CHAPTER 8
Genocide in East Timor

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Introduction

In 1975 Indonesian forces invaded the Portuguese colony of East Timor, which was then in the process of decolonization. The invasion provoked a spirited armed resistance, and during the subsequent five-year period, which was marked by bitter fighting in the interior and harsh oppression in occupied areas, the population of the territory underwent a substantial decline. So heavy was the loss of life that 16 years later (in 1991) the population was reported to be significantly lower than the estimate prior to the Indonesian invasion. In relative terms, therefore, the humanitarian costs of this act of forced integration reached genocidal proportions, which makes the East Timor case manifestly one of the most costly genocides in recent history.

While it should not be concluded that the Indonesian authorities embarked on a grand plan designed to bring about the systematic destruction of the Timorese people, Indonesia's occupation strategies and the behavior of the military seemed bound to achieve that end. The large influx of Indonesian settlers into the province could, in the long run, have led to ethnocide—that is, the destruction of the distinctive culture of East Timor. In the years following the invasion, however, the Timor case remained on the UN agenda, despite persistent efforts by Indonesia and its powerful Western friends. Thanks to the efforts of courageous Timorese such as Bishop Carlos Bello, by the end of the 1980s there was a growing awareness in the international community of the catastrophic consequences of this process of annexation and subjugation.

Be that as it may, until the 1990s, the international response to this very serious violation of international law was largely characterized by

indifference and irresolution. Indeed, the expressions of international concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the years following the invasion were so weak that Indonesian authorities had become openly defiant of world opinion. As a result, the Suharto government, despite its heavy dependence on Western economic aid, clearly did not feel the need to respond to international concerns in a positive way—that is, until the Santa Cruz massacre in November 1991.

The Santa Cruz massacre sent shock waves around the world and put the Indonesian authorities on the defensive. Still, its concessions were of little real significance, falling well short of a concession to the demands of East Timor's leaders for the removal of the Indonesian military and for an act of self-determination. And again, thanks to accommodating reactions from officials in, among others, Washington, Paris, Tokyo, and Canberra, the Suharto government appeared to regain its determination to ignore the ongoing criticisms of its annexation of East Timor. Indonesia's agreement to the holding of a plebiscite, under UN auspices, in August 1999 was, it should be understood, an outcome attributable less to international pressures than to the fall of Suharto following the Asian economic collapse. The flexible stance adopted by President Habibie and the determined efforts of Kofi Annan, the newly appointed UN Secretary General, were the key elements in the fortuitous sequence of events that led to East Timor's liberation in September 1999, after 24 years of occupation. As it happened, the Indonesian military persisted until the very end with its practice of indiscriminate killing and wanton destruction, until the International Forces in East Timor (INTERFET) intervention, authorized by the Security Council, forced its withdrawal from the territory.

On the other hand, events elsewhere in the early 1990s, the implications of the liberation of the Baltic States and the international rejection of Iraq's seizure of Kuwait, together with the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize jointly to Jose Ramos-Horta and Bishop Bello, served to place Indonesia's occupation of East Timor under closer scrutiny. In the event, it was not international pressure but the fall of the Suharto regime that provided the catalyst for a radical change in Indonesia's Timor policy. The new president, Habibie, began a process of negotiation with East Timorese leaders, on the one hand, and UN and Portuguese officials, on the other, which led to a UN-administered plebiscite on August 30, 1999. In spite of extreme intimidation, the outcome of the plebiscite was decisive; almost 80% of voters rejected Jakarta's offer of autonomy. After a period of violence, which shocked the international community, President Habibie responded to the demands of the Security Council, and the intervention of President Clinton, and ordered the withdrawal of Indonesian troops and agreed to the transfer of the former Portuguese

colony to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), with the task of preparing the devastated country for full independence.

The Setting

The island of Timor lies at the southeastern extremity of the Indonesian Nusatenggara island group, which was named the Lesser Sundas in Dutch colonial times. It is located at the opposite end to the island of Bali, one of Asia's best-known tourist attractions. Following a long period of rivalry and conflict, Timor came to be divided into two almost equal parts by the Dutch and Portuguese colonial administrations. The partition began to take shape about the middle of the 17th century, as Portugal's colonial power in the East Indies began to weaken in the face of the more vigorous Dutch intrusion. Boundary disputes between the two colonial powers persisted until the late 19th century; that is, until the Lisbon Convention of 1893 and the subsequent signing of the *Sentenca Arbitral* in April 1913, which demarcated the borders as they exist today. The Portuguese colony of East Timor comprised the eastern half of the island, the tiny enclave of Oecussi on the north coast of West Timor, and the small island of Atauro north of Dili.

East Timor is a small country, but it is not insignificant by the standards of smallness among today's membership of the UN. The territory has an area of about 7,300 square miles, comparable in size as well as population with Fiji and only slightly smaller in area than Israel or the state of New Jersey. On the eve of the Indonesian invasion, the Timorese population of the territory was estimated at about 680,000 people, with an annual growth rate of near 2%.

Portuguese navigators first reached Timor about 20 years after Columbus embarked on his epic trans-Atlantic crossing half a millennium ago. About 50 years later, their colonial rule of the area began in earnest. Therefore, for more than four centuries Portugal had been the dominant, almost exclusive, external influence in East Timor—except for a brief Japanese interregnum, from February 1942 until they surrendered to Allied forces in August 1945.

Within five years, the Dutch colony of the Netherlands East Indies was formally to become the Republic of Indonesia. Portuguese colonial rule over East Timor was restored, however, and until 1974 its colonial status was virtually ignored by the nationalist leaders of the new republic. This lack of interest persisted during the last seven years of Sukarno's presidency, when Indonesia embarked on an aggressive anti-colonial policy, with Jakarta vigorously asserting its own claim for the "return" of West Irian. After that objective was secured, Indonesia launched, in

1962, a costly and futile confrontation with Malaysia, which Sukarno perceived as a British neocolonial creation.

At no stage during this period did Indonesia seek to bring any real pressure to bear on the Portuguese administration in East Timor, although the Salazar regime had by that time become the chief target of the mounting campaign for decolonization. Portugal had become the only colonial power that refused to declare its colonies non-self-governing. While Dutch colonialism in West New Guinea was denounced in vitriolic terms, the more traditional form of colonial rule then being conducted by the Portuguese in neighboring East Timor scarcely rated a mention in Jakarta.

From the early 1960s until 1965 there were occasional remarks by a few leading Indonesian political and military figures, hinting that East Timor's future lay with its big neighbor, but these statements were not taken further by the government of the time, and certainly never evolved into a formal claim or political campaign.[1] After 1965 the Suharto regime, which was keen to develop closer relations with the Western nations sharing its hostility to communism and to attract economic assistance from them, was anxious to show that Indonesia no longer had territorial designs on the territories adjacent to it.

This policy appeared to prevail at the highest political level in Jakarta, right up to the point of Indonesia's military intervention in East Timor, with most official statements from Jakarta emphasizing East Timor's right to self-determination.[2] Certainly, at no stage, under either Sukarno or Suharto, was a claim to East Timor ever formally made by the government in Jakarta.[3]

The idea of an East Timor nation emerged spontaneously from the Portuguese colonial experience, just as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the north Kalimantan states were shaped by British and Dutch colonial policies and rivalry. Although the two great empires of Srivijaya and Majapahit extended Java's influence to other parts of the archipelago for a period, there is no evidence that Timorese kingdoms were ever subjugated by the Javanese.

As a political concept, the notion of a nation of East Timor, even taking into account the arbitrary division of the island, is surely no less valid than the idea of an Indonesian state.

It could be said that the Indonesian nation was itself created not by a natural historical evolution but by colonial circumstances, determined by imperial and commercial rivalry in distant Western Europe. The legitimacy of the Indonesian state, it could therefore be argued, has its roots in Dutch colonial expansion and the political consensus—and dissent—it aroused, rather than in the natural evolution of a national political culture. In the world at large in 1974, events in East Timor aroused

little interest. It was poor, undeveloped, remote, and unconnected to the global network of commercial and tourist communications. It possessed no apparent strategic value to any nation, with the possible exception of Indonesia. Its status was therefore of little consequence in perceptions of national interest, other than to Portugal, Indonesia, and Australia. By the end of that year, the Portuguese themselves, with their empire now falling apart, had turned to Europe and were little interested in the fortunes of a distant colony of very little economic value.

Australia is East Timor's nearest Western neighbor, its Northern Territory coastline lying less than 400 miles to the south, across the Timor Sea. For some years after World War II, Canberra regarded the Portuguese colony as strategically important, but by 1962 its significance had faded in the view of the Australian political establishment. In that year, it was the assessment of the Australian government that Indonesian rule over East Timor would not pose any additional external threat and was therefore not unacceptable. Significantly, in September of 1974 Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, who was attracted to the notion that East Timor's integration with Indonesia was the best solution, conveyed that view to the Indonesian leader, President Suharto, at a meeting in Java.

Based on the strong support for decolonization and self-determination declared by Whitlam after he came into office in December 1972, the Timorese had a much more optimistic view of Australia's position. Furthermore, their idea that Australia owed a debt to East Timor, because of the extensive support Australian forces received during their commando operation against the Japanese in 1942,[4] had created an unshakable belief that Australia would help them out in the end.

While Foreign Minister Adam Malik was prepared to countenance independence for East Timor, his views were not in fact shared by Indonesia's most powerful military leaders, who had, from the very outset, different plans for East Timor's future. To be fair, it was not so much a desire for additional territory that motivated them—East Timor was, in the days before the recent offshore oil discoveries, anything but an economic prize. One of their main concerns was that an independent East Timor would stimulate ambitions for independence among discontented nearby ethnic groups, such as the West Timorese and the Ambonese. Also, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, Indonesia's military leadership was obsessed with the risk of communist infiltration and insurgency. To the military, therefore, integration was the only acceptable solution for East Timor.

As it happened, the Australian government was in a position to head off Indonesia's designs on East Timor but did not do so. From their extensive intelligence monitoring of Indonesian military activities[5] they were aware, at its very inception, that a subversive operation had been

put in place with the aim of bringing about integration.[6] Before the end of 1974 this operation was set up by a group of Indonesian generals, among them Lieutenant-General Ali Murtopo, Major-General Benny Murdani (a senior intelligence officer close to the president), and Lieutenant-General Yoga Sugama, then head of the intelligence services. The existence of this operation, code-named Operasi Komodo,[7] became known to U.S. and Australian intelligence agencies before the year was out. Its aim was to bring about the integration of East Timor at any cost, though preferably by non-military means. Its first activities, which included a stream of clumsy propaganda vilifying the independence movement, the open backing of Apodeti, and some thinly disguised covert intelligence actions, had the effect not of dividing the two major parties, but of bringing them together.

Thus it was partly in reaction to this heavy-handed meddling that, early in January 1975, Fretilin[8] and UDT[9] formed a common front for independence. There is little doubt that Australia's accommodating stance, at the official level, strengthened the hands of the generals bent on the annexation of East Timor. Indeed, it is probable that the viability of this operation was predicated on the assumption that Australia would accept it. By the end of 1974, Indonesia was waging a strident propaganda campaign against Fretilin, in particular, and all Timorese in favor of independence in general. Fretilin was a party of the Left, and the Indonesian military chiefs were quite paranoid about its activities. The Fretilin leaders were accused of being communists and anti-Indonesian, and falsified accounts of links between them, Peking, and Hanoi were circulated. In reaction to the provocative propaganda outpourings from Jakarta, the Timorese themselves became increasingly hostile towards Indonesia.

In the first couple of months after April 1974, the Portuguese were rather indifferent toward the idea of independence for East Timor, with some military officers believing that joining with Indonesia made sense for such a small and undeveloped country. One senior official believed he had a responsibility to promote the idea of integration.[10] However, the apparent popular support for independence eventually convinced Lisbon and the colonial authorities that the Timorese were simply not disposed to merge with Indonesia. They saw themselves as being different, in terms of their culture, their languages, their political traditions, and their religions.[11] The aggressive approach of the Indonesians after August 1974 merely served to strengthen the East Timorese national consciousness, impelling the two major parties to form a coalition for independence. In the event, the Portuguese authorities commenced a decolonization program late in 1974, presenting the Timorese political elite with three options—full independence, continuing with Portugal under some new and more democratic arrangement, or integration with Indonesia.

The year 1975 proved to be a turbulent one for East Timor. As a result of political instability in Portugal, and the demoralization of the overseas administration, the decolonization program for Timor soon ran into difficulties. Political turmoil in Lisbon weakened the colonial power's administrative control, and the Indonesian generals heading Operasi Komodo exploited the deteriorating situation subtly and subversively. By mid-fall of that year political differences had surfaced between the two major parties, and in an Operasi Komodo operation, guided by Lieutenant-General Murtopo himself, the Indonesians sought to divide the independence movement. Their propaganda offensive against Fretilin was intensified, while the UDT leaders were invited to Jakarta—and courted. They were lectured, sometimes by Murtopo himself, on the dangers of communist subversion, were exhorted to break the coalition with Fretilin, and were sent, at Jakarta's expense, on tours of anti-communist political centers in Asia—South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan. Furthermore, fabricated evidence of links between the Fretilin leaders, on the one hand, and Peking and Hanoi, on the other, was passed on to them.

At least two of the conservative Timorese leaders, Lopes da Cruz and Mousinho, were actually recruited by Bakin, the powerful Indonesian military intelligence agency.[12] By the middle of 1975 relations between the two Timorese parties had become so tense that talks between them broke down completely. At this time, rumors were circulated by Bakin agents that Fretilin was planning a coup, encouraging UDT leaders to act hastily and rashly.[13]

Early in August 1975 Lieutenant-General Murtopo informed UDT leaders, who were visiting Jakarta, that his intelligence agents had uncovered a Fretilin conspiracy to launch a coup, and he encouraged them to take pre-emptive action.[14] Days after their return, these UDT leaders, with what military support they could muster, launched an abortive coup in Dili—abortive because within three weeks the party and its followers had been overwhelmed by Fretilin. They were defeated not because of external military intervention, but because most Timorese troops, who formed the majority of the colonial military establishment, favored the left-wing party. In this brief but intense conflict[15] the Portuguese, whose administrative apparatus had been reduced to a small number of officials and fewer than 100 combat troops, withdrew to the offshore island of Atauro.[16]

The Indonesian military, their plans having backfired, would have no truck with the independence movement and ignored its overtures. Operasi Komodo's military commanders sought to persuade President Suharto to authorize direct military intervention, but the president, who was unenthusiastic about any moves that would prejudice Indonesia's

international standing (especially in Southeast Asia and the United States) as a nation without territorial ambitions, continued to hesitate until September when Generals Murtopo, Murdani, and Sugama (then head of Bakin) managed to secure his consent to a military operation against East Timor. They were able to assure him that the governments of greatest importance to Indonesia, among them the United States, Japan, Australia, the Netherlands, and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) would accommodate a military operation to secure East Timor's integration into Indonesia.

Two weeks later, Indonesia's first major military action against East Timorese territory was launched. It was carried out as a covert operation and involved an attack on the border village of Balibo. Its casualties were to include the five members of two television teams from Australia.[17]

Weeks before this assault, the victorious Fretilin leaders had sought to assuage Indonesian fears, and had encouraged the Portuguese to return and resume decolonization. But there was no response from the Portuguese, whose government in Lisbon was still in crisis. The Indonesian response was a series of military attacks over the border from West Timor. The official news agency, Antara, claimed that the "anti-Fretilin forces" had regrouped and were counter-attacking.

With the Portuguese having failed to respond to their request to return and resume decolonization, the Indonesians attacking from the west, and the international community ignoring their plight, Fretilin's unilateral decision to declare East Timor an independent republic was hardly surprising.

The Invasion and Its Aftermath

Having in a way provoked Fretilin's hasty decision to declare East Timor independent, the Indonesians lost no time in mounting a full-scale invasion—an amphibious attack on the capital, Dili. The status of East Timor was therefore changed abruptly on December 7, 1975,[18] when a combined military and naval force, under the overall command of Major-General Murdani, moved in from the sea. From the considerable evidence accumulated over the past several decades, it is clear that the invasion and subjugation of East Timor, especially in the early stages, was carried out with scant regard for the lives, let alone rights, of the Timorese people. Not only was the act of aggression itself a violation of the UN Charter, but the brutal way it was carried out over a period of several years constitutes genocide.

In the very first days of the invasion, rampaging Indonesian troops engaged in an orgy of indiscriminate killing, rape, and torture. Large-scale public executions were carried out—women being included among

the victims—suggesting a systematic campaign of terror. In some villages whole communities were slaughtered, except for young children.

Outraged by these atrocities, the small but determined Timorese army bitterly contested the advance of the invading forces, and in terrain ideal for guerrilla warfare they were able to inflict heavy losses on the attackers until the early 1980s, denying the ABRI[19] effective control outside the main towns and administrative centers. The retaliation of the invading force to this stiff challenge to integration was the imposition of a harsh and oppressive occupation. In the areas under Indonesian control serious human rights violations were a daily occurrence, forcing tens of thousands of Timorese to seek refuge behind Fretilin lines.

The invasion force, which was soon to amount to more than 30,000 troops, entered the Portuguese colony from the west, where East Timor adjoins Indonesia, and in landings at major towns on the north coast, such as Baucau and Maubara. Thousands of Timorese were killed in the first weeks of the invasion when, from all accounts, troops went on a rampage, no doubt in response to the unexpectedly determined Timorese resistance to the invasion. In Dili there were a number of public executions—including along the wharf area where more than 100 were reportedly shot, at Santa Cruz, at the military police barracks, and at Tasitolo, near the airport. Also, in the small towns of Maubara and Liquica and at other villages in the interior, Indonesian military units carried out public executions, killing from 20 to more than 100 persons.

While conditions in the occupied areas were harsh and oppressive, indiscriminate killing, rape, and torture were even more widespread in the disputed areas. In their advance into the mountainous interior, especially where the advance was being hotly contested, the Indonesian forces killed many of the Timorese they encountered. The biggest single killing reported to the author by the Timorese driver of one of the Indonesian trucks occurred in 1975 at Lakmanan, near the western border, where invading troops returning from a stiff encounter with Fretilin turned their guns on a large temporary encampment of Timorese. One of these witnesses estimated that as many as 2,000 were killed over a period of several hours.[20]

As Indonesia sought to overpower the armed resistance and to suppress opposition to integration in occupied areas, tens of thousands of Timorese were to perish up to the end of 1979. During this period, East Timor was virtually sealed off from the outside world. The International Red Cross, which had been present in strength until just before the invasion, did not regain access to the territory until the second half of 1979, almost four years after the invasion.[21]

Although initially it was the intention of most townsfolk to remain in their homes and communities, the widespread killing, torture, and rape

committed by the invading troops resulted in the flight of a large proportion of the population into the interior, to the comparative safety of the mountain districts under the control of Fretilin. However, it was in the mountainous interior of the island that the greatest loss of life was to occur in the following three years. Most of the deaths were from famine and related diseases, but it was the harsh treatment meted out by the Indonesians that prompted the Timorese to flee to the mountains.

Because of the absence of demographic records, whether kept by the invaders or by other authorities, no precise account of the human cost of the invasion and its aftermath exists. However, recent Indonesian census statistics provide evidence that it attained genocidal proportions. Before the invasion East Timor's population was about 690,000, and growing at about 2% per year. It follows that by 1991 there should have been more than 950,000 people; but based on Indonesian statistics, in East Timor, which had been designated the twenty-seventh province of Indonesia, there were only about 740,000 people.[22] Of this number, though, as many as 140,000 were non-Timorese who had, in recent years, moved into the territory from elsewhere in Indonesia, some of them transmigrants and others opportunistic drifters. The upshot is that, in effect, the Timorese population, some 16 years after the invasion, was 12% fewer than it was in 1975.

The annexation of East Timor had a drastic effect on all aspects of life in the community. Before the invasion, the ethnic and cultural patterns in the territory were exceedingly complex but, aside from some special characteristics, they resembled the patterns in the nearby islands of Eastern Nusatenggara.[23] The population was essentially Autronesian in character, but with a noticeable Melanesian influence. It reflected a long procession of migrations from west, north, and the east. But it would be an oversimplification to describe the territory as culturally part of Indonesia, if only because of the great ethnic and cultural diversity within this sprawling archipelagic nation. To call a Timorese "Indonesian" is rather like calling a Kurd an Iraqi or a Tibetan Chinese, labels that are imprecise and attract resentment. The Timorese were not, however, antagonistic toward people from other parts of the archipelago, at least before Indonesia began to meddle in the affairs of the island.[24] But in the past they had regarded the occasional visiting Indonesian fishing vessels with some suspicion. Perhaps this was because, unlike the Javanese or Buginese, the Timorese were not themselves a seafaring people and felt threatened by outsiders with these skills.

The rugged mountainous interior of East Timor provided excellent conditions for Fretilin's guerrilla campaign, but the resistance forces were not in a position to provide the basic needs of the tens of thousands of people who sought refuge within this territory. Food and medical

supplies were inadequate, and the Timorese were subjected to constant air attacks (including, for a short period, the use of napalm). The Timorese were bombed and strafed, and once the Indonesian air force acquired Bronco anti-insurgency aircraft from the United States, these attacks intensified. In the two years following the invasion, the Timorese leaders managed to feed the people within their lines by developing the agricultural resources available to them in the rich valleys, but according to reports from Fretilin, in 1978 these farms were subject to air attacks by AURI[25] aircraft. According to one report, chemical substances were dropped on the crops, causing the plants to die. By 1978 the food situation behind Fretilin lines was desperate, and the Timorese leaders began encouraging their people to return to Indonesian-occupied areas; the resistance forces were no longer able to feed them, nor to provide even the most basic of medical treatment.

Initially, when these "refugees" moved into occupied territory, their reception was anything but humane. Some suspected Fretilin supporters were summarily executed, while many others were beaten or tortured at the slightest provocation (Amnesty International, 1985). The refugees were forced into resettlement camps, where food and medical facilities were grossly inadequate. In 1979, the first international aid workers to enter the territory reported that the basic needs of the Timorese in these centers were being seriously neglected and that thousands were dying needlessly from famine and disease.

Reports on the grim situation in East Timor began to come out of the territory as early as the end of 1976. In that year a confidential report from Catholic Church sources depicted a scene of oppression and wanton killing. Its authors suggested that in the year since the invasion as many as 60,000 Timorese might have lost their lives.[26] Was the international community aware of this very heavy loss of life and, if so, how did it react? In fact, these early reports aroused very little international attention. East Timor was remote, little known, and without any strategic or economic importance, even to the colonial power. While the UN itself promptly condemned the invasion and called on Indonesia to withdraw its forces, its pronouncements were mostly vague and irresolute.[27]

There is a more sinister aspect to this dismal situation. When the gravity of the humanitarian situation in this territory began to unfold, East Timor could easily have been made an issue of international concern by nations like the United States or Australia if their governments had chosen to do so.[28] In the 1970s, however, Indonesia had begun to assume a new importance in the eyes of the major Western powers. It was large, Muslim, and oil-producing, and the archipelago straddled the division between the strategically important Pacific and Indian Oceans. And the Suharto regime, despite its undemocratic

character, fulfilled important political conditions—it was anti-communist, it was development-oriented, and it had created a facade of stability and harmony.

Under those circumstances, the Western governments with the greatest interest in Indonesia—which were also best placed to monitor events in East Timor—chose to play down the reports, most of them emanating from Church sources in Dili, that Indonesian military operations were inflicting heavy loss of life on the general population. In the Australian parliament, for example, these reports were repeatedly alluded to by official sources as being unproven, or ill-founded and exaggerated.

If the foreign missions in Jakarta were aware of just how serious the humanitarian situation was, they were careful not to disclose it in their public statements. In the case of the missions representing Australia, Canada, and the United States, the extent to which their diplomats were able to report on this situation was, in the experience of this writer, diminished by the tacit support that their governments had given to integration. According credibility to the reports from organizations such as the Catholic Church in East Timor would have been tantamount to admitting by implication a measure of responsibility.

Some of the reports made public could not have been honestly arrived at. For example, early in 1977 one U.S. State Department official told members of the U.S. Congress that only 2,000 Timorese had died as a result of the invasion. A few weeks later another U.S. official, Robert Oakley, came up with a revised figure of 10,000, which yet another official source later qualified with the comment that many of these deaths had occurred in the fighting between Fretilin and UDT.[29] Australian official responses were delivered in a similar vein. Their statements appeared to be designed to minimize the seriousness of the situation on the ground in East Timor and, in so doing, to discredit reports that Indonesian troops were responsible for widespread death and destruction. It was a blatant attempt to deflect international criticism of Indonesian actions. Thus, in 1978, when conditions in the territory were being described as nightmarish, the Australian government led by Prime Minister Fraser felt able to take the extraordinary step of recognizing de facto the annexation.[30]

By the end of 1979, however, the devastating consequences of Indonesia's military annexation of East Timor could no longer be concealed. And so, some four years after the invasion, when Indonesian authorities finally allowed a small number of international aid workers to conduct a survey of the humanitarian needs of the province, the dimensions of the tragedy began to emerge. The human misery they encountered shocked even some officials with experience in Africa and Southeast Asia. Their estimates suggested that in the preceding four years, Timor had lost

between one-tenth and one-third of its population and that 200,000 of the remainder were in appalling conditions in "resettlement camps," which one official, who had previously served in Cambodia, described as among the worst he had seen.[31]

These revelations should have shocked the world into demanding that Indonesia withdraw from the former Portuguese colony, but that did not happen. Not one of the major powers was prepared to press Indonesia to reconsider its seizure of the territory and to bring any real pressure to bear on the Suharto government. The best that Washington and Canberra could come up with was to urge Indonesia to admit international humanitarian relief organizations.[32] These requests, which brought some response from Indonesia, resulted in the readmission to the province of the International Red Cross, which had been forced to leave on the eve of the invasion, in the face of Indonesia's refusal to guarantee the necessary protection.[33]

It was to be more than a decade after the invasion before Jakarta could claim to exercise administrative control over most of the island. Into the late 1990s armed resistance continued, despite annual large-scale operations by Indonesian forces, who invariably outnumbered the guerrillas by more than ten to one.[34] Thanks to the intervention of international agencies, and the work of some dedicated Indonesians, material conditions in Timor improved markedly during the 1980s. However, serious human rights abuses, mostly by the Indonesian military, continued to occur throughout the 1990s. In one annual report after another issued by Amnesty International, the authorities were accused of summary executions, "disappearances," torture, and imprisonment on the grounds of conscience.[35]

Notable examples of indiscriminate killing occurred at Creras, near Viqueque, in August 1983 and in Dili in November 1991. The Creras incident was first recounted to the author by a priest from the district some months later, and its details confirmed in 2001 by a leading East Timorese, Mario Carrascalao, who in 1983 was governor of the province. He told me that shortly after the incident he went to the area and personally investigated it. According to these accounts, rapes by Indonesian troops led to an attack by the Falintil (the military arm of Fretilin) on the Indonesian military unit to which the soldiers belonged, an attack that resulted in the killing of 16 Indonesian troops. In the following days, Indonesian forces, allegedly under the command of Major Prabowo Subianto (later Lieutenant-General), carried out severe reprisals against the population of the immediate region. According to Carrascalao, over 1,000 people, including many women and children, were massacred.

Another case of indiscriminate killing was the Dili massacre of November 1991, which cost the lives of more than 200 young Timorese.

It occurred when Indonesian troops opened fire on unarmed demonstrators, most of them students, near the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili. The incident was widely reported in the international media, thanks to the presence of foreign observers. The Timorese were about to engage in a peaceful protest at the killing of one of their number, as well as at the forced integration of the territory. For several minutes Indonesian troops fired into the crowd of demonstrators, killing many of them. From evidence that subsequently became available, it appears that most of the killings took place after the firing had stopped. A large number of the wounded were killed in a crude fashion, some of them over the next two or three days, with their bodies being secretly disposed of at a site near Tibar.

Largely in response to an international reaction, the Indonesian government set up a Committee of Inquiry *(Komisi Penjelidik Nasional)*, which issued its Preliminary Report on December 26, 1991. While the report acknowledged some mistakes and lack of control, it absolved the authorities, including the military command in East Timor, from any responsibility for the massacre. While several senior military officers, including the East Timor and regional commanders, were removed from their posts, they were not formally charged with any offenses. Subsequently, nine junior-ranking soldiers and one policeman were to face court-martial, but the charges laid against them were of a relatively minor nature. None of the troops were charged with killing, and all received relatively light sentences. For the Timorese demonstrators, however, it was a different matter. More than a dozen trials were held and, although none were charged with carrying weapons or using violence, most received severe sentences ranging from six years to life imprisonment (Asia Watch Committee, 1992).

The Santa Cruz massacre is significant not only because it occurred 16 years after the beginning of Indonesia's military action to annex East Timor. It also happened at a time when the Suharto regime, and governments friendly to it, were seeking to assure the international community that the East Timor situation was settled, and no further action against Indonesia was therefore warranted. Government officials in, for example, the United States, Canada, and Australia were insisting that indiscriminate killing, and most other forms of mistreatment, had been ended by a more enlightened regional administration.

While the humanitarian situation in the province eased in the mid-1990s, a new crisis unfolded following the collapse of the Suharto regime in May 1998, and the launching of a more conciliatory policy toward the East Timorese by his successor, Habibie. By the middle of that year, self-determination and the possibility of independence was again on the agenda. The new president began a dialogue with both Timorese leaders

and senior UN officials, including Kofi Annan himself, the new UN Secretary General, who stepped up the world body's efforts to achieve a just solution to what, at that time, was the biggest issue of its kind remaining on the agenda of the Decolonization Commission.

These new moves, and the development of a more democratic regime in Jakarta, led to two conflicting developments: on the one hand, a sharp increase in East Timorese demands for self-determination and the right to the choice of independence; and on the other, a strong reaction on the part of the Indonesian military command. These developments were of particular concern to the politically powerful Special Forces Command (Kopassus), which had played a leading role in the illegal seizure of the former Portuguese province, and in the subsequent administration of the territory. In the years of military operations against the Timorese resistance, many thousands of Indonesian troops had lost their lives, and the idea of giving up the territory was therefore anathema to the commanders.

In the event, senior Kopassus generals organized the establishment of a militia force, recruited from among the East Timorese minority who favored continuation of Indonesian rule. The structure of the militia was designed by Kopassus, while arms, military training, and other funding were provided from various government sources. Under these arrangements, each of the 13 districts had a militia unit. These troops were exhorted to wage a campaign of violence and intimidation against East Timorese who favored independence.

Early in 1999, President Habibie announced his readiness to agree to a plebiscite on his offer of autonomy, assuring the Timorese that the right to independence would be accepted should the offer be rejected. The militia campaign of violence was stepped up with TNI officers, who called on the paramilitary forces to attack and kill pro-independence supporters—in some cases, the militia were exhorted to kill supporters' families. What transpired was, in effect, a conspiracy by senior TNI generals aimed at preventing the loss of East Timor and at sabotaging UN efforts in support of what was regarded internationally as a much-delayed act of self-determination. These commanders may have operated independently, but clearly their operations were known to the Indonesian defense force commander, General Wiranto.

The presence of UNAMET after June 1999 hampered this campaign of violence, but by the time the plebiscite was held in August of that year dozens of East Timorese had been killed in attacks organized or aided by the Indonesian military, and thousands more had been dislocated by the militia terror. As the plebiscite approached, the military commanders realized that, regardless of the militia operations, they were going to lose the vote. It was then that the military command devised a campaign of

killing and destruction, as a punishment of the East Timorese for their disloyalty and their humiliation of the Indonesian military. The operation, designated Operasi Guntur (Operation Thunder), was launched within hours of the announcement of the results of the plebiscite (78.5% voted against acceptance of autonomy). TNI troops, aided by their militia, swarmed over the province in a campaign of destruction. In less than three weeks 72% of all buildings and houses were destroyed or damaged, and hundreds of East Timorese were killed, many of them in massacres at Suai, Maliana, and the Oecussi enclave. More than 250,000 people were deported to West Timor. The casualty rate would have been much higher had not hundreds of thousands of Timorese fled to the mountains where they faced severe food shortages—a crisis, though, that was soon eased by UN and Australian emergency airdrops.

Unlike in 1975, this genocidal crime attracted an immediate global response, with the UN Security Council calling on Indonesia to end the rampage and allow for the implementation of the outcome of the plebiscite. A force composed of a coalition of the willing, led by Australia, was instructed by the UN to enter the territory immediately after its authorization by President Habibie. The nightmare of the previous weeks ended, but East Timor was left in a totally devastated state, and without the basic elements of a community infrastructure. The loss of life from this military operation is still not fully known (some of the bodies were disposed of in the deep-sea channel north of the island), but the author believes that it could exceed 2,000.

The following November a UN mission with a comprehensive mandate to prepare the country for independence began its mission, ending 25 years of harsh occupation. Reconstruction of the nation's destroyed towns and villages began, and after considerable delay the return of those who had been forced to go to the Indonesian part of the island was negotiated by UN authorities. The UN has been less successful in its quest to bring to justice those ultimately responsible for these atrocities. According to the findings of the International Commission of Enquiry established by CHR Resolution 1999/S-4/1, "ultimately the Indonesian Army was responsible for the intimidation, terror, killings, and other acts of violence experienced by the people of East Timor before and after the popular consultations [plebiscite]." A more damning report came from Indonesia's Human Rights Commission's special committee, implicating the military, including General Wiranto, as being responsible for these heinous actions.

The obvious answer would have been an ad hoc international tribunal, but enthusiasm for such an outcome soon wilted. That was due to several reasons. First, Indonesia came under the leadership of President Wahid, a leading reformer who insisted that Indonesia would itself establish a

tribunal and bring to justice the military commanders responsible for the crimes committed. Second, Wahid encountered great difficulty in implementing his reforms, and one of the casualties was the proposed tribunal. Third, though it finally came into being some months after Megawati Sukarnoputri took office, it was a pale shadow of the intended tribunal, its terms of reference offering an escape for the generals responsible for setting up the militia. Indeed, its outcome has been a farce. The senior officer who gave orders at the Suai massacre has been acquitted. Other killers have not even been charged. More seriously, not one of the conspirators who planned the campaign of terror and killing has even appeared before the court—except to witness its proceedings! One senior officer was given a brief sentence, but his case is subject to an appeal.

In East Timor itself a number of militia were captured, and after a considerable delay several were sentenced to lengthy prison terms. Unfortunately, for several months the efforts of UNTAET's prosecutors suffered from poor direction. Then, under the new management of the prosecutor-general's office, the process was expedited, but with the office no longer being a direct UN responsibility it encountered political criticism from the leaders of the newly independent state, who were anxious to avoid a confrontation with Jakarta in the first difficult years of independence. The recent indictment of a number of Indonesian military commanders attracted an angry rejection from Jakarta and a cool response from Dili.

Responsibility for the Genocide

There can be little doubt that direct responsibility for the killing in East Timor rests with the Indonesian military forces. From the outset the invading forces had an opportunity to extend maximum protection to the non-combatant population, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. The invaders almost totally ignored these basic rights, at huge cost to Indonesia, as it turned out.[36] A humane and disciplined occupation would have moderated the attitudes of the Timorese themselves, and the character of the resistance would have been radically different. As it turned out, the senseless killing and harsh occupation policies in general, especially under General Dading Kalbuardi, stiffened the courage, determination, and endurance of the Falintil—the military arm of Fretilin. Indeed, because the armed resistance was effectively isolated, and was able to attract little international support, their will to resist may have collapsed much earlier had it not been for the harsh nature of Indonesian military rule in East Timor.

From time to time it has been alleged that many of the Timorese casualties were caused by the civil war, or later internecine conflicts. In fact, between 1,500 and 2,000 were killed in the brief civil war of August

1975,[37] but there is no evidence that tribal conflicts occurred after Indonesia's invasion. On the other hand, it is known that the resistance forces killed several hundred collaborators over a period of 10 years.

It has been argued, especially by some apologists for the Suharto regime, that none of this killing was ordered from Jakarta and that most of the blame rests with undisciplined or impulsive troops. Following the killings at Santa Cruz cemetery, for example, officials in Washington, Canberra, and certain other Western capitals responded along these lines. Yet, governments cannot be absolved of responsibility so conveniently. Even if these killings were not ordered by the government of Indonesia, it remains the final responsible authority. Moreover, the government can hardly claim ignorance of human rights abuses of this nature, because they were so frequently reported and the focus of regular protests by organizations like Amnesty International and Asia Watch.

The Suharto government's line of defense was especially facile if we consider the Santa Cruz tragedy. The Indonesian decision to set up a commission of investigation was clearly a response to international outrage, and not a spontaneous reaction to the news of the killing. In the immediate aftermath of the massacre, the reaction from Jakarta was defensive, while the military's response was dismissive, even defiant.[38] There can be little doubt that the Indonesian authorities would have reacted differently had foreign observers not been present. It may well be that no order to kill indiscriminately has ever been issued by Jakarta—even at the highest military levels. Nevertheless, it is inconceivable that the military command had been unaware of the indiscriminate killing and summary executions perpetrated by the military during those 16 years. Yet there is no evidence that, until the Santa Cruz incident, any of the perpetrators were ever placed on trial or disciplined.

It is impossible not to conclude, therefore, that such gross violations of fundamental human rights were tolerated by the government of Indonesia. Certainly, within the military itself such killings had become acceptable behavior. In Indonesia, military and political leadership tends to merge at the top, and therefore it follows that the top-ranking responsible authorities in Indonesia had long been aware that the behavior of the military forces in East Timor had resulted in the decimation of the indigenous population.

Clearly, genocide, in the form of the destruction of a significant part of a group, can occur as the result of inhumane and irresponsible actions, without a formal intention being identified. Troops can be indoctrinated with hatred in what many might accept as the normal preparation for combat; that is, the strengthening of the soldier's will to fight.

In Timor, for example, in the early weeks of the fighting some of the Indonesian forces were told they were fighting communists, who had

been the subject of hatred and indiscriminate killing after 1965 because of the PKI's alleged conspiracy to overthrow the government and set up a Marxist state.[39] Ideological hatred breeds racial hatred and intolerance. The way the annexation of East Timor was carried out inevitably provoked an irreconcilable antagonism on the Timorese side. Dislike, therefore, was mutual, causing Indonesian troops to care little about the lives of Timorese, whose language they did not speak and whose religion most of them did not share.

On the other hand, there is no evidence that the Indonesian government, or for that matter the military leadership, sought, as a matter of deliberate policy, to destroy the Timorese people as a race or ethnic group. Yet it cannot escape the charge that it was aware of the wanton human destruction, especially between 1975 and 1982, and the organized militia violence that culminated in massive destruction, wanton killing, and large-scale deportations in 1999.

There is one aspect of intention worthy of closer scrutiny. It could be argued that when it became apparent to Indonesia's highest political and military authorities that the majority of the East Timorese were opposed to integration, the Indonesian military command in the province sought to destroy the will of the people for independence. This meant destroying a key element in the Timorese identity, that is, changing their identity from that of a people seeking to shape their own political future to a radically different status, that of being a loyal component of the Indonesian state.

If they had initially aimed to achieve this end by persuasion—by winning hearts and minds—why did their invading force behave like barbarians? Why did they torture, rape, and kill indiscriminately? Was not this killing and other inhuman actions, which inevitably led to tens of thousands of deaths, part of a plan to destroy the desire for independence and the will to oppose integration?

If we accept the words of no less an authority than General Murdani,[40] the principal targets of the occupation authorities for eradication were, and, for that matter, continued to be for years to come, the independence movement leaders and their supporters. But the government's oppressive policies ensured that the vast majority of Timorese still yearned for independence, even if only a few of them were prepared to take up arms. If the Indonesian military had persisted with the idea that all support for independence must be eliminated, it would have placed the majority of the population at risk.

The Timor situation highlights an important dimension of the subject of this book—cultural genocide. In Portuguese times, foreigners made up only a small percentage of the population of East Timor. The largest minority was the Chinese. The Portuguese, even if we include their military, never amounted to more than a few thousand people.

By the early 1990s, outsiders—that is, people who had come from elsewhere in Indonesia after the invasion—made up one-fifth of the population. In terms of power, they were not a mere minority, but the successors of the colonial power. In fact, their presence was infinitely more pervasive and had a far greater impact on Timorese society. From the latter's point of view, these intruders dominated virtually all aspects of the government of the province. In the economy, as well as in government and the military, the Indonesian role was much more powerful and commanding than was the place of the Portuguese, even under the Salazar dictatorship.

The Indonesian newcomers were very much a ruling class, dominating as they did the military and the civil government. Thousands of transmigrants moved into some of the province's best agricultural lands, in some cases displacing the indigenous inhabitants. A flood of informal arrivals, mostly drifters seeking to exploit any economic opportunity, swelled the populations of the major towns. This massive intrusion of outsiders, and Jakarta's efforts to change Timorese ways and attitudes, was undermining the very identity of the Timorese, the least "Indonesian" of the communities of the archipelago.

Special Characteristics of the Timor Case

The case of East Timor presents a number of distinctive elements. First and foremost, it is a live issue, an issue of our time as distinct from being a lesson of history. The question of culpability for the crimes committed is still before the UN. It is one of the issues that had not been resolved when UNTAET's mandate ended, leaving the world body with a continuing responsibility. There has been strong pressure for the setting up of an ad hoc international tribunal, but the proposal has attracted little support from the UN Security Council, despite widespread criticism of the conduct of the Indonesian tribunal. The low level of international interest has discouraged some of East Timor's leaders from pursuing such an outcome. Hence, more emphasis has been placed on the reconciliation process than the exposure of past crimes and action against those responsible for them. Although East Timor's position has changed radically over the past 10 years, this case continues to highlight the frailty of international resolve when it comes to the small and unimportant in the global power play. It is a reminder of the vulnerability of small states outside the mainstream of global political and economic interests.

Second, while past international responses at times caused Indonesian political leaders some discomfort, they have always been able to resist such pressures. The Santa Cruz massacre illustrates this point. The

official response from countries like Australia, the United States, and Japan was restrained, even non-judgmental. Most of those governments, who were quick to denounce relatively recent cases of indiscriminate killing in Iraq and Bosnia-Herzegovina, did not resort to the same kind of blunt language in their responses to the massacre of more than 200 Timorese in November 1991.

On the whole, in its seizure of East Timor, Indonesia was able to exploit the prevailing Cold War context. Indeed, the Suharto regime's Western friends to an extent encouraged the annexation by accepting as credible Jakarta's alleged fears of communist insurgency in the post-Vietnam years. Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this case is that these crimes against humanity went virtually unchallenged at a time when acts of aggression and oppression were being challenged in almost every other part of the world.

Third, the annexation of East Timor could in fact have been averted, had Indonesia's Western friends acted responsibly in the 1974–1975 period. The Suharto regime's moves to annex the colony were carefully devised against the anticipated reactions of countries like Australia and the United States, whose intelligence agencies were familiar with the unfolding conspiracy. It is in this context that the genocide dimensions of the problem are profoundly disturbing. Most Western governments, especially those members of Indonesia's aid consortium, were aware, more than a decade before the Santa Cruz killing, of the genocidal impact of Jakarta's military operations in East Timor; that is, in the terms of Article II(c) of the Convention. The failure of the IGGI (Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia) members, in particular, to take up the issue at a time when the Suharto regime was heavily dependent on Western aid was at best shameful. Ever since the anti-communist Suharto regime came to power it had been sensitive to the concerns of major Western powers like the United States. Despite this fact, even when the extent of loss of life in East Timor became evident in the early 1980s, the continued acceptability of Indonesia rule of the former Portuguese colony was never seriously questioned.

Fourth, although the Timor case was for more than two decades before the UN, the problem was not effectively addressed until after the fall of President Suharto, the collapse of his regime brought about by causes unrelated to the Timor problem. East Timor is arguably the only remnant of the once-extensive European empires to have been annexed by its neighbor, with the virtual collusion of many of those nations who today regard themselves as being at the forefront of the international movement to promote universal respect for human rights, including the right to self-determination.

The Timor Case as a Contributor to Genocide Studies

The case of East Timor is a significant one, particularly as a definitive case of genocide within the terms of Article II of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Although the question of the denial of the right to self-determination has now been resolved, the commissioners of the serious crimes committed have yet to be appropriately dealt with by the international community. The violation against the people of East Timor has some classical characteristics, in the sense that it resulted from an act of aggression by the large power next door. However, it occurred within a contemporary historical framework; that is, an extensive body of human rights principles and laws had set down protective parameters for the international community. It also occurred at a time when acts of aggression of this kind were no longer tolerated by the UN system, as the cases of the Falklands (1982) and Kuwait (1990) dramatically demonstrated.

On the other hand, the lesson of East Timor is that some things have not changed, despite the growing intolerance of the international community toward gross human rights violations involving mass killing. The East Timorese suffered from their country's remoteness, from its lack of economic and strategic importance, and conversely, from the perceived importance of the violator, today the world's largest Islamic nation, which forms a strategically and economically important division between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. However, one of the most disturbing aspects of the case is that the perpetrators of those atrocities were in practice shielded from international scrutiny by countries like Australia and the United States, which pride themselves on their commitment to human rights.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the experience of East Timor is that it highlights just how difficult it is to invoke the Genocide Convention, even in circumstances where the evidence that grave violations have occurred is substantial and persistent. Indeed, the Timor case suggests that the Convention is so difficult to invoke that it is perceived by the victims and others as being virtually irrelevant as an international legal protection or recourse against this monstrous form of crime. On a number of occasions at the United Nations, Timorese representatives and their supporters examined the possibility of invoking the Convention before the International Court of Justice, but in each case experts cast doubt on this course of action. As for the governments of Australia and the United States, "genocide" is a term that has been studiously avoided, even when there have been expressions of concern at the human rights situation in Timor.

The East Timor case also brings into focus the factor of cultural genocide, which is of crucial importance when the victims of aggression are

massively outnumbered in terms of population. While this aspect is not specified in the Convention, it remains extremely important, as the Timor cases attests.

It is very likely that deliberate "Indonesianization" would have submerged Timorese culture, ultimately risking its destruction, had not unforeseen circumstances led to a radical change of policy by the Indonesian government.

Editors' note: The following update is provided by the editors. It covers the years 2002–2011.

Becoming an independent nation was, as one can imagine, a monumental event for the people of Timor-Leste, who had suffered through 400 years of Portuguese colonial rule and 24 brutal years of occupation by Indonesia. Slowly but surely the new nation has continued to crawl toward the realization of creating a democratic state. A key reason for the jittery and slow progess is that Timor-Leste has had to virtually start from the ground up in creating what are considered fundamental institutions of modern democracy. One of the key problems over the years has been the large gap between the establishment of governmental bodies and regulations and implementation of these building blocks for a society that promotes justice and human dignity for all its citizens.

In August 2001, while still under the authority of UNTAET, East Timor adopted a parliamentary form of government and established its first parliament in a UN-supervised election. Not surprisingly, the Fretilin Party won the most seats in the election. On May 20, 2002, East Timor formally became an independent republic, Timor-Leste.

In April 2002, Xanana Gusmao was elected Timor-Leste's first president. Gusmao was a beloved and legendary rebel who fought against Indonesia's rule of East Timor for some two decades. Not only did he put his life on the line fighting for the freedom of his people, but he was incarcerated and then placed under house arrest for six years by the Indonesian government.

With East Timor's independence, UNTAET's mandate came to an end. UNTAET was replaced by the UN Mission for the Support of East Timor (UNMISET), whose primary purpose was to assist the new nation in many areas, such as managing law and order and training a new police force as the government became more established. UNMISET's mandate ended on May 20, 2005, and was followed by a special political mission (UN Office in Timor-Leste or UNOTIL) aimed at assisting Timor-Leste.

In 2002 the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation was established and held its first public hearings in November of that year. The Commission delved into human rights violations committed just prior to Indonesia's invasion of East Timor in 1975 and throughout its

24-year occupation. The Commission faced a huge task as innumerable human rights violations and atrocities had been committed by Indonesia against the people of East Timor during that long, sordid period.

Timor-Leste experienced its first full year of independence in 2003. Throughout the year, the government worked at developing and/or strengthening new institutions and policies, abiding by key human rights instruments and treaties, and creating a police force that stood for law and order and justice for all citizens. These were tasks that were going to try the patience of many, be called into question in regard to their implementation, and take years to work out both small and extremely serious issues.

Throughout 2002 and 2003, efforts continued to be made to bring to justice those who had allegedly committed criminal acts during the vote on independence in 1999. According to the well-known human rights organization, Amnesty International, "by December [2003], indictments had been served against 369 individuals for serious crimes, including crimes against humanity, in connection with the independence ballot in 1999. Among those indicted were 281 people residing in Indonesia, including senior Indonesian military officials." Indonesia, however, balked at sending suspects to Timor-Leste to stand trial.

In 2004 the two governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia agreed to establish a bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission for the purpose of establishing "the conclusive truth in regard to the events prior to and immediately after the popular consultation in 1999, with a view to promoting reconciliation and friendship, and ensuring the non-recurrence of similar events." Many, however, including citizens of Timor-Leste and international human rights organizations, feared that such an entity might end up granting impunity to alleged perpetrators of major crimes committed during the 1999 vote on whether East Timor was to remain with Indonesia or seek independence.

In June 2005 the UN-sponsored Commission of Experts (CoE) submitted a report to the UN Security Council that included an analysis of Timor-Leste's prosecution of serious violations of human rights perpetrated during the 1999 vote. It found that those who were most responsible for the crimes perpetrated during that period had not been held accountable, and its major recommendation was *not* to allow impunity for such individuals. In the same report, serious concerns were issued in regard to the focus of the Truth and Friendship Commission. Again, its major concern was that various provisions of the Commission might not be in compliance with international standards vis-à-vis the denial of impunity, and thus it called for "clarification, reassessment and revision" of such provisions. Basically ignoring the criticism and recommendations, the Truth and Friendship Commission was established in August.

In October 2005 the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste submitted its report to the president's office. The report delineated, in detail, the various human rights violations that had been perpetrated between 1974 and 1999 in East Timor. Interestingly, its recommendations largely matched those in the report issued by the CoE. In doing so, it supported the ongoing process of arresting and trying in a court of law those who allegedly committed crimes, and suggested that, if justice was not served and impunity reigned, serious thought should be given to establishing an international tribunal.

Unfortunately, as alluded to above, and as is often the case with new nations, not all went smoothly. It did not help that Timor-Leste is one of the poorest countries in the Asia-Pacific region and, for that matter, in the world. It is estimated that half of its citizens live below the poverty line. Those residing in urban areas are no better off than those in rural areas. Among the major problems faced by citizens all across the country are a lack of adequate infrastructure, such as electricity, telecommunications and roads, bridges, and transport.

Furthermore, as the new government continued to stumble along, Timor-Leste citizens alleged that the police in the newly established police force abused the laws by, for example, both detaining individuals arbitrarily and beating suspects. There also continued to be a massive shortage of judges, defense lawyers, and prosecutors, which largely undermined the efficacy of the judicial system.

In February 2006 an estimated 400 soldiers (out of some 1,400) complained to President Xanana Gusmao about the discriminatory behavior they were allegedly facing. The head of the nation's military (F-FDTL), however, summarily dismissed the complaints. On April 28 about 400 soldiers held a demonstration, which exploded into deadly violence.

Fearing for their safety, many civilians fled from their towns and villages, seeking sanctuary elsewhere. Mass chaos, fighting, and the destruction of homes and buildings ensued. As mobs and gangs virtually took over Dili, the capital of the country, and killed at will, the city became so dangerous that thousands more fled into the countryside. Ultimately, it was estimated that some 150,000 had fled from their homes. On May 28, fearing the entire nation was about to descend into anarchy, the leaders of Timor-Leste sought assistance from Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Portugal to help return the nation to peace.

Due to intense criticism of how the prime minister dealt with the aforementioned conflict he resigned on July 10, which was followed by the creation of a new cabinet on July 14. On August 25, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1704, which established the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). UNMIT's express mission

was to assist the government of Timor-Leste in various ways, including but not limited to the following:

- to support the government and relevant institutions, with a view to consolidating stability, enhancing a culture of democratic governance, and facilitating political dialogue among Timorese stakeholders, in their efforts to bring about a process of national reconciliation and to foster social cohesion;
- to support Timor-Leste in all aspects of the 2007 presidential and parliamentary electoral process;
- to ensure the restoration and maintenance of public security in Timor-Leste;
- to assist in further building the capacity of state and government institutions in areas;
- to assist in further strengthening the national institutional and societal capacity and mechanisms for the monitoring, promotion, and protection of human rights and for promotion of justice and reconciliation; and
- to facilitate the provision of relief and recovery assistance and access to the Timorese people in need.

In April 2007, presidential elections were held, and, after a run-off, Jose Ramos-Horta, who had resigned as Prime Minister in order to run for president, won by 69% of the vote. In June, the country held parliamentary elections and, again, Fretilin candidates won the most seats but no party won a majority of seats in parliament. Complicating matters, the parties could not come to a consensus on forming a new government. Subsequently, in August 2007, President Ramos-Horta asked the former president of the country, Xanana Gusmao, to help form a new government. Gusmao agreed to do so and became the new prime minister.

While both of the aforementioned elections in 2007 were, for the most part, free of threats, violence, and suspect behavior, violence did break out upon the creation of the new government. Some members of Fretilin were furious that they were not asked to form the new government and during the course of their protests violence broke out. Once the protests and violence were quelled, those in Fretilin remained perturbed that they had been slighted and asserted that the current government was unconstitutional. Be that as it may, Fretilin has taken an active part in the new government and today constitutes the major opposition party in parliament.

The new government has worked diligently to address the various problems that have resulted in grievances in the recent past. For

example, it addressed the complaints of the military personnel who felt discriminated against; it has tackled the difficult issue of reintegrating displaced persons back into society; and it continues to address land rights issues.

Unfortunately, violence has continued to plague Timor-Leste. For example, on February 11, 2008 an assassination attempt was carried out against President Ramos-Horta by the followers of a disenchanted former military police commander, Alfredo Reinado. Ramos-Horta was shot and suffered severe injuries but was whisked to Darwin, Australia, and underwent successful surgery.

On the very same day that Ramos-Horta was attacked, a failed assassination attempt was carried out against Prime Minister Gusmao. Due to the quick actions of his bodyguards he was not shot or harmed in any way. Ultimately, Reinado was caught and killed.

Due to the assassination attempts on the two top political leaders of the country, the government announced a "state of siege." Security forces were allowed greater freedom to carry out searches and arrests of suspects, a curfew was imposed, and freedom of assembly was limited. Not wishing to cause hardship for the society at large and wanting to avoid criticism for adopting such a tough approach, the measures were gradually removed by the government as calm was reestablished.

Upon the capture and surrender of all of Reinado's men, the state of emergency was called off on April 29. On March 3, 2010 most of Reinado's men were tried and convicted of attempting to assassinate Ramos-Horta. Magnanimously, Ramos-Horta commuted the sentences of all of the men and all were released from prison.

In July 2008, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao and President Jose Ramos-Horta met in Bali with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in order to receive the Truth and Friendship Commission's report. The Commission asserted that attacks and abuses had been perpetrated by individuals and groups aligned with both sides of the crisis but assigned "institutional responsibility" to the Indonesian military for committing gross human rights violations. As might be imagined, the reception to the report was extremely mixed. Those who supported the report asserted that the findings and recommendations were likely to bring about reconciliation between the two nations; critics, on the other hand, decried the report's authors for failing to demand accountability for those Indonesians (military troops, members of the militia, and individuals) who killed, tortured, maimed, and created a life of misery for the people of East Timor.

In late August 2009, Amnesty International (2011) issued a report in which it asserted that the ongoing failure to try those who wreaked violence during the 1999 independence vote constituted an ongoing threat

to the new nation's stability. The report noted that almost all of the suspects who perpetrated the violence had not yet been tried in independent courts in Timor-Leste or Indonesia. Those who had been tried in Indonesia had been acquitted. Not surprisingly, the court proceedings were roundly criticized as being fundamentally flawed. The Amnesty International report also asserted that

> The failure to rebuild the justice system effectively and to bring those responsible for past human rights violations to justice contributes to an environment where there is no strong deterrent to political violence and human rights violations.... The denial of justice ... has eroded key pillars of the new state: the rule of law and a strong and independent judiciary. (Amnesty International, 2011, p. 4)

The report concluded by calling on the UN Security Council to halt the ongoing impunity and to establish an international criminal tribunal to try the alleged perpetrators of the various crimes committed during East Timor's occupation by Indonesia.

Today, in January 2012, Timor-Leste's economy remains shaky. Due to its citizens' "low skill base" and the country's "weak public governance," the establishment of a strong, sustainable, and far-reaching (meaning for all citizens throughout the country) economic base is still but a dream. Real security for all citizens as well as the protection of individuals' land rights continue to plague Timor-Leste. The latter has resulted in people fighting over the same piece of land, each claiming the land as their own. All of these concerns must be addressed if Timor-Leste is to move toward a truly stable society based on law, justice, and equity.

Eyewitness Accounts

Since Indonesian troops invaded East Timor close to 30 years ago, eyewitness accounts have provided mounting evidence of gross human rights violations, including those of a genocidal character. Such testimonies have been collected by professional human rights agencies such as Amnesty International and Asia Watch and, at the time of writing, a UN-supported Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In the past, researchers, including this writer, encountered a major obstacle to the recording of these accounts—the informants invariably insisted that their identities should not be made public. A few witnesses spoke out publicly but the vast majority were extremely reluctant to be identified. Until the end of Indonesian occupation in 1999, and even in its

aftermath, the reason advanced was understandable enough—fear of reprisals by the Indonesian security authorities against relatives and friends in East Timor, or against refugees remaining in West Timor under duress.

Unlike other issues of this nature, the Timor saga was not, at least for close to 25 years, a matter of past history; it was an ongoing drama. While the authorities responsible for the most serious violations may no longer have been in the territory, the regime whose policies enabled them to take place was still firmly in power. And while the way East Timor was seized had been the subject of widespread criticism, there was not a serious attempt, until 1999, by the major powers to persuade Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor and to allow a process of self-determination to take place. Indeed, for many years there was simply not enough international pressure, nor foreign or human rights presence in Timor, to discourage retaliation and victimization against advocates of self-determination. Until very recently, in fact, accounts of harassment by security authorities of the relatives of those Timorese involved in the resistance and related activities continued to filter through to outside human rights agencies.

While the penalties may have eased in the mid-1990s, the TNI-led campaign of violence, deportations, and massive destruction that occurred in 1999 demonstrated that the nature of the military-dominated administration remained unchanged. Its intolerance of opposition to integration is well recorded, including several actions by the military commander in the aftermath of the Santa Cruz incident. If anything, political oppression was intensified in 1992, especially after the appointment of Governor Abilio Osorio Soares, who had long been associated with the Indonesian intelligence network.

Between 1991 and 1999 few foreigners were able to gain free access to East Timor. In those circumstances, it was very difficult to make contact with witnesses of indiscriminate killings and torture, let alone offer some protection against reprisals from the military authorities. This problem was highlighted during the trial of Xanana Gusmao in Dili, when the defense counsel informed the court that he was having difficulty in persuading witnesses to appear on behalf of the accused. The situation changed after the UN intervention in 1999, but the massive upheaval caused by the TNI's final destructive campaign of revenge, and UN and Timorese rehabilitation priorities, led to considerable delay in addressing the atrocities perpetrated during the 24 years of Indonesian occupation. Only in 2000 were these incidents starting to be investigated.

As for the TNI perpetrators, although several of the commanders have been brought before an Indonesian tribunal in response to internal pressures, most have been acquitted. Only one officer received a light

sentence, but that case was summarily dismissed by a higher court. The UN-led prosecutor-general's office in East Timor has issued a number of indictments against Indonesian officers, as well as militia members, but so far these have been ignored by the government of Indonesia. It remains a matter of grave concern that most of the indicted commanders have been rewarded with promotions, with several of them subsequently occupying responsible operations roles in TNI military actions in West Papua and Aceh.

The following are selections of accounts that were brought to the direct attention of the author in the aftermath of the invasion. Although much new material now being assembled is available, these testimonies are typical in character.

Account 1

The invasion of Dili. Etelvina Correia was interviewed by the author some months after the invasion. She was chosen because of her clear and unhesitating account, and because she was one of the few witnesses at the scene of the killing. The following is an abbreviated version of her account.

The attack on Dili began at about 4 a.m. on December 7. Etelvina Correia was in the church, which is located in the waterfront area. Some time later paratroops began to land (some of them dropped into the water). At 7 a.m. she saw paratroops shoot a woman in the parish garage and later three women in front of the church, although their hands were raised. The Indonesian soldiers then ordered all of the people in the vicinity of the church to go inside. The next day, Etelvina and the others were ordered by troops to go to the wharf area. There, 20 women—Chinese and Timorese—were taken out to the front. Some of them had children who were weeping. The soldiers tore the children from the women, who were then shot one by one, with the crowd being ordered to count after each execution. At 2 p.m. on the same day, 59 men, including Chinese and Timorese, were taken to the wharf and executed in the same way. Again the witnesses were ordered at gunpoint to count. They were told that these killings were in reprisal for the killing of a paratrooper near the Toko Lay shop in Dili.

Account 2

The following consists of extracts from a letter written in November 1977 by a Catholic priest in East Timor and sent to two Dominican nuns, Sister Natalia Granada Moreira and Sister Maria Auxiliadora Hernandez. Its importance is that it was written during what was probably the worst period following the invasion. At the time, East Timor was

securely closed off to the outside world, and communications even to other parts of Indonesia were heavily censored. This letter was smuggled out by a person who carried it to Jakarta.

The war. It continues with the same fury as it had started. Fretilin continues the struggle, in spite of famine, lack of clothing, death, and a crisis in understanding and objectives which has surfaced lately. The invaders have intensified their attacks in the three classic ways—from land, sea and air.

Between December 7 and 31, 1975, and up to February 1976, in Dili harbour there were at anchor up to 23 warships which vomited intense fire towards Dili 24 hours a day. Daily eight to twelve helicopters and four bombers flew reconnaissance and bombing runs near Dili. Numerous tanks and armoured vehicles roamed about the territory. The Indonesian armed forces in Timor must have surpassed 50,000 (I don't know for certain). In December last year there was heavy movement of ships in Dili, discharging war materials and disembarking troops. From last September (1977) the war was again intensified. The bombers did not stop all day. Hundreds of human beings died every day. The bodies of the victims became food for carnivorous birds (if we don't die of the war, we die of the plague), villages were completely destroyed, some tribes decimated.... And the war enters its third year with no promise of an early end in sight. The barbarities (understandable in the Middle Ages and justifiable in the Stone Age), the cruelties, the pillaging, the unqualified destruction of Timor, the executions without reason, in a word all the "organized" evil, has spread deep roots in Timor.

There is complete insecurity and the terror of arbitrary imprisonment is our daily bread (I am on the "persona non grata" list and any day I could disappear). Fretilin soldiers who give themselves up are disposed of—for them there is no prison. Genocide will come soon, perhaps by next December. Taking advantage of the courage of the Timorese, they are being urged to fight their brothers in the interior. It is they who march in front of the (Indonesian) battalions to intimidate the prey.

[Section on the position of the Church omitted]

The political situation. Indescribable. Sabotage and lies dominate the information sector. Integration is not the expression of the will of the people.

The people are controlled by the Indonesians and, given the character of the oppressor and the level of the Indonesian presence, it is a lamb being led to the slaughter. In the presence of such force, there is no way to resist; liberty is a word without meaning. The proclaimed liberation is synonymous with slavery. Timor is returning to the nineteen forties and

anti-communism is an Islamic slogan meaning "iconoclasm." The reform of our customs means the setting up of cabarets and houses of prostitution.... In commerce, the search for basic needs dominates, and black-market is the rule. The Chinese are easily corrupted and they themselves are instruments of commercial exploitation. To travel outside of Indonesia is a dream. Mail is censored....

Please do something positive for the liberty of the Timorese people. The world ignores us and our grief.... We are on the road to complete genocide. By the end of December the war could exterminate us. All of the youth of Timor (30% of the population) are in the forests: the Indonesian control only one or two kilometres beyond the villages. We ask all justice-loving people to save Timor, and we ask God to forgive the sins of the Timorese people....

Timor, November 1977 [name withheld]

Account 3

The next item consists of extracts taken from a message, written in 1977, from a Timorese father to his son in Portugal, with whose whereabouts he was not familiar. Again, it is rather general, but it is one of the few first-hand written accounts of conditions in East Timor at that time.

Tell my son that for nothing on this earth should he return to Timor. I would rather die without seeing him again than to know that he had returned to this hell....

There are very few Timorese in the streets of Dili; most of them are in the forests, dead or in prison; the cost of living is extremely high and there is a need for the most basic foodstuffs. The suffering is indescribable, as may be affirmed by the Apostolic Nuncio in Jakarta who went to Dili in the middle of October to celebrate an open-air mass. The weeping, the tears, the laments of the orphans, widows and forsaken were such that the Mass had to be interrupted for a quarter of an hour before it could continue....

In a desperate attempt to crush by force the armed resistance which continues to exist in most of the territory, the Jakarta authorities now have sent ten more battalions to Timor. Thus, the number of Indonesian troops engaged in fighting usually cited as being over 40,000 must now be more than 50,000.... The increase in military operations has once more turned Timor into a place of arms and warfare. At the present time, with the beginning of the rainy season, land operations should have diminished but the constant air raids and the launching of incendiary bombs which have been systematically punishing the rural populations continue.

Account 4

An extract from a Letter from Timor, also in 1977.

> A continuous, increasingly violent war rages in Timor. The group of villages in which I lived have been completely destroyed. There is not one soul there. I myself am in Dili and I have gone many days without eating. These are the effects of war. But there are people who are much worse off than I. I have been sick several times and at death's door for want of medication. The cost of living in Dili is very high and the salaries are very low. One sees no one else but Indonesian soldiers and Chinese on the streets of Dili. There are very few Timorese for the majority are either in the forest, dead or in jail. The luck of Timor is to be born in tears, to live in tears and to die in tears. It would, perhaps, be more appropriate to say that one does not cry for one has no more tears to shed, for Timor is no longer Timor: it is nothing but an oppressed worm. . . .

Account 5

The following account was conducted by Michele Turner, a well-known Australian oral historian. The subject is a former Timorese guerrilla fighter, named Laurenco, who spent much of the early years of the occupation in the eastern sector of the island. He describes conditions in a mountain area, where many Timorese lost their lives, largely through air attacks, and the consequences of famine. (Note: accounts 5 and 6 are extracts from Michele Turner's *Telling: East Timor Personal Testimonies, 1942–1992* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 1992). Reprinted with permission.)

Our section in the east was the last to be attacked. In 1978 they started to come against us. At first we didn't resist, just watched the enemy, let them feel confident. Matebian Mountain is a big area and there were 160,000 of us, fighters and civilians, divided into small groups.

On 17 October 1978 some Indonesians got right to the bottom of Matebian Mountain and that's when we started to fight back. For those first two months, October and November, we were very successful and about 3000 Indonesians died. Then they got angry and scared to come close and started to bomb us from the air. They bombed twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon with four black planes. Their name I know now is Broncos, but we called them scorpions because they had a tail that curves up at the back like that insect. Their bombs left a big hole about two metres deep. Then they got new supersonic planes. Our

people were very frightened of those because you didn't even hear they were there until they were gone. Those supersonics would zoom along the valley so fast we couldn't shoot them.

The bombing became constant, in rotation. Three supersonics came to bomb for about forty-five minutes and then went back to reload. Half an hour later the black scorpions came, and this could go on all day. In Matebian there are a lot of caves and we hid there and only moved at night.

We knew by radio from the south zone that the Indonesians had dropped four napalm bombs there. Then they dropped two of these on us. I saw all the flames and heard people shouting and screaming. I was on another mountain but I could see well; there was a close view of it, straight across. Some of us set out straight away to help those people. By foot it took half an hour to go down and up again, and by the time we got there everything was completely burnt. We saw a whole area about fifty metres square all burnt, no grass, nothing except ash. On the rocks it was a brown reddish color and on the ground ash too, no ordinary grey ash, sort of yellow ash, like beach sand. You couldn't see where bodies had been. There was nothing except ash and burned rocks on the whole area, but we had heard those people screaming.

We could find no bones or bodies, but people near said there were about a hundred people living there who were killed by this. Those people disappeared, they were not sheltering, we never saw them again. The population was large but people were in small groups in different places and knew where each group was. The whole population was very upset—no bodies of those people left to bury. My cousin said, "If this is what they can do there is no hope for the world."

We had no food because of all the bombing and we lost radio contact. Fretilin decided they couldn't defend the people properly any more and the population should surrender, otherwise we would all be wiped out. When they announced this decision the people cried. Falintil said they couldn't force us, but this was the best thing for all. Our leader said, "You surrender and it will be better for you to get food and it will be better for us too so we can fight freely. But this doesn't mean that the war stops. We will keep fighting for our freedom and don't forget, wherever you go outside, that we are nationalists, and if ever you have a way to help us in the bush, do it." Then Falintil gave up their responsibility for the people and everyone decided for themselves to stay or go. Also the Falintil broke up into small groups to fight as guerillas.

About 2000 of us tried to stay in the mountains. We broke into three groups to escape and I was in one of these trying to get through the encirclement. In our group there were a few hundred, mostly fighters, only about a hundred ordinary people. We kept walking and walking.

The Indonesians would drop some bombs, we would hide, then walk again. We were in a valley and the Indonesians were up higher. If they shot at us our fighters did not shoot back so that the Indonesians would think we were just a normal group of people walking to surrender. We had no food, the area we were going through was mostly rocks. The enemy burnt the trees and any food growing; the animals were dead.

Account 6

The following is an extract from an account by an elderly Timorese woman, named Eloise, who was in Dili when the Indonesian invasion of the capital took place in 1975. This incident was only one of a number of mass killings carried out by Indonesian troops, following their assault on Dili.

On 7 December we woke and heard this big noise of planes and saw parachutes and planes covering the light—it became dark because of them, so many. There were shots and we went inside and kept listening to more and more shooting. In the afternoon some Timorese came and told us everyone must come to surrender at headquarters. We had to get a stick and put a piece of white material on it and come. They said, "These are orders from the Indonesian people." So we went, women and children and old men and young men.

Once we got there, they divided us: the women and children and old men to one side, and on the other young boys they wanted to help carry Fretilin things—they had taken over their store and there was ammunition and food there. We watched while they took all this stuff out from the storeroom. When they finished they were coming to join us, but the Indonesians said, "No, stay there!" Then they ordered us to form a line and wait.

Then an Indonesian screams an order and we hear machine gun running through [*sic*] the men. We see the boys and men dying right there. Some see their husbands die. We look at each other stunned. We think they are going to kill us next. All of us just turn and pick up the children and babies and run screaming, wild, everywhere.

Notes

1. Curiously, the strongest argument for such an outcome was advanced in 1966 by an American academic, Professor Donald Weatherbee, who concluded, "In a sense, Portuguese Timor is a trust territory, the Portuguese holding it in trust for Indonesia" (Weatherbee, 1966).
2. In June 1974, in contrast to most of his colleagues (who studiously avoided uttering the word "independence") Foreign Minister Adam Malik generously assured the Timorese of Indonesia's support for East Timor's independence. In a letter to Jose Ramos-Horta, a Fretilin leader, Malik wrote, inter alia: "The independence of every country is the right of every nation, with no exception for the people in Timor."

3. In 1957, for example, Indonesia told the UN First Committee, in a reference to Timor: "Indonesia has no claim to any territories which had not been part of the former Netherlands East Indies. No one should suggest otherwise or advance dangerous theories in that respect."
4. Within weeks of Pearl Harbor, Australian and some Dutch forces, ignoring the protests of the Portuguese—at that time neutral—had landed in East Timor, bringing in large Japanese forces. The Timorese gave the Australians extraordinary support until their withdrawal a year later. The Japanese then imposed a harsh occupation on the local population, which cost perhaps as many as 70,000 Timorese lives.
5. Under a special agreement (UKUSA) this intelligence surveillance was shared with the United States and formed the basis of key Defense Intelligence Agency briefings prepared for the administration in Washington.
6. The Australian relationship was not as important to Indonesia as were its links with the United States, Japan, or the Netherlands, but a firm Australian stance on the decolonization rights of the Timorese would certainly have influenced the policies of the other states and reinforced Suharto's misgivings about military intervention.
7. Named after the dragon, or giant lizard on the nearby island of Alor.
8. Frente Revolucionaria de Timor-Leste Independente—the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor.
9. Uniao Democrata de Timor—the Timorese Democratic Union.
10. Based on remarks made to the writer by Major Metello, a senior representative of the Armed Forces Movement.
11. East Timor is predominantly Roman Catholic.
12. Based on talks in 1975 with two of those present at the meeting, Mousinho and Martins.
13. An example of the provocative disinformation role of Bakin at this point was the deliberate circulating of a story by Operasi Komodo agents, that a number of Vietnamese officers had been smuggled into Timor and were training a Fretilin military force.
14. In fact, at the time, most Fretilin leaders were out of the country, so it was an unlikely eventuality.
15. The humanitarian consequences of this civil war were assessed by the International Red Cross and an Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA) mission, of which I was the leader, with the former insisting that the total loss of life was about 1,500.
16. For an account of the withdrawal, see Chapter 11 of Missao Impossivel? Descolonizacao de Timor by Mario Lemos Pires (1991), the Portuguese governor at that time.
17. There is now ample evidence that these newsmen were shot by Indonesian troops, at least three of them having been executed some time after the force entered the village.
18. As an indication of Western complicity, U.S. intelligence was informed in Jakarta by their Indonesian opposite numbers that the attack would take place on December 6. However, American officials in Jakarta were shocked to discover that President Ford and Dr. Kissinger would be in the Indonesian capital on that day, and their hosts obligingly delayed the attack 24 hours.
19. Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia, Indonesian Armed Forces.
20. The Indonesian army often used Timorese drivers because of their familiarity with the difficult and sometimes dangerous road conditions in the interior.
21. The International Committee of the Red Cross team, under the leadership of Andre Pasquier, was forced to withdraw before the invasion when Indonesia refused to respect its neutrality.
22. In fact, in October 1989 Governor Carrascalao, in a briefing to visiting journalists, gave a much lower total figure—659,000, which, he said, was growing at 2.63% annually. If this figure was correct, it gives an indication of the pace of immigration from elsewhere in Indonesia.
23. I have chosen deliberately to use the past tense, because the great upheaval caused by the invasion, especially the resettlement programs, has clearly had a significant impact on cultural and settlement patterns.
24. However, their attitudes were to an extent influenced by the hostility toward Javanese that was prevalent in Indonesian Timor, especially after the widespread killings in 1965–1966.
25. Angkatan Udara Republik Indonesia, Air Force of the Republic of Indonesia.

26. A copy of this report, Notes on East Timor, is held by the writer.
27. A General Assembly was followed by Security Council Resolution 384 (December 22, 1975), which was unanimously agreed to, a rare achievement at that time.
28. Of Indonesia's major trading and aid-donor partners—the United States, Japan, West Germany, Australia, and the Netherlands—only the last-mentioned showed concern at the government level.
29. Testimony of Robert Oakley in "Human Rights in East Timor and the Question of the Use of U.S. Equipment by the Indonesian Armed Forces," before Subcommittees of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, 95th Congress, March 28, 1977. Also, letter from Edward C. Ingraham, Department of State, May 13, 1977.
30. East Timor had by that time been designated Indonesia's twenty-seventh province. Canberra waited only until 1979 before according de jure status to its recognition.
31. The confidential report to which the author was given access stated that, of the 200,000, about 10% were in such bad shape that they could not be saved.
32. In fairness, it should be noted that Australia was a major provider of financial backing for the operations of the International Red Cross.
33. Indonesia imposed strict conditions on the admission of the International Red Cross, which limited its effectiveness. For example, for some years it was denied the right to carry out tracing activities. Moreover, most of its work was carried out by the Indonesian Red Cross, which was largely under military direction.
34. In fact, the last of these operations, Operasi Senjum, involving some 10,000 troops was carried out in the central mountain area in the middle of November 1996.
35. See, in particular, the annual reports published by Amnesty International, especially East Timor: Violations of Human Rights (1985). Also see the publications of Asia Watch, especially its detailed accounts of the circumstances of the Santa Cruz massacre in Dili in November 1991.
36. The spirited Timorese resistance took a heavy toll on Indonesian lives; as many as 20,000 reportedly having been killed since 1975.
37. Based on the assessment of the International Red Cross mission, as conveyed to the writer some weeks after the civil war had ended.
38. Including from General Try Sutrisno, the defense forces commander, who was elected vice president of Indonesia in 1993.
39. The slaughter of more than 500,000 "communists," including their families, in the aftermath of the 1965 Gestapu affair, most of them by the army, was perhaps the bloodiest episode in Indonesia's history.
40. In a speech to Timorese officials in Dili, in February 1990, Murdani warned that those who still sought to form a separate state "will be crushed by ABRI. ABRI may fail the first time, so it will try for a second time, and for a third time." In a reference to Fretilin and its sympathizers he said: "We will crush them all … to safeguard the unity of Indonesian territory."

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Map 9.1 Cambodia