

AUSTRALIA EAST TIMOR FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION (SA) INC
(formerly CAMPAIGN FOR AN INDEPENDENT EAST TIMOR (SA) INC)



AETFA NEWS

C/- Global Education Centre, 1st Floor Torrens Building
220 Victoria Square ADELAIDE SA 5000
PH (08) 8344 3511 WEB: www.bigbutton.com.au/~winroh/aetfa/



No.13

AUGUST 2005

Cooperating with Timor-Leste Ideas for good development practice (Victoria University, 16-18 June)

They planned for fifty or so people - a hundred at the most, but over 300 came. In the end they had to turn people away.

The Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Dr Mari Alkatiri, spoke at the opening night. He stressed that his country would not agree to any Timor Sea deal with Australia that did not include maritime boundary between the two countries. He also outlined Timor-Leste's intent to put the money from oil and gas into a fund similar to Norway's to ensure continued income for his country after those resources were exhausted. Timor-Leste has refused loans from the World Bank and the IMF that would deny it autonomy in economic and social planning.

The Conference broke into Sectoral Panels, covering agriculture and environment, communications and transport, the economy, livelihoods and trade, health and population, governance, civil society, law and justice, and education and human resource development.

Later interest groups met in workshops covering friendship cities, aid agencies, church members, unions, service clubs, the Timorese in the Diaspora, young people and students,

academics, women, health workers and business.

The absence of a session on the future of the Timor Sea oil and gas fields was remedied by the initiative of Miriam Tonkin (our esteemed Secretary). The resulting workshop was attended by thirty or more people, including Ian Melrose and Chip Henriss-Andersen of the Timor Sea Justice Campaign. The conclusion was that the campaign would continue until Timor-Leste received justice, including the setting of maritime boundaries according to International law.

The Conference proved the value of meeting and networking with other groups and people working to help Timor-Leste, particularly with the participation of Timor-Leste government and civil society representatives also in attendance.

Resolutions at the final session included the proposal to hold another national conference in two years time, with perhaps state conferences in between.

AETFA in South Australia will be approaching interested people and organizations about this state conference proposal, and the general principle arising from the conference to establish co-ordinated aid and friendship activities with Timor-Leste to ensure effective and appropriate outcomes for the people of Timor-Leste.

We would be interested to hear from anyone willing to assist in this process.

Timor Sea—political contention & media censorship

Xanana to veto gas deal?

Timor-Leste President Xanana Gusmao wants more debate on the maritime boundary between Australia & East Timor. He doesn't believe Timor-Leste should give up its claimed sovereignty over undersea gas reserves worth more than US\$30Billion (UN estimates). Australia wants East Timor to postpone maritime boundary talks for 50 years in exchange for a 50/50 revenue deal on the Greater Sunrise field. East Timor, desperate for money for health & education & other infrastructure, is considering the "offer". Under East Timor's constitution, the President could veto the legislation on the grounds of national interest.

Principles more important than money (Downer)

Speaking to the Australian Institute of International Affairs, Foreign Minister Downer said Australia had been "generous" in "giving" East Timor 90% of the revenue from the joint development area (the Bayu Undan field) in the Timor Sea. He said East Timor would do "extraordinarily well" from the proposed 50/50 Greater Sunrise deal. "We're not so concerned about the money; we're concerned about the principles of our boundaries", he said. Nobody thought to ask his opinion of East Timor's concern about the principles of its boundaries - or about East Timor's desperate need for money.

Ramos Horta versus TSJC

Timor-Leste Foreign Minister Ramos Horta says Ian Melrose's TV ads are "counter-productive". He thinks East Timor's interests are better served by negotiations with Australia without any interference. The Timor Sea Justice Coalition (TSJC) says fair negotiations can't happen when the more powerful party has a "might is right" attitude & has already taken \$2Billion in contested royalties. TSJC wants the Australian Government to put contested royalties into a trust fund. After repeated failed attempts to set permanent maritime boundaries, TSJC says the dispute must go to the International Court of Justice. While Australia's 50% offer for Greater Sunrise is better than previous offers, failing to set permanent boundaries is a serious mistake. Without permanent boundaries, disputes will happen every time new oil & gas reserves are found. TSJC says the present negotiations are like someone dying of thirst being forced to negotiate the price of water. TSJC intends no

criticism of East Timor's Government, but will continue to challenge the Australian Government to act fairly & in accordance with international law."

...meanwhile, Legal action being taken over ad bans

Businessman Ian Melrose will sue TV stations that refused to run his advertisements about the Timor Sea issue. Commercial Acceptance Division (CAD) is a private company wholly owned by the free-to-air TV stations. CAD classifies ads shown on free-to-air TV. It gave Mr. Melrose no reason for the ban. "I think it is quite legitimate for me as an Australian citizen to criticise my Government when I think they are doing the wrong thing", Mr. Melrose said. He has begun production of a further 16 ads. Julian Burnside QC is representing Mr. Melrose.

Current ads can be viewed online at: -

<http://www.timorseajustice.org/tvcs.htm>

Vale HT Lee

(August 3)

East Timor activist HT Lee died from heart surgery complications on July 26th. He was with a small handful of journalists in the UN Compound in Dili in September 1999 as militia violence raged outside. The journalists finally realised that UN staff intended to evacuate to Darwin leaving the 3,000 East Timorese who had sheltered in the Compound. HT organised a petition, persuaded all journalists to sign & never gave up gathering UN police officers' signatures in his own good-humoured but insistent style. As a result, all 3,000 East Timorese were evacuated to Darwin with the UN staff.

HT "stood out as someone who could make things change" (John Martinkus). HT continued working on the asbestos issue & on the Timor Sea issue (with the late Dr Andrew McNaughtan). HT went back to find the child he had photographed screaming in terror in the UN Compound, and organised a birthday party. John Martinkus says he never saw HT happier than at that birthday party. We have lost a great comrade.

Timor Sea Negotiations—Greater Sunrise Briefing Paper

Timor Sea Justice Campaign, 28th July, 2005.

(original document at www.timorseajustice.org/resources/greater_sunrise_briefing_sheet.pdf)

This paper has been prepared for the [Australian] opposition parties and East Timor solidarity and activist groups to encourage informed responses to the signing of a temporary resource sharing agreement between Australia and East Timor covering the Greater Sunrise gas field.

About the Timor Sea Justice Campaign

The TSJC is an independent campaign made up of concerned Australians of various ages and professions that believe East Timor should control all of the gas and oil fields that it is entitled to under current international law, by the establishment of a permanent maritime boundary

The Greater Sunrise gas field

The Greater Sunrise gas field is located about 170km from East Timor and about 450km from Darwin.

The 'government take' of Greater Sunrise is estimated to be higher than \$40 billion and could even become significantly more as oil prices rise over the next few decades.

Most, if not all, of this field would belong to East Timor if permanent maritime boundaries were established in accordance with principles of current International Law.

Australian company, Woodside Petroleum has the license to develop the field once the legal framework is in place. If/when the project goes ahead, Woodside hopes to pipe the gas to Darwin for processing. However other development options are possible.

The currently proposed deal on Greater Sunrise

The deal does not create maritime boundaries - it is merely another 'temporary resource sharing agreement'

The deal reportedly consists of a 50/50 split of government royalties from Greater Sunrise.

As part of the deal the Australian Government wants East Timor to suspend claims of sovereignty for the next 50 years.

Many civil society groups and individuals within East Timor will continue to push for the establishment of permanent maritime boundaries as borders are closely linked with key issues of self-determination and independence.

The deal only covers the Greater Sunrise field.

The Timor Sea Justice Campaign's view of the currently proposed Greater Sunrise Deal

While the 50% share of Greater Sunrise is an improvement on the miserly 18% previously offered by the Australian Government, it still falls dramatically short of East Timor's legal entitlement under current International Law.

Through this deal, the Australian Government is set to short change the poorest nation in Asia to the tune of at least \$20 billion dollars.

This deal is a 'stop gap, band aid' solution that does not even begin to address the broader issues of sovereignty. It's simply an attempt to allow the commercial development of the field without the Australian Government acknowledging East Timor's rights to this and other fields on East Timor's side of the median line.

The deal only covers one single field. If further resources are discovered, this entire process will need to take place again. Only permanent maritime boundaries will provide the legal and fiscal

certainty required for a range of Australian companies to confidently operate in the area.

Sadly, the Howard Government has proven that it is willing to bully and blackmail our neighbouring countries for its own financial gain. This disregard for International Law is damaging Australia's reputation in the region.

The Australian Government should compensate East Timor for the \$2 billion taken from the Laminaria Corallina fields since 1999.

East Timor should receive a fairer share of the downstream benefits as well as have greater control of development decisions via its, currently inequitable 2:1, representation on the Sunrise Commission.

The Australian Government must 'finish the job' and commit to negotiate permanent maritime boundaries with East Timor in accordance with International Law.

These issues are integral to the process of self-determination and achieving true independence. Until the East Timorese enjoy just and fair borders, their struggle will continue.

The 2003 Greater Sunrise Unitisation Agreement

In March 2004, the Australian Government introduced the 'Greater Sunrise Unitisation Agreement' into both houses of parliament. Under the deal, that the East Timorese Parliament refused to ratify, the Australian Government would have taken 82% of the royalties from Greater Sunrise leaving East Timor with only a miserly 18%.

Labor supported the seriously flawed policy and it was left to Senators Brown, Harris and Stott Despoja to be the only Federal Australian politicians to publicly condemn it. Fortunately, growing public pressure on this issue has ensured East Timor will now receive a larger share of royalties from Greater Sunrise.

Part of the current pending agreement on Greater Sunrise, is that East Timor will ratify the IUA unchanged. There will simply be an additional document spelling out how East Timor gets the 32% increase in its Greater Sunrise share.

The bill still remains both flawed and unjust. The exact same arguments used to support the original bill are being recycled, only it has now been proven that the Australian Government can be pushed towards a more equitable solution.

The Labor Party can 'get it right' this time by insisting that the Howard Government 'finishes the job' and establishes permanent maritime boundaries with East Timor in accordance with current International Law.

Background

For various historical reasons East Timor has never had maritime boundaries and is presently trying to negotiate boundaries with its neighbours.

Under current International Law, East Timor is entitled to a much larger share of the petroleum resources in the Timor Sea than it currently enjoys.

However, the Australian Government has not been 'acting with restraint' as recommended by International Law. Instead the Australian Government has taken over \$2 billion in royalties since 1999. These royalties from the Laminaria Corallina oil fields are highly likely to belong to

East Timor if permanent maritime boundaries were established in accordance with current principles of International Law.

For the last year and a half, representatives from the East Timorese and Australian Governments have been discussing where permanent maritime boundaries between the two countries should be established.

East Timor wants to establish maritime boundaries along the median line, halfway between the coastlines, and with equitable lateral boundaries. East Timor's claim is based on principles of international law set out in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and in case law. Australia on the other hands, wants to simply close the 'Timor Gap' that was left in the 1972 Indonesia/Australia seabed boundary treaty, which was based on the now outdated continental shelf rationale.

Because the Australian Government secretly and preemptively withdrew recognition of the maritime boundary jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal of the Law of the Sea in March 2002, East Timor has no legal avenues in which to settle this dispute and has been forced into unbalanced negotiations.

As a result of this deadlock, and with East Timor (the poorest nation in Asia) in desperate need of funds, a so called "creative solution" has been devised and a deal covering the Greater Sunrise gas field is expected to be signed within the next few weeks.

A combination of the efforts of East Timor's negotiating team, Australian grassroots pressure, businessman Ian Melrose's television commercials, and mounting international pressure by politicians, trade unions and activists, has moved Canberra's position significantly over the past 18 months.

There's every reason to believe that the Howard Government could be moved even further if negotiations and campaigning continues. The Australian people and media are just beginning to grasp the underlying truth behind Australia's continuing maritime occupation of the Timor Sea.

Now is the time for all opposition parties to voice their concerns.

For further information and updates, please visit <http://www.TimorSeaJustice.org>

The Timor Sea Justice Campaign would like to thank all of the people who, believing in justice and the notion of a fair go, have supported the campaign to stop the theft of East Timor's gas and oil.

While the deal currently on offer still falls disappointingly short of East Timor's legal entitlements under International Law, our supporters deserve some of the credit for East Timor's share of Greater Sunrise revenues being increased from 18% to 50%.

Well done and thanks.

Enquiries: Tom Clarke, co-ordinator TSJC
Mobile: 0422 545 763
E-mail: tom@timorseajustice.org

The News in Short

US didn't screen foreign trainees, GAO says

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) (an office of US Congress) has reported that military trainers violated US law by instructing almost 7,000 Indonesian, Filipino & Thai police without determining any history of human rights violations (in debates like this, "human rights violations" has become code for murder and torture). The SE-Asian police were trained by the US Justice Department between 2001 and 2004 at a cost of US\$265.7 million. The 4,000 Indonesian trainees included 32 from a notorious special-forces police unit long known for its human rights abuses. US training of Indonesia's police increased massively in those years because of a long-standing US ban on assistance to the military.

Indonesia says "hands off Papua"

The US House of Representatives has approved a bill that questions the status of West Papua. It says the votes of Papuan elders were manipulated in 1969 during the "Act of Free Choice". The bill asks the Secretary of State to report to Congress within 6 months on the 1969 Act of Free Choice. The bill is part of legislation to approve aid to foreign militaries. If the bill is passed by Congress & not vetoed by President Bush it will intensify pressure on Indonesia to give the West Papuan people an act of self-determination (like East Timor's in 1999). Indonesia says it will use all diplomatic avenues to block the bill.

Munir murder trial

The trial begins in August of Pollycarpus, Garuda Airlines pilot and suspected intelligence (BIN) agent, for the murder of human rights activist Munir. Munir died from arsenic poisoning on a Garuda flight to Amsterdam in September 2004. Most cases have a panel of 3 judges, but this one will be heard by 5 judges. A fact-finding team helping the police reported to President Yudhoyono (SBY) that there was a conspiracy involving former and active BIN agents. Pollycarpus was in very frequent 'phone contact with BIN officials before & after Munir's death. 2 human rights NGOs (one of them founded by Munir) are urging SBY to speed up the investigation. They say they will demonstrate in front of foreign embassies in Jakarta unless the case is resolved before September 7th, the anniversary of Munir's death.

Military impunity again – US Senate objects

In 2001, then-President Wahid established special human rights courts for 2 cases. One was the 1999 militia and TNI (army) violence in East Timor. Of 18 defendants, 17 were acquitted, including all Indonesian army & police officers. The second case was the Tanjung Priok massacre in Jakarta in September 1984. Security forces fired on Muslim protesters, killing 33. All 14 defendants have now been acquitted. Human Rights Watch says it shows TNI remains above the law & continues to get away with murder.

As a result, the US Senate is likely to maintain its restrictions on aid to TNI. Since 2001, the Pentagon & the Bush administration have relentlessly campaigned to remove restrictions on military ties with Jakarta. In June, the House of Representatives agreed to lift all restrictions. The Senate is yet to debate this. Since the Tanjung Priok acquittals the Senate is expected to leave the restrictions in place.

Peace in Aceh

The Indonesian Government & the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) made a historic peace agreement during a 5th round of negotiations in Helsinki (July 17th). The accord is to be signed in Aceh on August 15th. President Yudhoyono (SBY) has ordered TNI to cease military operations against GAM. The agreement covers political participation, human rights, amnesty for GAM members, security arrangements, dispute settlement & a monitoring mission. TNI & police numbers will be reduced from 50,000 to 23,000. The Government will change Indone-

sian law to enable GAM to contest elections in Aceh. Until now elections have been tightly controlled by the big parties & are often corrupt, with candidates paying major parties up to US \$100,000 to be nominated. GAM rejected an offer by major parties to nominate GAM members as their candidates in Aceh.

The army (TNI) has most to lose from an end to the conflict as Aceh is the province where it is most out of control. It stands to lose its lucrative drug-dealing, illegal logging, extortion, prostitution, gambling & smuggling if Aceh politics is no longer corrupt. SBY's Government fears a threat to withdraw billions of dollars in post-tsunami reconstruction funds if the conflict continues. With a weak & stagnating economy, Indonesia can't afford to sustain the war in Aceh.

War crimes in Aceh (July 15)

During Aceh peace talks, separatists called for an international tribunal to try TNI officers accused of war crimes. They raised the case of Lt. Col. Sudjono, accused of leading troops that massacred 56 boys & their teacher at a religious school in 2000. 24 soldiers were tried & found guilty, but Sudjono disappeared from a military jail. He is reported to be living openly in central Java. Human rights groups say he is the link to TNI generals who ordered the massacre.

East Timor joins ASEAN security group (July 30)

East Timor has joined the ASEAN Regional Forum, South-East Asia's main security forum. Members include 10 ASEAN nations, the EU, USA, China, Japan, Australia & Russia. East Timor is not ready to join ASEAN itself as its funds don't allow it to attend the many ASEAN meetings.

Freeport and TNI (July 25)

Relations between mining company Freeport McRoran & the army (TNI) are exposed in a new report by Global Witness. After the killings of 3 teachers working for Freeport, the company revealed payments of US\$10.3million in 2001-2 for military & police protection of its mine in West Papua. The report, "Paying for Protection", shows large sums went directly to TNI & police officers, not to the Indonesian government. Area commander General Simbolon received US\$247,705 (Gen. Simbolon held a senior post in East Timor in 1999). Global Witness is calling for investigations under both the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act & Indonesian laws. It also calls for all mining, oil & gas companies to stop payments to security forces that are not required by law; and to publish independently audited details of those required by law.

"Bigger, better Government" (July 27)

Prime Minister Alkatiri has unveiled a more effective and decentralised government for East Timor, expanding it from 31 to 43 members. Each of the 5 regions will have a state secretary. Departments of Youth & Sport, Environment and Physical development will have state secretaries. Defence is upgraded to a ministerial portfolio. PM Alkatiri will be Minister for Natural Resources, Minerals & Energy.

More ferries (July 25)

East Timor already has a ferry under construction by PT PAL Indonesia in Surabaya; it will serve the Dili – Atauro – Oecussi route. Now it has ordered 3 more – to give sea transport to Darwin, Kupang (West Timor) & Surabaya (Java).

World Bank report—as NOT told by *The Australian* (July 20)

The World Bank has just released its latest report on East Timor – but Australians will only know what it actually says if they listen to interviews with the report's authors. Rupert Murdoch's national newspaper *The Australian* published a front-page account of the report suggesting a danger of civil conflict & of inevitable high-level corruption siphoning off the benefits of oil wealth. In an interview on ABC radio on July 19th, World Bank (East Timor) Country Director Xian Zhu said he "takes exception to such coverage". Xian Zhu said the report really says East Timor is making remarkable progress.

Comment on Australian Story-Lance Collins (ABC-TV, 25th July)

All Australians who value integrity, humanity, justice and fair play in our international dealings owe a debt of gratitude to Lance Collins, Martin Toohey, Merv Jenkins and the Australian Story team who ensured we could hear the stories of these men.

The names of former Ausaid employee, Lansell Taudevin and former army security officer, Wayne Sievers, should also be recalled as others who suffered because they too tried to alert officialdom to the problems that were becoming apparent during the lead-up to the 1999 Timor referendum.

They should not have had to battle unethical politicians and bureaucrats in their quest to change Australia's disgraceful behaviour over the illegal and genocidal Indonesian invasion of East Timor. The Indonesian apologists did not seem to care that about 300,000 East Timorese lost their lives and suffered some of the most sickening crimes against humanity during the 24 years of occupation.

The refusal to confront the Suharto dictatorship over the supply of arms to its militias meant at least 2000 more Timorese died after the independence referendum of 1999. Australian leaders adamantly refused to allow peace keepers into Timor Leste before the referendum to ensure that the process would be fair and safe. Instead, more people died and suffered at the hands of the Indonesian military (TNI) and its militias.

The security of personnel of international organisations working there and subsequently the Australian peace keepers was put at risk by this irresponsible action. It was good fortune only that more peace keepers and NGO personnel

did not die.

Now the Howard Government has resumed military aid and cooperation with the Indonesian Special Forces (KOPASSUS) because they claim this is necessary to assist the war on terror. The problem is that KOPASSUS is the biggest terrorist organisation in our region! Apart from Timor Leste, we should also scrutinise the behaviour of the TNI in West Papua, Aceh and parts of Indonesia itself eg the Moluccas (Maluku), West Kalimantan etc. Many of the same war criminals that led the TNI in Timor Leste are now operating in these other areas.

Of course, the reason for the betrayal of the Timorese, our valiant World War 2 allies, is that the Australian government and the oil companies wanted to pirate East Timor's share of the oil and gas in the Timor Sea. Australia is not trusted in many countries around the world because of its behaviour on the East Timor question and because of its willingness to be involved in colonial wars for Britain and the US over many decades. Despite the protestations of many western leaders, the terrorism that western countries are experiencing now is a direct backlash to the bellicose actions of the US and the UK in Iraq and the Middle East.

When Xanana Gusmao, the President of East Timor, was asked for his response to the attacks on the World Trade Centre, he said that the only way to stop terrorism and build world peace in the world was to "pursue the politics of international social justice and love".

If this nation decides to follow this path of international relations and behave more responsibly and humanely in our international dealings, it is going to need Australians like Lance Collin, Martin Toohey and Merv Jenkins to lead the way. A big thank you to all who brought us this story. It should cause all Australians to pause, reflect and follow the path of justice.

Andrew (Andy) Alcock
Information Officer,
Australia East Timor Friendship Association (SA) Inc

'Truth' or Impunity? Joint commission criticised as 'toothless'

The governments of Indonesia and Timor-Leste have announced the makeup of a largely toothless joint truth commission. It will investigate the nearly 1,500 deaths that occurred in 1999 after East Timorese voted overwhelmingly to end Indonesian occupation.

Hundreds of thousands of Timorese fled their homes in terror when pro-Jakarta militiamen, backed by the Indonesian military, went on a destructive rampage just days after the vote. The mayhem ended only after an Australian-led multinational force arrived and Indonesian troops left.

Since then Indonesia has prosecuted a number of Indonesians accused of leading the violence, but all 18 military and civilian officers charged with human rights abuses have been acquitted.

Victims of the deadly rampage and human rights workers criticised the 'Truth Commission' saying the United Nations should continue to push for an international tribunal, similar to the ones held for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

A UN group also recently called for an international tribunal to be set up to prosecute offenders.

East Timor's Catholic bishops agreed saying "the victims and their families ... deserve nothing less".

"The Catholic Church requests the continued intervention of the United Nations to achieve justice for the people of East Timor," Bishops Basilio do Nascimento and Alberto Ricardo da Silva said in a statement.

"We hope that the voice of the East Timorese people, who have suffered from impunity, will be heard."

But East Timor's foreign minister repeated his opposition to an international tribunal.

"We do not believe the establishment of an international tribunal is the only way to find truth or justice," Jose Ramos Horta said.

East Timor, the poorest nation in Asia, gets more than 80 per

cent of its imports from Indonesia and is also dependent on its former occupier for electricity and gas. All flights pass through Bali, and many of Indonesia's laws are still on the books.

In Jakarta, Indonesian foreign ministry spokesman Yuri Thamrin told a news conference that 10 panellists - five from East Timor and five from Indonesia - have been selected.

The commission has been tasked with establishing a "conclusive truth of events" to promote reconciliation and friendship and to ensure that such tragic events will not be repeated.

"The members of the commission have free access to all documents related to the human rights abuses that can be used to reveal the truth, including on the reasons behind the abuses," Thamrin said.

The commission is modelled on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but will have few powers.

Thamrin said the commission would issue recommendations to heal "past wounds" but would not seek to prosecute human rights offenders.

The commission has a one-year mandate that can be extended for another year.

It was established based on an agreement between Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and East Timorese President Xanana Gusmao last December.

Preliminary consultations commenced in Denpasar, Bali, on August 4.

Indonesia has picked Achmad Ali, a legal expert; Wisber Loeis, former director-general of international economic relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Benjamin Mangkudilaga, a former Supreme Court justice; Petrus Turang, a West Timor bishop; and Agus Widjojo, a military expert.

The East Timor members are Jacinto Alves, Diorinicio Babo, Aniceto Guterres, Felicidade Guterres and Cirilio Varadales.

Epilepsy—a major cause of burns in East Timor

DULCE - HER STORY.

Dulce is an 18-year-old from Emera, Emera District of East Timor.

Three years ago Dulce developed epilepsy.

As soon as she had the first bouts of seizures, her life dramatically turned for the worse.

Suddenly Dulce was hated by her father and he used the slightest excuse to beat her. Her stepmother (her mother is deceased) called her a witch and in order to prevent her transmitting epilepsy to others burned her clothes and even her primary school certificate!

Dulce's father and stepmother continued mistreating her, starving her and not allowing her to attend school, until finally a distant relative, Manuel, took pity on her and took her into his home. Manuel obtained traditional Timorese medicines for Dulce but they gave her no relief from seizures that she had as often as two to five times per day.

Two months ago, as Dulce was trying to get warm by a fire on a cold morning, she had a seizure during which her right forearm fell into the fire. She received a second degree burn extending almost to the elbow before

Manuel pulled her out of the fire.

Dulce was admitted to the district hospital where she was diagnosed with epilepsy and anti-epileptic medication commenced immediately. After discharge she was followed up by a district mental health nurse and since then has not had any more seizures.

Having been returned to 'normalcy' by the medication Dulce is most anxious to return to school. However, Manuel cannot afford to send her back to school as he has his own children to care for.

East Timor Epilepsy Association seeks help!

The story of Dulce reveals much about the plight of epileptics in East Timor.

The fight to bring epilepsy out of the shadows is yet to be started in East Timor. Until about a year ago, there was absolutely nothing on the ground. There is a strong taboo placed on epilepsy with enormous negative effects on those afflicted with the condition.

Community education is needed urgently in East Timor. It will take years before a noticeable effect will be seen but the first step has been taken with the establishment of the East Timor Epilepsy Association a year ago. The association is yet to find the sponsorship it desperately needs. The understanding in East Timor of the

(Continued on page 6)

The Alola Foundation's newest project up and running!

Mother & Baby Packs

In the middle of June, the Alola Foundation's newest project was put into operation, with the organising (through Mothers' Support Groups) of a sewing week.

Using donated sewing machines, six local women were employed for a week and sewed their way through nearly three boxes of thread and hundreds of metres of donated material, to make 475 baby wraps, which, added to the 40 wraps sent to us by Heather Motteram's sewing group of Fullarton, SA, will give us enough for the first two weeks of this project. We could have kept going but, unfortunately, we ran out of material!

Sewing machines and material donated by Mavis Taylor and Rotary (Victoria); many further wraps to be donated by The MILK Fund (Singapore).

Thank you from Alola

Alola are seeking to raise US\$20 per maternity kit to purchase as much as possible in Timor, but are seeking assistance in obtaining suitable lightweight fabric, and sheeting (new or good quality second-hand), rolls of terry towelling and baby soap. Some 0000-00 baby clothes (new & good quality second-hand) and nappies (cloth) are also being sought. Alola wishes to sustain this project to provide work

TARGET for the first year

Australian Relief & Mercy Services (Vic)	US\$70,000
	\$750
Loreto Federation, Melbourne (Vic)	\$5,625
Ms Jenny Weaver (SA)	\$750
KOMSTA (South Korea)	\$500
Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters' Project	\$2,250
Timor-Leste Foundation	\$10,000
TOTAL TO DATE	\$19,875
STILL REQUIRED	US\$50,125

for some of the enormous number of unemployed women, and cash is always the most important component.

With the baby boom in Timor, Alola is seeking to produce 350 "Smart Mum Packs" per month. For people who love to sew, tropical weight baby wraps at about 70x90cms finished would be enormously appreciated. This could be an ongoing project for groups here too. At US\$20 per pack, this is around AU\$9,100 per month, with AU\$2,000 per month already donated or pledged.

Cash donations will help sustain the project and help not only the mothers and babies, but also the employment situation.

If any readers can assist, please contact jill.forsyth@formax.com.au, for both cash donations, and in kind donations which will be sent by Melbourne Rotary clubs through Bill Dagg from the DIK store. Or contact

(A letter from Kirsty Sword Gusmao)

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your interest in supporting the Alola Foundation to prepare and distribute Maternity Packs to women giving birth at Dili's Guido Valadares National Hospital and Baucau Hospital. Only 10% of pregnant women give birth in health facilities in Timor-Leste. The costs incurred in travelling to and spending time in hospital are one factor determining many women's choice to give birth at home. Another is the shame associated with their inability to provide their newborn babies with appropriate clothing, wraps etc. It is a priority of the Timor-Leste Ministry of Health to encourage women to give birth with the assistance of skilled birth attendants as a means of bringing about a reduction in the alarmingly high rates of maternal and infant mortality in our country.



Alola Foundation, www.alolafoundation.org

Heather Motteram on 8338-3122 if you can help the Adelaide Rotary sewing group produce more baby wraps.

AETFA-SA will also forward donations.

What's On

* Thursday, 25th August, 7.00pm

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Stop Violence Against Women Forum at CAOS CAFE, 188 Hindley St, ADELAIDE

Included amongst speakers will be Rebekah Kuhn from AETFA committee, speaking on violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations in East Timor.

* Tuesday, 6th September, 5:30 - 7:00pm

MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

Adelaide Town Hall, King William Street, ADELAIDE
*How Australians can help to halve global poverty by 2015
in support of the Millennium Development Goals.*

Part of the bi-monthly forums on key international development issues presented by World Vision Australia and AusAID and supported by the Hawke Centre, University of South Australia.

Speaker:

Professor Stuart Rees, Director, Sydney Peace Foundation and Director, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney

Entrance: Free

Bookings: Hawke Centre website: www.hawkecentre.unisa.edu.au
or RSVP line 08 8302 0215

* Friday 9th-Sunday 11th September

Challenges and Possibilities: International Organisations and Women in East Timor

Storey Hall, RMIT University, Melbourne
A Weekend of Reflection, Dialogue and Collaboration

For more information and to download the registration form visit
www.timorwomen.org (register early as places are limited!)

For further details, contact Cleo Fleming at cleo.fleming@rmit.edu.au
or on 03 9925 1921

East Timor Epilepsy Association

(Continued from page 5)

pressing need to save the epileptics from their horrible conditions is very low, and in any case for many life in East Timor is a daily struggle to survive. The ETEA is therefore seeking sponsorship from abroad.

The ETEA intends to identify those epileptics who have been abandoned by their families like Dulce and look for people who could sponsor them for a couple of years to enable them to attend school, live in decent houses, wear decent clothing and feel that they are loved.

The ETEA would be willing to forward the list of such epileptics to potential sponsors.

The topography of East Timor is so rugged that there is limited access to most of the epileptics who live up in the mountains. The East Timor Epilepsy Association presently have no means of mobility. The association will need a four wheel drive vehicle and two motorbikes to search and find as many of the epileptics as possible in East Timor and start them on medication and provide follow up.

At this point only an insignificant number of epileptics are on medication. The majority are still using traditional Timorese medicines which leave them worse off and worse still impoverishes the epileptic and their family further until a point is reached where the family abandons them to their fate.

(based on information supplied by ETEA)

For further information—

Mr Jose Mali, Coordinator, ETEA.

Dr John Anaje, Adviser, ETEA.

Tel: 670 7235779 (Dili office)

e-mail: eteainfo@yahoo.com

Or in Adelaide please contact Rebekah Kuehn

e-mail: rebekah.kuehn@excite.com

You can also purchase *The Entertainment Book*

CD: "Freedom Rising"

Musician Paul Kelly has produced a new compilation CD for East Timor.

Timor-Leste: Freedom Rising features Kelly & a Who's Who of Australian music: Hoodoo Gurus, Living End, Cruel Sea, Renee Geyer, Cat Empire, John Butler Trio, Missy Higgins, Dallas Crane, Kasey Chambers. Some artists wrote & recorded songs especially for the album.

Half proceeds go to the **Alola Foundation** (Paul Kelly is a friend of President Xanana & Kirsty Sword Gusmao & stays with them when visiting East Timor). The other half proceeds go to **Life, Love & Health** – which was founded by former Australian soldier Luke Gosling – like Alola Foundation it works in the areas of maternal & childhood health in East Timor. While stationed in East Timor, Luke Gosling was moved by the generosity of the poverty-stricken people and decided to do something about their poverty.

The CD is available at all good music stores & will soon be available from AETFA.

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