

Justice for East Timor

SEPTEMBER 6 marks two dark anniversaries for East Timor: a brutal, Indonesian military-led massacre in 1999 and the militia killings of three United Nations staff working with East Timorese refugees in 2000. After East Timor, a small island country north of Australia, voted overwhelmingly for independence on August 30, 1999, the Indonesian armed forces and their militia proxies laid siege to East Timor, destroying more than 75% of the territory's infrastructure and forcing hundreds of thousands into exile in Indonesian West Timor. At least 2,000 East Timorese were killed during September 1999. One of 1999's most infamous massacres occurred in the town of Suai.

On September 6, 1999, Indonesian army and police, together with local militias, attacked civilians taking refuge in Suai's churchyard. Witnesses heard First Lieutenant Sugito and retired army Colonel Herman Sedyono, who supervised the attack, say that everyone would be killed.

Militiaman Igidio Manek shot Father Hilario Madeira and trod on his body. Manek later abducted fifteen year-old Juliana dos Santos as a "war prize", and took her to West Timor to be his sex slave. Approximately 200 people were massacred in the Suai churchyard.

Exactly one year later, on September 6, 2000, three international staff with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in West Timor were hacked to death and their bodies set on fire by rampaging military-backed militias, while Indonesian police stood by and did nothing. An unknown number of East and West Timorese civilians were also killed.

In early May 2001, an Indonesian court sentenced six East Timorese militiamen who had admitted killing the UN workers to prison terms of only 16 to 20 months. After the verdict, one militiaman stated he was "proud of what he had done." The UN called the verdicts a "mockery" of justice and Secretary-General Annan said the ruling was "unacceptable."



Two years after the independence vote, East Timor voted for a constitutional assembly, an important step towards full independence. However, the 80,000 East Timorese still languishing in militia-controlled refugee camps in West Timor could not participate. Humanitarian organizations report as many as five deaths per day in the camps, with conditions worsening. Rape, sexual enslavement, and other forms of violence against women are prevalent in the camps. Militias continue to make cross-border attacks against UN peacekeepers and East Timorese civilians from their bases in the camps.

These crimes will continue until the perpetrators are brought to justice.

The UN International Commission of Inquiry on East Timor wrote in its January 2000 report: "The intimidation, terror, destruction of property, displacement and evacuation of people [in 1999] would not have been possible without the active involvement of the Indonesian army, and the knowledge and approval of the top military command," and called for an international human rights tribunal to be established for East Timor.

An international tribunal will not happen without your action and U.S. support!

**Phone Your Congressional Representatives Today
End The Impunity Of The Indonesian Military!
Don't Sell Them Arms, Put Them Behind Bars!**

Call your Representative and Senators to urge them to co-sponsor House Concurrent Resolution 60 or Senate Concurrent Resolution 9, which call for "the establishment of an international war crimes tribunal for prosecuting crimes against humanity" carried out by the Indonesian military in East Timor. For a current list of co-sponsors see www.etan.org/legislation.

The Congressional switchboard number is 202-224-3121

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