



East Timor *ACTION* Network ALERT

BUSH ADMINISTRATION GRANTS UNLIMITED MILITARY “AID” TO INDONESIA

BETRAYS MILITARY’S VICTIMS AND END-RUNS CONGRESS

In a surprising and appalling move, the State Department waived all legislated restrictions on U.S. military assistance for Indonesia on November 22. For the first time in over a decade, the Indonesian military is now eligible to receive Pentagon weapons and training without any specific human rights or other conditions.

Just two weeks earlier, ETAN and its allies won a clear victory in Congress. Senators and Representatives voted to maintain a ban on foreign military financing and the export of lethal weapons to Indonesia despite unprecedented pressure from the State Department and Pentagon. Congress sent a strong message to Indonesia’s government and security forces that it expected real improvements in military reform, human rights protections, and accountability for crimes against humanity and other serious crimes. Secretary of State Rice, exploiting a national security waiver, undermined that message.

U.S. support for an above-the-law, unreformed military is not in the national interest of the United States, Indonesia, or Timor-Leste (East Timor). With the 30th anniversary of the December 7 Indonesian military invasion of Timor just around the corner, the Bush administration chose a particularly unfortunate time to condone human rights violations.

We must vigorously protest the Bush administration’s deceptive action. Here are actions YOU can take:

1. Call Secretary Rice today. Tell her:

- You are appalled that the State Department issued a national security waiver allowing unrestricted assistance for the Indonesian military for the first time in over a decade.
- U.S. support for an unaccountable, unreformed military is not in the interest of the United States or any other country. Rather, it undermines democracy and human rights protections and is an affront to Congress.
- Secretary Rice should retract the national security waiver.

Call the State Department at 202-647-6575 to leave a message for Secretary Rice or send a message via <http://tinyurl.com/ds5cr>.

2. If you can make a second call, phone Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill with the same message. He can be reached at 202-647-9596.

3. Write a letter to the editor to your local newspaper, often the most widely-read section. See below for a few sample letters to adapt as your own. Email etan@etan.org or call 718-596-7668 if you’d like some help with your letter.

We cannot let the Bush administration get away with this! Please call Secretary Rice and Assistant Secretary Hill today, and write that letter to the editor. And please let us know the results of your efforts at etan@etan.org. Your actions make a world of difference. Thank you!

For more background, see <http://www.etan.org/news/2005/11/waiver.htm>. Stay tuned for more actions you can take.

ETAN Action Alert

Sample Letters to the Editor

Be sure to include your full name, address, and telephone number. Keep your letter under 200 words. If possible, include a local angle. Timeliness is the bottom line for newspapers, so the sooner you submit your letter, the better. Thank you and good luck!

Sample Letter #1

The State Department's decision to allow unrestricted military assistance for Indonesia is a betrayal of the hundreds of thousands of victims of that military's brutality in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. U.S. support for Indonesia's unreformed military only encourages it to remain above the law. This is not in the interest of either the United States or Indonesia.

Indonesia's democratic reforms have occurred in spite of the military. By issuing a waiver to congressional restrictions on weapons sales, Secretary of State Rice and President Bush have undermined U.S. pressure for further reform. With the stroke of a pen, the administration gave away its leverage to press for accountability for crimes against humanity in Timor-Leste and elsewhere and demonstrated the hollowness of its stated commitment to human rights protections in Indonesia.

Congress must vigorously protest Secretary Rice's abuse of discretion and demand a public explanation. We should all watch closely the impact of such engagement with this terribly abusive military.

Sample Letter #2

In a bitter irony, the Bush administration recently waived all restrictions on military assistance to Indonesia just weeks before the 30th anniversary of that military's invasion of East Timor. Just prior to the December 7, 1975 invasion, President Ford and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger gave then-dictator Suharto the green light to attack East Timor with U.S.-supplied weapons. Tens of thousands of civilians died as a direct result.

No senior military or political official in multiple Indonesian or U.S. administrations has been held accountable for the crimes against humanity committed during the invasion or the subsequent quarter-century of occupation. Secretary of State Rice's decision to override Congress and allow unrestricted U.S. assistance to the brutal Indonesian military for the first time in over a decade only sanctions this cycle of impunity.

Secretary Rice should retract the waiver and instead put the administration's full weight behind an international tribunal on East Timor. After 30 years, Washington should have learned by now that genuine justice and human rights protections are in the national interest. Propping up an unreformed and unaccountable military is not.

This alert can be found at <http://www.etan.org/action/action05/11endrun.htm>

East Timor & Indonesia Action Network/U.S.
PO Box 15774
Washington, DC 20003-0774
202-544-6911, 718-596-7668, etan@etan.org