



NEWSLETTER



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ET NGO statement on ET-Australia boundary talks

The following statement was released at a press conference in Dili on 29 September, 2004.

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29 September 2004

TIMOR-LESTE CIVIL SOCIETY DEMANDS FAIR BOUNDARY

Civil society and people in Timor-Leste, including the NGOs issuing this statement, continue to follow the negotiations between our government and Australia with great interest. We believe that the issues being discussed in Darwin this week are among the most important for the future of our nation.

Based on what we have been able to learn about the negotiations process, we urge Australia to do the following:

1. Respect the national sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, negotiating with our government as an equal partner and not belittling us with offers of "Christmas presents." Listen and respond to our national right to establish the boundaries of our newly-independent nation.
2. Although it appears that Timor-Leste's negotiators are considering a "creative solution" which would put off a boundary settlement for many decades, we continue to believe that a permanent boundary, both for the water column and the seabed, is essential for completing our struggle for national independence. The boundary should be based on current international legal principles, along the median line between our two coasts, with lateral boundaries decided according to current international law.
3. Return to the international dispute resolution processes for maritime boundaries of the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.
4. Do not involve our future in your nation's politics. Over the past six months, we have been disappointed to see Timor-Leste's rights used by Australian politicians for domestic political purposes. Our rights are based on international law and moral principles, not on Australian public opinion polls. We are struck by the contrast between last year, when you refused to meet more than once every six months, and now, just before your election, when you want to meet every week.
5. Respect Timor-Leste's right to develop our resources on a timetable that is best for our people. We are dismayed by Australia's support for Woodside's hunger to extract Sunrise gas as fast as possible.
6. Stop exploration of Laminaria-Corallina and other fields in disputed territory, including issuing of new licenses. Place all revenues received from such fields in an escrow account, to be apportioned between our nations when an agreement is completed.

HAK Association, Haburas Foundation, La'o Hamutuk (East Timor Institute for Reconstruction Monitoring and Analysis), FOKUPERS, LAIFET (Labor Advocacy Institute of East Timor), Timor-Leste Community Radio Association (ARKTL), The Mirror of the People (LBEH), Forum Tau Matan (FTM), Timor-Leste Students Association.

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Our relationship with Indonesia has to change

DAMIEN KINGSBURY

The shameful policies of the past must be buried - for the sake of both countries.

The latest terrorist bombing in Jakarta has confirmed yet again that Indonesia is of critical importance to Australia. And as Tony Parkinson noted on this page yesterday, Australia has responded inadequately.

Australia's drifting relationship with Indonesia was also noted on this page on Monday by former Australian ambassador Richard Woolcott. But Woolcott's contribution did little more than recall Australia's shameful policy towards Indonesia under Soeharto.

Australia-Indonesia relations during the Woolcott years were characterised by the view that Indonesians are too poor for good government, do not have the right history, or come from the wrong type of culture.

Imagine the uproar if he had said this about Australia's indigenous population.

The second Woolcott position was so-called realism, exemplified by Australia endorsing Indonesia's occupation of East Timor, and accepting corruption, military domination of politics and so on.

Despite Woolcott's prescriptions, Australian relations with Indonesia were poor, only achieving weak rapprochement in the mid-1990s, when Prime Minister Paul Keating and President Soeharto formed a close relationship. Being personalised, the relationship collapsed after both men lost office. The chasm yawned again in 1999.

In classic shoot-the-messenger style, Woolcott responds to a policy failure he helped develop by saying that Australia should eschew "megaphone diplomacy". However, after diplomatic communication, the value in public communication is the guarantee that representations have been made.

Many Australians reasonably believe that if nothing is said publicly, then little or nothing has been said at all, a conclusion for which there has been considerable evidence

in the case of Indonesia.

Australia could have said more about terrorism in Indonesia when Indonesia's political leaders were still in public denial, until the Bali bombing, after which it was too late.

Interestingly, for a diplomat who damped down Australia's possible objections to the 1975 invasion of East Timor and who endorsed the secret Australia-Indonesia defence treaty of 1995, Woolcott now calls for transparency in government over Australia's Iraq policy. Transparency is certainly necessary to any genuine democracy, but applies as much for near neighbours as far countries. The history of Australian diplomacy on Indonesia has largely lacked transparency.

But perhaps most troubling, Woolcott now suggests that Australia should renew its ties with Indonesia's military, the TNI. The TNI remains part of the problem, not part of the answer.

In particular its special forces, Kopasus, practise state terror and have close links to a range of terrorist and militia groups.

The TNI is again politically powerful; it is the power behind the President. It has used the "war on terror" to legitimise unrelated activities, including the renewed war in Aceh and human rights abuses in Papua, while effectively censoring media reporting of such events.

Even former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans has recently admitted that working with the TNI failed to improve its respect for human rights or the rule of law.

While on a steep learning curve, Indonesia's police and their Gegana anti-terrorist squad are at least under civilian control, representing a much more reliable option for combating terrorism, for both Australia and Indonesia. So here are some suggestions, rather different to Woolcott's, to revitalise the Australian-Indonesian relationship:

1. Employ transparent foreign policy consistent with domestic policy, to accurately reflect Australian values and to remove the possibility of surprises as a con-

sequence of contradictory policy positions (for example East Timor). For its part, Indonesia should recognise that regional countries do not owe it greater obeisance due to their proximity.

2. Australia-Indonesia military co-operation should be kept off the agenda until the TNI is thoroughly reformed, including closing its business and criminal networks, and it is brought under full civilian authority.

3. Instead, increased police-to-police links, under civilian control, are a more appropriate response to the threats that face both Australia and Indonesia.

4. Build strong institutional relationships, including of the judiciary, and police, that survive changes of government.

5. Enhance funding for people-to-people contacts, including lawyers, jurists, journalists, academics and students.

6. Broaden the membership of the main funding body, the Australia-Indonesia Institute, to reflect a genuine plurality of Australian perspectives.

7. Renew official support for Indonesian language education.

Australia's responsibility as a good neighbour and a good international citizen is, where it can, to assist Indonesia's faltering efforts to reform, develop and curb threats to us all.

But Australia's capacity to help or influence is limited, and Indonesia's military remains stubbornly recidivist.

Australia must conduct an honest, accountable good neighbour policy with Indonesia, supporting accountable, civilian-controlled institutions.

But harking back to the bad old days, and supporting the TNI, is in neither Australia's nor Indonesia's interests.

Dr Damien Kingsbury is the head of philosophical, political and international studies at Deakin University and the author of *Power Politics and the Indonesian Military* (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

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AETFSA(SA) on the Web!

A temporary location for AETFSA(SA) has been established on the web at www.bigbutton.com.au/~winroh/aetfa. Please visit our prototype web site and let us now what you think. You can also click on links on this web site to advise or update you contact details. If you advise your e-mail address we will be able to keep in touch with you more regularly with information and notice of events.

In Memory of Ron Gray

The Australia East Timor Friendship Association (SA) expresses its profound appreciation of Ron Gray who passed away on August 13, 2004. Ron, along with partner Irene Gale, had supported East Timor for many years physically and morally before and after Independence.

Ron, one of the founding members of the Australian Peace Committee (SA) was one of its most active committee members, and was tireless in his pursuit of peace, justice and a better world. We will not forget his contribution to many causes.

The News in Short

Hip-Hop & Rock for Condoms

Local hip-hop, reggae, ska & rock musicians are promoting the safe-sex message in Tetum in mainly-Catholic East Timor with their songs such as "Use a Condom". Dr. Dan Murphy, who runs the Bairo Pite Clinic in Dili says the extent of the HIV problem is unknown. He says he fears an increase among the conservative Catholic population, which resists condom use & sexual discussion.

Indonesia hires PR firm

Indonesia has hired APCO Worldwide to convince the world it is a staunch US ally committed to combating terrorism. APCO will arrange a trip to Washington, DC by Indonesian leaders after September 20th - to talk about diplomatic ties, democratic reform & cooperation on terrorism.

Indonesia's Truth Commission— TNI has trouble with "Truth"

Indonesia is to set up a Truth & Reconciliation Commission next year, based on a similar body set up in South Africa following the end of apartheid. It is expected to begin by examining the mass slaughter following the September 1965 coup: estimates of those killed range from 500,000 to a few million. The move for a Commission was initiated by President Wahid in 2000. Critics say the 4 year delay before passing this through parliament shows weak political commitment to the process. They fear it could be a whitewash for human rights violators. It was introduced into parliament earlier this year but has been delayed for 3 months by the military's objection to including "truth" in the title.

Ramos Horta: East Timor vulnerable to terrorists

Foreign Minister Jose Ramos Horta fears East Timor is vulnerable to terrorist infiltration. He has sought help from Canberra, & Australia's Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) has worked in an advisory role in East Timor for over a year. He is concerned about East Timor's sea border, which is routinely exploited by smugglers & illegal fishermen. Several East Timorese intelligence agents will be trained at an Australian-funded counter-terrorism facility at Semarang in Indonesia. Malaysia is now arming & training East Timor's police rapid deployment force.

Human Rights Hero Munir dies

Munir, one of Indonesia's most respected & courageous human rights activists, died suddenly earlier this month on his way to the Netherlands, where he was to study for a masters degree in law. He was among the first activists to organise Indonesians in support of East Timor's self-determination. He personally helped hundreds of East Timorese in Jakarta & elsewhere with legal or financial problems. A strong leader of Indonesia's Human Rights Commission, he condemned impunity for Indonesian military & political leaders responsible for crimes against humanity.

Benny Murdani dies

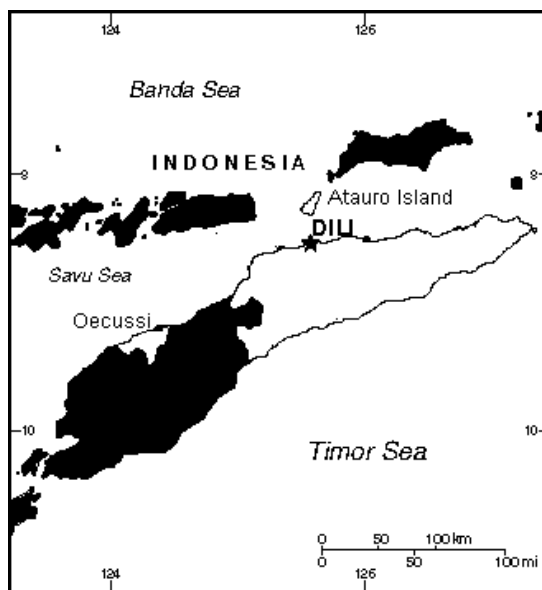
Former armed forces chief, General Benny Murdani died recently in Jakarta. He was armed forces chief from 1983 to 1988. He was best known for planning & directing a major operation for control of West Papua in the early 1960s & also the covert operation to subvert East Timor before the main invasion in December 1975.

East Timorese win permanent residency in NT

58 of 60 East Timorese asylum seekers in Darwin have been granted permanent residency. Most of them have lived in Darwin since 1990. Most suffered torture & trauma & left East Timor in harrowing circumstances. They then lived for many years in Darwin not knowing what their status was.

Ferry for Oecussi

Indonesia's largest ship-builder PT PAL has won the tender to build a Roll-on-Roll-off ferry for East Timor. The US\$7 million project, financed by the German Development Bank KfW, includes the ferry, new harbour facilities & maintenance facilities. The ferry will travel between Dili, the Oecussi enclave & Atauro Island. The people of Oecussi prefer a sea-link to the road connection through West Timor for economy & safety reasons.



West Timor safe for UN?

Indonesia's army (TNI) says it is ready to provide protection for UN agencies in West Timor. The UN left West Timor when 3 UN workers were killed by a rampaging mob in September 2000. The UN is considering the security situation.

Agreements with Philippines

East Timor has signed 2 cooperation agreements with the Philippines. East Timorese diplomats will train in the Philippines; and the 2 countries will begin joint projects in food processing, forest products & enterprise development. Manila is also supporting East Timor's applications for observer status in ASEAN & membership in the ASEAN regional forum. Its regional forum membership is also supported by members the USA, Australia, PNG & Russia.

(Continued on page 4)

WHAT'S ON

*** Thursday 14th & Friday 15th October, 7:30pm**

Man of La Mancha

Adelaide High School Hall

Presented by the Romero Company Inc.

Tickets \$18/\$12 concession

Bookings essential—ph 8223 5959

Proceeds support overseas aid projects

*** Thursday, 21st October, 7:30pm**

(Following Oxfam CAA(SA) Annual General Meeting - 6:30 to 7:15pm)

Campaign CAAfé

Caos Café, 188 Hindley Street, Adelaide

East Timor - What is its Future?

A Panel Discussion:

"Issues and Dilemmas in the Formation of the state of East Timor"

Presented by - Australia East Timor Friendship Association and Oxfam CAA.

Panel includes:

Michael Sullivan - Lecturer in Political & International Studies, Flinders University

Crystell Halliday - Teacher (recently returned from East Timor)

Ted VanDijk - Police Officer (recently returned from East Timor)

David Chamberlain - Police Officer (returned from East Timor tour of duty 2000)

(Coffee, drinks and light meals available)

Entry \$5 / concession - cold coin donation

*** Saturday, 27th November, 6:30pm**

Annual EAST TIMOR

Independence Dinner

Ikaros Hall, 24 Arthur Street, Unley

Keynote speaker:

Abel Gutterres, East Timor Consul General

An evening of food and entertainment in support and celebration of an Independent East Timor.

Tickets \$25/\$20 concession

To book tickets or offer assistance:

phone Miriam—8295 6481

or Don & Mary—8371 0528

The News in Short

(Continued from page 3)

International rejection of Jakarta appeals court verdict

There has been almost universal rejection of the Indonesian appeals court verdict in August which overturned the conviction of 4 Indonesian officers implicated in the 1999 violence in East Timor. Once again the Australian government stands alone in its "All the way with TNI" stance.

US deputy ambassador Stuart Holliday told the UN Security Council: "It is critical for the development of democratic institutions in both Indonesia & East Timor that there be some level of accountability for the 1999 atrocities." He proposed an international Truth Commission of international experts. Strong criticism also came from most European Union countries & New Zealand. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan asked the Human Rights Commissioner to prepare a report - due in early October. On the basis of that report the Security Council will decide how to ensure that impunity does not prevail. Human rights groups have demanded a UN tribunal for East Timor. The Security Council is understood to be opposed to a tribunal because it would be expensive & would antagonise Indonesia. Indonesia responded to the proposal for a Commission of Experts by refusing to allow any such group entry into Indonesia. East Timor's government also opposes a tribunal & has not commented on the Experts Commission proposal. 78 members of Congress (USA) and leading human rights groups (including Amnesty International & Human Rights Watch) have also written to Kofi Annan supporting the Experts Commission proposal. The Security Council is to consider the Commissioner's report in October.

Can we keep in touch with you by e-mail?
Visit us on the internet at—
www.bigbutton.com.au/~winroh/aetfa/
for information on how to join our e-mail list.

a special pre-release screening of
OUTFOXED

Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism

Produced & directed by ROBERT GREENWALD

Thursday, 7th October, 7.30 p.m. \$13, \$9 (conc)

Mercury Cinema

North Tce, Adelaide, by Morphett St bridge.

Fundraiser for the Pt Adelaide branch of the Greens. Tickets available at the door, but secure your seat by ringing Pat on 8341 5471