

The East Timor & Indonesia *Estafeta*

Voice of the East Timor & Indonesia *Action Network/U.S.* Vol. 11 No. 1/Spring 2005

ETAN Assists Aceh

by Charles Scheiner

On December 26, 2004, a devastating earthquake and tsunami struck the Indian Ocean. Aceh, Indonesia, was hardest hit, with more than 128,000 people killed and a half-million left homeless. In one hour, this natural disaster took as many lives as the Indonesian military did in 24 years of occupation of East Timor. Natural forces destroyed more buildings and infrastructure than Indonesia-directed militias did in East Timor in "Black September" 1999.

The Acehnese people have endured brutal repression by Indonesian military (TNI) and police for more than a decade. After a brief ceasefire in late 2002, negotiations collapsed, Indonesia arrested the negotiators and restricted international access to Aceh. Martial

law and civil emergency in Aceh have killed thousands and displaced tens of thousands, mostly civilians with no connection to the Free Aceh (GAM) independence movement. After the tsunami, GAM suspended military operations, but TNI has continued to fight, killing more than 120 people in January alone.

In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, Acehnese and U.S. friends turned to ETAN to facilitate emergency humanitarian relief. ETAN has worked with grassroots people under Indonesian occupation since 1991, and we understand how the Indonesian military works. ETAN quickly began to solicit and receive donations to directly assist grassroots Acehnese organizations. These local groups know the situation best and the Acehnese trust them.

Jakarta reluctantly admitted governmental

and non-governmental international humanitarian agencies into Aceh a few days after the earthquake. Much-needed services were provided by UNHCR, the Red Cross, Oxfam, and even the Pentagon. But all international NGOs and agencies must work through the Indonesian government, with its famous corruption and less well-known adversary relationship to Acehnese civilians. Many Indonesian soldiers found it hard to assist people whom they saw as enemies before December 26, and many survivors are reluctant to trust the soldiers.

With publicity from Amy Goodman's "Democracy Now!" and other progressive media, ETAN donations for Acehnese organizations came in through our website and mailbox. These

(continued on page 2)

ETAN Takes A New Name

With great pleasure, ETAN announces our new name — East Timor and Indonesia *Action Network* (ETAN). The change has come after much thought and discussion. Along with the name change, we have revised our mission statement. We will continue to use the acronym ETAN. Our work remains the same - and as vital and necessary as ever.

John M. Miller, ETAN's Outreach and Media Coordinator, reflected on the changes at hand, "The new name and mission statement more clearly reflect who we are and what we currently do. It is obvious that Indonesian military repression and human rights violations have not been limited to East Timor. While both countries have made progress, we continue to believe that justice for past violations and restrictions on U.S. security assistance to Indonesia are essential to building a just and democratic East Timor and Indonesia."

ETAN's new mission statement has been updated to include the range of issues which members have consistently worked on in the

wake of East Timor's independence. The work ETAN members were performing in the name of human rights throughout the Indonesian archipelago is now officially under the mandate of the organization. In addition, changes were made which more prominently address newer, East Timor specific topics, such as resource issues and the struggle for a fair maritime boundary between East Timor and Australia.

"We think these changes will bring new energy and resources to ETAN in support of democracy, justice and human rights," said Elizabeth Venable, a member of ETAN's Executive Committee from Riverside, CA.

ETAN continues to support an international tribunal for war crimes and other human rights violations committed in East Timor and accountability for the U.S. role in supporting the Indonesian military invasion and occupation. We work with East Timorese civil society and NGOs to support democracy, human rights and economic alternatives for East Timor. We regularly bring grassroots perspectives on both East

Timor and Indonesia to policymakers, media, academia and many others, serving as an important and credible source of information and analysis.

ETAN's Mission Statement

The East Timor and Indonesia *Action Network/U.S.* (ETAN) is a U.S.-based grassroots organization working in solidarity with the peoples of East Timor and Indonesia. ETAN educates, organizes, and advocates for human rights, women's rights, social and economic justice, democracy and genuine self-determination in East Timor. ETAN works for justice for historic and ongoing crimes against humanity, war crimes, and human rights violations in East Timor and Indonesia.

contributions went to local groups who have experience working with displaced people, especially children. ETAN's Aceh relief is a genuine grassroots-to-grassroots effort. So far, we have received \$200,000 from more than 1300 donors, most of whom had not donated to ETAN before. About 12% of the donors are from outside the United States. A comprehensive report on how the money has been allocated will be available in a few months.

The amount ETAN collected is tiny compared to the hundreds of millions collected by governments or the Red Cross, but all of it is going directly to local groups — not to high international salaries, airfares, or administrative expenses. Although we paid for emergency food and shelter in the first two weeks, other international agencies soon took care of those needs. At the suggestion of grassroots Acehese leaders, ETAN held most of the money we raised until unfunded needs became clear.

The programs we have funded include:

- Food and emergency shelter and school construction for displaced persons not reached

by larger or international agencies

- Medical supplies and emergency aid, including construction of a hospital.
- School reconstruction, as well as tuition, school supplies and living expenses for displaced orphans.
- Organizing and education to empower people in underserved communities, especially women, to rebuild their lives and function independently of outside agencies.

What's the Deal with the Timor Sea?

Australia was saying, while Timor-Leste was denying, that a deal had been struck over petroleum resources in the Timor Sea. The apparent agreement would cheat the new nation. ETAN urged the two governments to conduct negotiations based on fundamental international legal principles. ETAN also condemned Australia's continued pressure through media leaks and other means to force East Timor to concede its oil and gas rights by making a rapid agreement on the Timor Sea.

At publication, Timor had not approved the proposal and the details of any agreement had yet to be released. Media reports said that Australia will pay East Timor around US\$3.8 billion over the next 30 to 40 years; negotiations over the maritime boundary would be

delayed for 60 years. Experts project government revenue from the Sunrise oil and gas at around US\$39 billion.

"Why the rush to complete a deal?" asked ETAN Executive Committee member Charles Scheiner. "East Timor will receive sufficient revenues from other oil projects for the next 15 years. Furthermore, the value of Sunrise natural gas will increase over time."

In April, East Timorese NGOs urged their government not to "rush in obtaining an agreement... it is more important that you determine [boundaries] based on international law..." They also asked "the Australian government to return to international dispute resolution processes for maritime boundaries" and to "cease exploration" and new licenses in disputed areas.

ETAN Needs Your Support!

Please donate generously to celebrate ETAN's forward-thinking changes to our name and mission statement. Your support will enable ETAN to continue our important work for justice, human rights, and democracy in both Indonesia and East Timor.

Send your check to ETAN, PO Box 15774, Washington, DC 20003-0774 or make a secure, online donation, by visiting <http://www.etan.org/news/2005/05name.htm>. Donations of any size for ETAN's political and advocacy work should be made out to ETAN and are not tax-deductible. Tax-deductible checks for over \$50 can be made out to "AJ Muste Memorial Institute/ETAN" and will be used to support our educational work. *Thank you.*

- Building local capacity to manage economic and physical construction, as well as to monitor the aid and reconstruction process from a local perspective, and to negotiate for victims with national and international government agencies and NGOs.

Although ETAN was gratified to be able to respond quickly and directly to the emergency in Aceh, we are not a humanitarian assistance organization, and will soon phase out this work. However, we continue to educate people in the U.S. about human rights violations in Aceh and to encourage solutions to the conflict. We are also opposing efforts by the U.S. and Indonesian governments to exploit the disaster to resume military training and weapons shipments to Indonesia's military. In addition to op-ed articles written and talks given by ETAN activists around the USA, we prepared a CD-ROM containing a power point slide show intended to accompany presentations. It also includes the 32-minute video *Anywhere but Fear: Inside the Martial Law in Aceh 2003-2004* and a collection of reports and documents on Aceh. Copies are available for \$12 postpaid from ETAN. International attention to Aceh generated by the tsunami may have a collateral benefit. As of this writing, the Acehese independence movement and the Indonesian government are discussing ways to end the conflict and "civil emergency" in Aceh. ETAN will continue to follow the human rights situation, especially the role of the United States government and military.

ETAN is still collecting donations for Acehese groups, although we also need money for our advocacy work in the United States (see above). To donate to Aceh on-line via credit card, go to <http://www.etan.org/aceh>, or send a check payable to ETAN to our DC address; write Aceh in the memo line. Checks for tax-deductible contributions of \$50 or more for the relief effort can be made out to "Nonviolence International"; write "ETAN/Aceh" in the memo.

The East Timor *Estafeta* is the newsletter of the East Timor & Indonesia Action Network of the United States. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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IMET Certified

Congress Speaks Out on TNI, Aceh, Papua, Timor Sea

by Karen Orenstein

With then-Undersecretary of Defense (and now World Bank President) Paul Wolfowitz heaping praise on the Indonesian security forces for their response to the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami in Aceh and North Sumatra, the Bush administration began shamelessly lobbying Congress to lift restrictions on military assistance for Indonesia early in the 2005 legislative process.

In her second month as Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice restarted full IMET military training for Indonesia, the prestigious military training program that Indonesia had sought but Congress denied for over a decade largely due to the horrendous rights record of the Indonesian military (TNI). Just two days after the release of IMET, the State Department in its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices said, "Security force members murdered, tortured, raped, beat, and arbitrarily detained civilians and members of separatist movements, especially in Aceh and to a lesser extent in Papua."

In recent years, Congress had maintained only one condition restricting full IMET — cooperation by Indonesian authorities with an FBI investigation into the 2002 ambush murders of two U.S. citizens and an Indonesian in West Papua. But cooperation by Indonesia has been spotty at best. The sole suspect indicted so far (by a U.S. grand jury) remains at large in Indonesia. His military connections, which appear to be extensive, have hardly been examined. Given this lack of progress, the State Department's certification of cooperation is false; it has far more to do with fulfilling the administration's long-term goal of re-engagement with the TNI than with bringing to justice those responsible for the ambush or encouraging democratic reforms. Indeed, Indonesia has yet to fulfill previous conditions on IMET, including accountability for rights violations in East Timor and Indonesia and transparency in the military budget.

Members of Congress spoke out strongly against IMET's reinstatement. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) called the move "premature and unfortunate," and Representatives Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa), Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), and Christopher Smith (R-NJ) also objected.

With the start of spring, Congress began assembling key authorization and appropriations bills, accompanied by committee hearings. In

Indonesia human rights and ETAN activist Ed McWilliams testified before the House International Relations Committee in March on "Implications of Recent Indonesia Reform." ETAN helped organize a Human Rights Caucus briefing on human rights in tsunami-stricken Aceh.

In response to IMET reinstatement, Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) successfully amended the Foreign Affairs Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007, passed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The amendment requires strict reporting by the Secretary of State on progress in the case of the West Papua ambush, including the status of cooperation between the Indonesian and U.S. governments, before FY06 IMET funds for Indonesia and any defense-related procurement can be released. The same bill also contains language inserted by Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) calling for resolution of the decades-long conflict in Aceh.

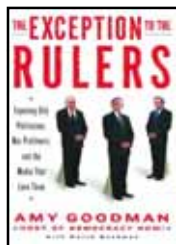
Representative Barney Frank (D-MA) and Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) led 15 other senior members of Congress in March in a letter to Australia's prime minister urging his government, "to move quickly and seriously to establish a fair, permanent maritime boundary with Timor-Leste," as the two countries prepared to resume negotiations on the issue. The Australian Embassy in Washington mounted

a lobbying campaign in response to the letter. ETAN's response to Australia's arguments are available at www.etan.org/action/issues/tsea/plainfact.htm.

Also in March, Representative Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa) led 36 members of the Congressional Black Caucus in sending a letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan requesting a "review" of the fraudulent "Act of Free Choice," which resulted in Indonesia's annexation of West Papua in 1969. In a separate letter, Faleomavaega and the Black Caucus urged Secretary Rice to oppose IMET.

Despite several years' worth of high priority effort, the Bush administration has failed to normalize relations with Indonesia's security forces. Though, at least for now, Indonesia can get IMET, Congress still forbids foreign military financing and export of lethal defense articles for Indonesia. With your political and financial support, ETAN continues to fight for total restriction of military assistance. ETAN's annual Advocacy Days are an important component of that fight. Join us in Washington, DC June 12-14 to meet with Representatives and Senators to educate Congress and move U.S. foreign policy in a more sane direction (see back page).

New from ETAN



The Exception to the Rule: Exposing Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, & the Media that Love Them
by Amy Goodman
352 pp. \$22 hardcover.
\$13 paper.

A Not-So-Distant Horror: Mass Violence in East Timor

by Joseph Nevins, 288 pp. \$19
International complicity with East Timor's tragedy. New from ETAN activist and scholar.

Rich Man, Poor Man

Timor Sea boundary dispute with Australia.
45 minutes. VHS video. \$25

Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia & the Independence of East Timor

by Clinton Fernandes 144 pp. \$25



Indonesia's Secret War in Aceh
by John Martinkus
340 pp. \$35

West Papua & Indonesia since Suharto
by Peter King 240 pp. \$25

We Are the Victims and the Witnesses: Women of Aceh

Pamphlet from Eye on Aceh. \$3

A Woman of Independence

by Kirsty Sword Gusmão
321 pp. \$35

Send orders to ETAN, PO Box 15774, Washington, DC 20003

Add postage and handling (20%; 15% for orders over \$50; 30% int'l air mail)

See our website for a complete list:
www.etan.org/resource/booksetc.htm

ETAN ADVOCACY DAYS

Come to Washington, DC June 12-14

The pro-Indonesian military lobby and the Bush administration have stepped up their lobbying efforts, and so must we! Face-to-face meetings with your Senators and Representatives are our best response. Come to Washington, DC, this June to educate Congress about human rights and justice in East Timor and Indonesia.

Join ETAN as we provide Representatives and Senators with their annual (and often only) update on conditions in East Timor and Indonesia. Prod them to work for justice at ETAN's 12th annual Advocacy Days!

Please let us know as soon as possible if you can participate in ETAN's Advocacy Days. Novices and seasoned activists are welcome! Training is provided for all. Planning for Advocacy Days is much more effective when we have advance notice of participation. Housing can be arranged. Partial travel subsidies are available.

For more information, contact Karen Orenstein, ETAN Washington Coordinator, at karen@etan.org, 202-544-6911, or see our website, www.etan.org.

Join ETAN's National Call-In Days

Thursday, June 9 & Friday, June 10

Tell Congress You Oppose Aid to the Indonesian Military

The Pentagon and State Department want to remove all Congressional restrictions on military assistance to Indonesia's brutal security forces. Senators and Representatives need to hear from you that this must not be allowed to happen, especially now as Congress makes crucial decisions on appropriations legislation.

Tell your Representative and Senators that:

- ✓ Congress must fully restrict military assistance for Indonesia in the FY06 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. This includes IMET, foreign military financing, and export licenses for lethal defense articles. The Senator/Representative should actively support restrictions.
- ✓ The Indonesian military continues to commit atrocious human rights violations, resist reform and evade accountability for crimes against humanity in East Timor and elsewhere. Prestigious U.S. assistance is not warranted.

Help set the context for our meetings during ETAN's Advocacy Days by calling your Representative and Senators on June 9 and 10, just a few days prior to our in-person Congressional appointments.

The Congressional switchboard number is 202-224-3121, or check www.congress.org for contact information. Every call makes a difference, so please contact your members of Congress.

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