trying to maintain a fiscal regime very favorable to the interests of the oil companies, a position gained because of Indonesia’s desire to gain international acceptance of its illegal annexation of East Timor. In this regard, Phillips and Canberra are trying to institutionalize the result of a criminal act, one in which they were partners.

As former Political Affairs Minister, Peter Galbraith argued, “In October 1999, while

(continued on page 11)

ETAN Tour Spotlights Refugee Crisis

by Diane Farsetta

Over the summer, ETAN renewed its efforts to ensure a just resolution to the plight of up to 100,000 East Timorese trapped in militia- and military-controlled refugee camps in Indonesia by increasing contacts and collaborating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) based in Indonesian West Timor. Our partnership with these NGOs strengthened our outreach, educational, media, and lobbying work, enabled us to effectively address major developments in the situation, and continues to provide us with important on-the-ground information.

In May and June, ETAN hosted a speaking tour with Winston Neil Rondo, the General Secretary of the Centre for Internally Displaced People's Services (CIS), based in Kupang, West Timor. The tour traveled to Los Angeles, Boston, Rhode Island, New York, and Washington DC. Even though it was summer, local organizers were able to host many successful events (perhaps most memorably a joint talk with Noam Chomsky in Boston), schedule radio and newspaper interviews, and inform their local communities on the issue.

Winston Rondo spent seven months in East Timor as an accredited observer of the August 1999 referendum on independence. When the Indonesian military began its post-ballot scorched earth campaign, forcing some 300,000 East Timorese into West Timor, Rondo returned to his native Kupang and helped found CIS. CIS started working with the refugees in West Timor at the time of their expulsion from East Timor in September 1999. CIS has provided humanitarian assistance to thousands of families and children, investigated human rights abuses, counseled women victims of violence and reported on violence against women in the camps, and disseminated accurate information on repatriation to refugees to combat militia intimidation.

In public presentations, media interviews, and meetings with policy makers, Rondo provided shocking information on conditions in the camps and stressed the need for military and militia leaders to be held accountable for serious crimes committed in East and West Timor. He put human faces on the desperation caused by the violence, malnutrition, and spreading epidemics in the camps. Rondo related the following incident during his U.S. visit: "Last January there was an accident in the camp of Tuapukan near Kupang, at the time home to 15,000 displaced persons. A small girl was hit by a car and killed. Such an incident can turn violent, and the driver, crying from fear, got down on his knees in front of the girl's mother to ask for mercy. The woman said, 'It's no use crying like a child, because everyone dies sooner or later. Just give me Rp. 200,000 (\$20) so I can have a small ceremony and bury my daughter.' This was said without any trace of emotion on the woman's face. The driver paid and the

whole thing was over in five minutes; a cheap and brief transaction for a human life. I later found out this woman had lost two children in the camps to sickness and that her husband had been killed in the post-referendum violence in East Timor. Suffering in the traumatic conditions of the camp, with limited food, water, and medicine, and a cycle of violence and intimidation without end has left people completely without hope for the future."

On June 6 and 7, the Indonesian government carried out a registration of East Timorese refugees, with the stated goal of determining the size of the refugee population and recording whether refugee families wished to resettle in Indonesia or return to East Timor. Information from CIS and other West Timorese organizations detailed serious problems with the registration, including widespread militia intimidation and misinformation, lack of security and confidentiality for registrants, and registration by many non-refugees. On June 7, ETAN and CIS released a joint statement outlining these flaws. Our statement urged the international community to reject the registration and added: "The United Nations conducted the 1999 election, while leaving security in the hands of the Indonesian military, thereby creating the conditions which forced these refugees from their homeland, and the UN should acknowledge its responsibility to enable them to rebuild their lives."

Also on June 7, Winston Rondo and ETAN staff met with officials and media at the UN in New York. We presented our information, questions, and demands to the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), the Department of Political Affairs,

(continued on page 10)



Diane Farsetta

New Resources on East Timor

Inform and motivate other members of your community, university departments, religious leaders, local progressive organizations, Congressional offices, media contacts and others with these great new resources:

- **REFUGEE TESTIMONIAL BOOKLETS:** 8 pages of full-color pictures from West Timor, excerpts from interviews with East Timorese refugees and important information on the ongoing crisis. \$1.50 each postpaid, \$1 each for 10 or more postpaid.
- **VIDEOTAPES:** "From East Timor to the U.S.", a talk by Amy Goodman of Democracy Now! in Exile and other new videos. Write for info.
- **BOOKS:** "Self-Determination in East Timor: The United Nations, the Ballot, and International Intervention" by Ian Martin, head of the UN mission which administered the 1999 referendum on independence. \$13.95 each plus \$2 postage and handling.

See www.etan.org/resource/booksetc.htm for a complete list of resources. For more information or to order, write ETAN, PO Box 15774, Washington, DC 20003 or karen@etan.org.

President Megawati: Bad News for East Timor

by Anton Sitepu

In the superb documentary film *Scenes from an Occupation*, Megawati Sukarnoputri appears at a rally in Dili, East Timor three weeks before the referendum of August 1999. She wears an East Timorese cloth over her shoulders as she stands stiffly before the lectern and implores the crowd to vote in favor of “autonomy” and remain within Indonesia: “If you vote for independence, you will no longer be able to call me Mother.” Given that she had never shown any concern for the East Timorese before and that she was supporting the army’s ultra-masculine occupation of their land, this was a particularly grotesque manipulation of the matronly image.

Some of her “children” in the assembled crowd — the militia leaders touted by their army handlers as noble sons of the soil — had only recently committed massacres of defenseless women and children. But that was none of her concern. Nor was it her concern that her most devoted “son,” the Butcher of Dili, Eurico Guterres, was up in the bleachers cursing under his breath (but still loud enough for the camera to record) the rent-a-crowd he had paid to greet her with loud cheers: “They yell ‘autonomy, autonomy’ now but when it comes time to vote they’ll vote for independence.” This was no concern to Megawati since she was lost in a fantasy world, where she was, by no labor of her own, a Mother figure for the poor child-like wretches of East Timor who only desired independence out of the sheer stupidity of their malnourished brains. A nice motherly touch and voila, the pathetic simpletons will swoon in rapture for Indonesia.

As the official Indonesian story line goes, these patriotic militiamen, or militiachildren in Megawati’s imagination, threw a rather nasty temper tantrum once they badly lost the referendum game. Megawati has been the forgiving mother to the militias and understanding sister to their patrons, the army generals; she has neither condemned their scorched earth operation of September 1999 nor called for any of them to stand trial. Her predecessor, Abdurrahman Wahid, went to East Timor after four months in office and laid a wreath at Santa Cruz cemetery in honor of the victims of the 1991 massacre there. With Megawati, one has no sense that she realizes yet that any atrocities were committed in East Timor, or that she even cares. Despite repeated displays of her lachrymose



disposition, she has not been moved to tears by the mass killings of East Timorese.

Megawati was recently able to muster a statement recognizing that East Timor was indeed an independent state, and not the property of Indonesia, as asserted by Eurico, who has been appointed the head of her party’s militaristic youth wing. And she slightly amended a presidential decree on the ad-hoc human rights court to allow for trials on the Liquisa and Dili massacres of April 1999. But these acts only reflect her sensitivity to international pressure, not to a principled position on East Timor’s right to self-determination or a suspicion that the military and its militias were culpable for serious human rights violations.

All observers have noted that Megawati, whatever genetic proof can be adduced, does not seem to be the daughter of Sukarno, the leader of Indonesia’s nationalist movement and the state’s first president. What they have missed is the fact that she does take after her mother, Fatmawati. Her limited mental faculties and princess fantasies derive from longstanding feudal traditions among the Indonesian elite. While her father fought against many of those traditions, he tolerated them in his wives and mistresses since he, especially in the early 1960s, started playing the role of the sultan among his harem.

One historian of Asia, John Roosa, was quoted in the press as calling Megawati a “mannequin.” This is true to some extent. She has never shown a strong will of her own, from the moment she joined a political party

to loyally serve Suharto’s fake parliament in 1987, to the moment she became president. During the night of July 22, 2001, when parliamentarians were feverishly scheming for their vote the following day to dismiss President Wahid, and Wahid was insanely plotting to dismiss parliament, and the entire country was worried about a military coup, Megawati went to a movie theater to watch Hollywood’s latest animated feature, *Shrek*. Obviously, she is not the one calling the shots in these political games.

The “mannequin” label, however, does not do her justice, for she does have a will. She has chosen which politicians and generals may use her motherly image and Sukarno name. The people she has chosen are among the most unscrupulous, greedy, vicious, and anti-democratic elements in Indonesia. And one of them is her husband. Although the so-called “pro-democracy” (really just anti-Suharto) movement took her as its icon from 1996 to 1999, she remained entirely aloof from the movement and actually seemed quite scared of it. In her cowardice and silence, she proved to be the exact opposite of Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

In an appalling display of inhumanity, she never deigned to help the victims of Suharto’s attack on her own party headquarters on July 27, 1996. The decisive event that made the public think of her as an opposition figure and victim was for her an unpleasant episode best forgotten. The fifth anniversary of the attack fell only four days after

(continued on page 11)

Lobby Days 2001 Yields Information, Action

by Karen Orenstein

ETAN Lobby Days 2001 were a remarkable success. Forty-five activists from 20 states met with some 155 offices! ETAN would like to extend a hardy “thank you” to all who made this year’s Lobby Days so successful.

On Saturday, June 9, Lobby Days activists participated in a fund-raising workshop led by veteran fund-raising consultant Katherine Wortheim, in addition to a grassroots organizing, strategies, and information-sharing session.

Sunday’s Lobby Days training covered the mechanisms of lobbying and legislative meeting role-plays, as well as policy updates and a discussion on accountability for human rights violations. A panel on “East Timor Today” was lead by Angelina Sarmiento of Kadalag Sulimutuk Institute in East Timor, which focuses on conflict resolution, and Lito da Costa Gama, an East

Timorese expert on education who interned with ETAN this summer. Winston Neil Rondo, General Secretary of the Centre for Internally Displaced People’s Services in Kupang, West Timor, spoke on the East Timorese refugees (see page 6). A workshop, on “Aceh, Papua, and Indonesia,” was lead by Radhi Darmansyah and Machyar Kumbang of the Aceh Referendum Information Center, and Kurt Biddle, the Washington Coordinator of the Indonesia Human Rights Network.

Topics covered during congressional meetings included co-sponsorship of concurrent House and Senate resolutions urging the establishment of an international tribunal for prosecuting crimes against humanity in East Timor (H. Con. Res. 60 and S. Con. Res. 9), signing on to House and Senate letters on the East Timorese refugee crisis in West Timor, and support for provisions on East Timor and Indonesia in For-

eign Operations Appropriations and Foreign Relations Authorization bills, including U.S. financial assistance for East Timor in 2002.

East Timor and Indonesia activists also took to the streets to demonstrate in front of the Indonesian Embassy in protest of the East Timorese refugee crisis, military and militia impunity, and ongoing human rights violations by the Indonesian military and militia throughout the archipelago.

Progress as a direct result of Lobby Days was clear; Congressional support for East Timor dramatically increased following everyone’s hard work. Prior to Lobby Days, co-sponsorship for H. Con. Res. 60 stood at 39 and S. Con. Res. 9 at 7. As of November, the House resolution had 59 co-sponsors and the Senate 11. House and Senate letters for which we were lobbying had 44 and 17 co-signers respectively, more than normally expected. ■

(Sept. 6 Action, cont. from page 3)

sentative Jim McGovern (MA) spoke at the Washington, DC press conference. With Senator Jack Reed (RI), they visited East Timor in August 1999 just before the UN-organized referendum. Senator Reed and Rep. Lane Evans (IL) provided statements

for the conference. On September 6, some two weeks after the members of Congress visited Suai, the Indonesian military led a brutal attack on refugees sheltering in the town’s churchyard, killing at least 200 people (including nuns and priests) as part of its larger scorched earth policy.

Senator Harkin is the chief sponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 9, which calls for “the establishment of an international war crimes tribunal to prosecute crimes against humanity” carried out by the Indonesian military in East Timor. Rep. Evans is the main sponsor of the companion House Concurrent Resolution 60 (see www.etan.org/legislation for a complete list of sponsors).

Speaking of those killed at Suai and elsewhere, Rep. McGovern said: “In so many ways, we in the United States and the international community failed them. ... If we are to honor their memory, then we must not fail them again.” Senator Reed stated that “those who have committed these awful human rights violations against the people of East Timor will be brought to

justice.”

Senator Harkin promised to block any attempt by the Bush administration to provide military funding to Indonesia unless a tribunal is established. “If they want to re-establish military aid to Indonesia and spend U.S. taxpayers’ money without us having a say, they’re sadly mistaken,” he said.

Rep. McGovern called for the U.S. to provide “aid to East Timor that directly benefits the people of East Timor . . . and involves them directly in the decision-making process on how best to target our aid.”

The September 6 anniversaries highlight the need for international action on the refugee crisis and for an international tribunal. It is ironic that the three United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) workers in Atumbua, West Timor – including U.S. citizen Carlos Caceres – were hacked to death and their bodies set on fire by rampaging militia exactly one year after the Suai massacre. The attack, the worst ever on the UNHCR, resulted in an evacuation from West Timor. To this day most international aid agencies have not returned. The resulting lack of clean water, food, medicine and oversight has worsened the refugee’s plight. And even though six militiamen confessed to the Atumbua attack, Indonesian courts sentenced them to prison terms of only 10 to 20 months.

For more information, visit www.etan.org/news/2001a/09cong.htm. ■



On November 12, the 10th anniversary of the Santa Cruz massacre, ETAN sponsored a forum in New York with (from left to right) attorney Michael Ratner (co-counsel on a successful lawsuit against an Indonesian general), East Timorese activist Constâncio Pinto (organizer of the 1991 demonstration), journalist Amy Goodman (eyewitness) and ETAN’s John M. Miller. Other events took place on across the country and around the world. At least 271 people were killed when Indonesian troops opened fire on peaceful demonstrators in Dili, East Timor, in 1991.

Court Issues \$66 Million Judgment in Rights Lawsuit Against Indonesian General

by John M. Miller

In a strong statement on the seriousness of crimes committed against ordinary East Timorese, Judge Alan Kay ruled in early September to hold Indonesian General Johnny Lumintang accountable for \$66 million in damages for his role in systematic human rights violations following East Timor's vote for independence in 1999.

All six East Timorese plaintiffs or their estates were granted \$10 million each in punitive damages. Compensatory damages ranged from \$750,000 to \$1.75 million each.

"It has been established... that Lumintang has responsibility for the actions against plaintiffs and a larger pattern of gross human rights violations," wrote Judge Kay. "[H]e — along with other high-ranking members of the Indonesian military — planned, ordered, and instigated acts carried out by subordinates to terrorize and displace the East Timorese population ... and to destroy East Timor's infrastructure following the vote for independence."

The case against Lumintang is the only one to date anywhere in the world against a senior Indonesian commander for the systematic destruction following East Timor's 1999 referendum. General Lumintang chose not to defend himself in court.

Last March, Judge Kay presided over three days of testimony in a Washington, DC federal court by the plaintiffs, all victims of Indonesian military and militia violence, and expert witnesses (see *Estafeta*, Spring 2001).

The court judgment, however, is not likely to enrich the surviving plaintiffs. Collection of any damages depends on uncovering Lumintang's assets.

In 1999, Lumintang, as Vice-Chief of Staff, was second in command of the Indonesian army. In his ruling, Judge Kay cited the principle of command responsibility where "a commander may be criminally or civilly responsible for crimes committed by subordinates." He said that Lumintang is "both directly and indirectly responsible for human rights violations committed against" the plaintiffs. Evidence of direct involvement includes his signature on certain key documents calling for the use of torture and removal of large numbers of people in East Timor if the people

voted for independence in the 1999 referendum. Lumintang was also found liable since, as a member of the TNI high command, he knew or should have known that subordinates were involved in systematic rights violations in East Timor and he failed to act to prevent them or punish the violators.

Several of the plaintiffs traveled to Washington to give moving testimony in the proceedings. They included an East Timorese victim of Indonesian military and militia violence whose brother was killed and father injured in post-election attacks. The father testified via videotape. Two other East Timorese targeted by the Indonesian military in September 1999 during the scorched earth campaign from Indonesia also testified: a mother whose son was killed, and a man shot by Indonesian soldiers who subsequently had to have his foot amputated.

The Megawati administration's recently-amended decree establishing a special human rights court on East Timor in Indonesia falls far short of fully addressing the military's role in orchestrating the violence and devastation. It only covers crimes committed in April and September 1999 in three out of East Timor's 13 districts, excluding many atrocities that occurred outside of those time periods, including hundreds of cases of violence against women, large massacres in Maliana, Los Palos, and Oecussi, the mass deportation of hundreds of thousands of East Timorese to West Timor, and the systematic coordination of the scorched-earth campaign by senior-level security forces personnel,

which were noted by both Indonesian and UN commissions of inquiry and Judge Kay.

General Lumintang was trained by the U.S. under the Pentagon's International Military Education and Training program and had been a commander in East Timor and West Papua.

In 1992, a judgment for \$14 million was issued in a similar case against Indonesian General Sintong Panjaitan for his involvement in the November 12, 1991 Santa Cruz massacre of over 270 East Timorese civilians. Panjaitan was sued by the mother of the only non-East Timorese person killed.

The Lumintang lawsuit, like the Panjaitan case, is based in part on the Alien Tort Claims Act of 1789, which allows non-citizens to sue for acts committed outside the United States "in violation of the law of nations or a treaty of the United States." The 1991 Torture Victim Protection Act reaffirms the 1789 law and gives U.S. courts jurisdiction over claims by citizens involving torture or extrajudicial killing occurring anywhere. Lawsuits can only go forward if the defendant is served legal papers while in the U.S.

Legal counsel for the case were the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York, the San Francisco-based Center for Justice and Accountability and the Washington, DC law firm of Patton, Boggs.

For the text of Judge Kay's "Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law" and more information about the Lumintang and Panjaitan cases, see <http://www.etan.org/news/2000a/11suit.htm>. ■

Upcoming National Events

- **ETAN steering committee meeting in Berkeley, CA the weekend of January 26-27, 2002.** Join us as we discuss recent developments in East Timor and Indonesia with experts and activists from across the country and around the world and develop new strategies for our solidarity work!
- **Spring speaking tour on justice and women's issues** with an East Timorese woman activist, from mid-February to early March 2002. The tour will focus on the need for an international tribunal to address crimes of violence against East Timorese women (among many other reasons), as well as the issues women in East Timor are faced with and organizing around as the first national government is established.

Contact ETAN field organizer Diane Farsetta at 608-663-5431 or diane@etan.org for more information or to express interest.

(Constituent Assembly, cont. from page 1)
the East Timorese who will manage future elections fell woefully short of the mark. And, of course, the ten percent of the East Timorese population still trapped in West Timor were entirely excluded from this historic step toward independence.

During the 1999 Popular Consultation, the International Federation for East Timor (IFET, including ETAN) organized the largest international observer project. This year, East Timor was inundated with observers from governments and international NGOs, and there were hundreds of East Timorese observers as well. IFET organized a small delegation of observers, and issued a report on the "Elections in the Context of Nation-Building" which concluded: "This election is a small but important part of the larger process of nation-building.... IFET believes that this step has been mounted successfully, but that significant obstacles remain for a truly democratic process."

IFET's report (available at www.etan.org/ifet) highlights the problems with the rushed timetable for the entire constitutional process. Furthermore, the decision to have voters choose among political parties (albeit through a proportional representation system for the 75 national seats) has far-reaching ramifica-

tions. It gives disproportionate power to the majority party, and could reduce transparency in the Assembly. Although UNTAET and NGOs conducted a widespread civic education program, the focus was on the voting process and keeping the peace. Similarly, the political parties did not reveal their views on governmental structure or other constitutional questions during the campaign.

The Constituent Assembly was sworn in on September 15 in the country's newly-restored legislative building. It includes Ajiza Magno — who visited 22 states on an ETAN-sponsored speaking tour last fall — as well as many other activists and leaders who have worked with ETAN over the years. Although 55 of the 88 members are from the historic independence party FRETILIN (led by Francisco "Lu Olu" Guterres and Mari Alkatiri), three other parties have 6 or 7 seats each: Partido Democratico (led by former student activist and political prisoner Fernando de Araújo, also appointed Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, with Constâncio Pinto as campaign manager), Partido Social Democratica Timor Lorosa'e (led by former governor Mario Carrascalão), and the Associação Social Democrata Timorense (led by Francisco Xavier do Amaral, who led the independence movement in 1974-75). Eight other parties

have one or two members each. Every major party except PD had women near the top of their slate, and 27 percent of the seats are occupied by women, higher than almost every parliament in the world. (The U.S. Congress, for example, has only 68 women among its 435 members, representing 16 percent). However, few women are in leadership positions.

The Assembly has only 65 working days to write the constitution, and the proliferation of parties contributes to a lively ongoing debate, televised live in Dili. In its first week, the assembly elected FRETILIN's Francisco Guterres as President of the Assembly, and Rev. Arlindo Marçal (Partido Democratico Christão) and F. Xavier Amaral (ASDT) as vice-presidents, even though both PD and PSD received more votes than ASDT or PDC.

On September 20, FRETILIN and UNTAET announced the members of East Timor's new cabinet, replacing a joint East-Timorese/international body appointed by UNTAET chief Sergio Vieira de Mello. The composition of the new cabinet, which is entirely East Timorese, resulted from protracted negotiations between de Mello, the FRETILIN leadership, and Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta. FRETILIN leader Mari Alkatiri is Prime Minister and Economic Minister, and José Ramos-Horta continues as Foreign Minister (he is also Deputy Chief of the Cabinet). There are eight men and two women ministers; six are FRETILIN and four are not affiliated with political parties. Second-level officials (vice-ministers and others) include 11 men and three women; four FRETILIN, seven independents, and three from the second-place Partido Democratico. Although some in the cabinet have resigned from the Constituent Assembly, at this time FRETILIN ministers Mari Alkatiri and Ana Pessoa sit in both bodies.

By its second week, the Constituent Assembly had already provoked protest. Some members with experience working with the grassroots proposed a regulation requiring public hearings, which was opposed by the FRETILIN leadership. After a brief and unsuccessful lobbying campaign, NGO activists demonstrated in front of the Assembly on the morning of September 27. The boisterous crowd (organized in 12 hours) grew quickly, supplemented by students from the university across the street. Although they have not yet persuaded the Assembly to adopt the public hearing law, it is clear that the East Timorese public will be heard by its new government.

The good news is that democracy is coming, in fits and starts, to East Timor. ■

(Refugee Crisis, cont. from page 6)

the U.S. Mission to the UN, and the Peace-keeping Office. We challenged UNHCR's decision to provide a significant level of funding for the obviously flawed registration, and UNTAET's decision to send an observer to the process.

The final registration results are so ridiculous even Indonesian officials have publicly questioned them. The Indonesian government's task force on refugee registration claims that more than 98% of the more than 284,000 refugees which supposedly remain in West Timor opted for resettlement in Indonesia. (Indonesia later acknowledged that many more than registered to do so will want to return.) The twelve international observers of the registration amazingly endorsed the process; their report does not even mention the militia. ETAN condemned the observers' report in a July 19 letter to U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Robert Gelbard, stating, "For an accurate and fair refugee registration to occur, the process must be organized by international agencies, and Indonesia must keep its repeated promises to disarm and disband militias. Clearly, twelve observers on one day, escorted by Indonesian military and govern-

ment officials, cannot provide an adequate picture of the 507 registration sites."

On August 3, the UN announced it was reducing its security alert for most of West Timor and would allow a small number of staff to return there following the completion of a security agreement with the Indonesian government. The UN and almost all international agencies had left West Timor following the September 2000 murder of three UNHCR staff (see page 3). While this at first seemed like a positive development, the UN later stated that it would not re-open an office in West Timor, apparently due to political and donor pressures. Instead, the UN refugee agency is scaling down its presence in East Timor, and is planning to address the situation from Dili and Jakarta, with occasional missions into West Timor (which will most likely not begin until 2002). With the peaceful constituent assembly election in East Timor (see page 1), refugee returns have increased. We hope this continues, but remain concerned given the continued prominence of armed, hostile militia in West Timor, and the decreasing will of the UN and other members of the international community to work toward a just resolution. ■

(Reflections on Terror, cont. from page 1)
acts of mass murder and wanton destruction. They know much about mourning.

In 1999, East Timor experienced its own destruction. After East Timor voted overwhelmingly for independence, the Indonesian military systematically razed the country. They did a thorough job, destroying up to 80 percent of its buildings. Whole towns and villages were gutted. Hundreds of women and girls were raped and hundreds of thousands were forced from their homes. An estimated 2,000 East Timorese were murdered, among the last of more than 200,000 killed during the course of Indonesia's 24-year occupation — many at the hands of troops wielding U.S.-supplied weapons. The murder and destruction ended only after the U.S. severed military ties and an international peacekeeping force was deployed.

The perpetrators of those crimes are well known. A report by Indonesia's Human Rights Commission named dozens of names, mostly from the Indonesian military. Other investigations point to additional masterminds. Two years later, none have been brought to trial. Some of those responsible retain high positions in the Indonesian military or government, where they are directing similar crimes against civilians throughout Indonesia.

It would be correct to call Indonesia a

nation harboring the terrorists who committed crimes against humanity in East Timor, but there is no international outcry to bomb Jakarta. Indeed, the East Timorese would be aghast at the idea. They have seen enough death and destruction. This is truly amazing, given that one would be hard-pressed to find a woman or man in East Timor who has not lost at least one family member during Indonesia's brutal occupation.

Unlike the mighty United States, East Timor is a small nation that will not even become formally independent until next May. The East Timorese could not act unilaterally to detain and try their former tormentors even if they wanted to. It is troubling that there has been so little international action to bring the agents of destruction to justice. Some still advise we should wait until Indonesia prosecutes its own. But while Jakarta may engage in a few token prosecutions, no one really expects them to accomplish much, and prosecutors in East Timor are unlikely to get custody to try the masterminds of the 1999 violence.

The means to justice for East Timor is clear. A January 2000 report by a United Nations special commission of inquiry recommended an international tribunal along the lines of those now sitting in judgment of systematic human rights violators in Rwanda

or the former Yugoslavia.

Two years after the destruction of their country, the people of East Timor remain angry, but they are not looking for vengeance. Indeed, many militia members have already been reintegrated into their communities. Few have suffered any form of retaliatory violence. The East Timorese want the people most responsible tried and punished according to law.

Here in the U.S., people are also angry. But in its effort to build a "coalition against terrorism," the Bush administration recently restored some of the military ties that were severed in 1999 as Indonesia was terrorizing East Timor, even though Congressional stipulations — including return of the refugees and the prosecution of human rights violators — have not been met (see article page 6). Giving assistance to a military and police that continue to systematically violate human rights does not support justice. Human rights, at home or abroad, should not be sacrificed in the name of holding accountable those responsible for the attack on my city.

Creating an international tribunal for East Timor would demonstrate a real commitment to the rule of law. The victims of the September attacks on the U.S. deserve justice; so do the people of East Timor. Both would be honored by actions that build peace and respect international law. ■

(Oil politics, cont. from page 5)

Dili was still in smoldering ruins, East Timorese leaders indicated to the companies that they welcomed their continued investment in the Timor Sea. At the time, the leaders were not aware of the unfair investment incentives, which lay hidden in company contracts." For this reason, asserted Galbraith, "It is ludicrous now to assert that East Timor is obliged to give the companies the benefit of the same unfair fiscal incentives that were offered to them by the Indonesians and Australians... (which were) offered to attract companies to invest in a territory which belonged neither to Indonesia nor Australia."

There is too much money involved in the Timor Gap for Phillips Petroleum and its allies to not stay involved. The question is: under what conditions? As the past conduct of Phillips and its allies in aiding Indonesia's subjugation of East Timor demonstrates, they are not defending any principle; they are simply trying to ensure high profits. The East Timorese leadership is correct to insist upon a set of tax policies that is significantly more favorable to East Timor. ■

(From the Lao Hamutuk Bulletin.)

(Megawati, cont. from page 7)

her inauguration as president. What did she do? Without a word of consolation for the victims or promise for justice, she left Jakarta to cut ribbons for the opening of a massive hydro-electrical project in Sulawesi. She let it be known that her ideological father is Suharto: smile, shake hands, open projects, say little, obey foreign capital, don't talk with ordinary people, and rely on military action to deal with any problems.

In appointing her cabinet ministers, Megawati did her best to restore Suharto's New Order. Her cabinet has been praised for being full of "professionals" rather than political party leaders. But these professionals attained their seniority in the bureaucracy through loyal service to Suharto. Such appointments include the Attorney General, M.A. Rachman. He is going to ensure that no one is seriously prosecuted for the war crimes in East Timor.

One of the overlooked appointments — but really the most telling — was that for the Ministry of Women's Empowerment. Under Wahid, the minister was outspoken, articulate, hard-working, and very supportive

of women's rights. Megawati appointed a woman who has been a leader of the Suharto-era state women's organization (Dharma Wanita) that only instructed women how to be good housewives.

With Megawati's cabinet abjectly faithful to implementing the IMF-imposed economic austerity programs and allowing the military to do what it wills, Indonesians are being returned to the Suharto era, when they were subjects, not citizens. Megawati is simply the queenly figure presiding over this restoration of the old sultan's men. She knows her ceremonial role in all this. With great fanfare, she staged an encore performance of her 1999 East Timor speech in Aceh. Under tight security, she visited the capital city, Banda Aceh, in the hopes of bringing them back into the national fold. She apologized to the Acehnese for the past "mistakes" and "shortcomings" of the Indonesian government. When her prepared speech was disrupted, she condescendingly told the crowd that they were not being polite. Thus, they learned that calling for thousands of summary executions and gruesome "mistakes" is the height of etiquette but speaking out of turn is très gauche. ■

A Letter from Dili

Dili, Timor Lorosa'e
22 September 2001

Dear ETAN Friends and Supporters,

A month ago, Jill Sternberg and I arrived in East Timor, our home for the next two years. Much has happened since our arrival: East Timor has held its first democratic election, sworn in its first elected legislature, and chosen its first all-Timorese cabinet. Many people ETAN has worked closely with are in office: José Ramos-Horta, Mari Alkatiri, Aziza Magno, Fernando Araujo, Aderito Soares, Rev. Arlindo Marcal, Emilia Pires, Vicente Faria, Prof. Armindo Maia and João Carrascalão, among others. People are thrilled to have their own government after five centuries of foreign occupation. And daunting tasks remain.

Before I left New York, I resigned as National Coordinator of the East Timor *Action Network*. For me, the next phase of the struggle is here in Dili.

When we started ETAN/U.S. after the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre, East Timor was one of the most horrific examples of U.S.-supported oppression, but many thought it marginal and hopeless. Together with the people of East Timor and activists from around the world, we increased public awareness in the U.S. and internationally. With the support of brave organizers in Indonesia, we were able to push the Jakarta government and the United

Nations to agree to the 1999 referendum. Despite the terror, the people of East Timor chose to separate from Indonesia, and they paid a tremendous price. But two years later, independence is inevitable and imminent ... and no one regrets the decision. Although there is still a long way to go, we mustn't forget how far we've come.

I want to thank the East Timorese people for giving me the chance to be part of this historic, successful movement. But I have been even more privileged to know and work with ETAN's outstanding people, together to have waged a struggle and built an organization and a community. Kristin Sundell's and Brad Simpson's marriage is the most obvious example of the love and friendship that enabled ETAN to work through difficult times, but it is not an exception. I treasure the many friends and colleagues I have come to know over the past decade.

Before we left New York, some friends organized a farewell party. I told them I was leaving the U.S. with a certain amount of guilt – while I would be sharing the elation of East Timor's new independence, they would be struggling with the havoc wrought by the Junior Bush Administration. The horrific events of September 11 have compounded those feelings. Ironically, this land, which has absorbed so much military-spilled blood, is one of the most distant places from current violent rhetoric and events. People here have been incred-

ibly empathetic to us displaced New Yorkers, understanding of the suffering of people at home. At the same time, the East Timorese reject violent retaliation, just as they did when they were victims over the past quarter-century. Every day, the people of this country teach me another lesson in humanity.

Although I have left ETAN's leadership, I will continue to be involved, even as I develop my work with the International Federation for East Timor (IFET) and with La'o Hamutuk, Yayasan HAK and other East Timorese NGOs. In this internet age, peace and justice activists are more globalized than the WTO. The international East Timor movement was among the pioneers of organizing across long distances, and our common efforts for justice and true independence for all East Timorese people will continue. I look forward to hearing of and joining in another decade of U.S. and East Timorese campaigns to achieve genuine and complete self-determination for this distant island which has become so close to so many of us.

The struggle continues.

Ate Amanha,

Charlie Scheiner
P.O. Box 358
Dili, East Timor (via Darwin, Australia)
Tel. +61-417-923273
charlie@etan.org

EAST TIMOR ACTION NETWORK/U.S.
P.O. Box 15774
WASHINGTON, DC 20003
U.S.A.

PRSRT STD

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
A & E Mailers