

# EAST TIMOR: TOWARD SETTING CAPTIVES FREE?

## I.

### PROLOGUE TO TRAGEDY

East Timor is legally a Portuguese colony in the last stages of its self determination process illegally occupied these 21 years by Indonesia.

To the Maubere people it is a nation occupied and annexed by an alien, hostile, abusive colonial/imperial power. (This is true even of the vast majority of the 45% odd who did not favour immediate independence in 1975.)

To Jakarta E. Timor is an oil rich territory whose independence or autonomy would pose grave moral hazard throughout the outer islands and - by being likely to practice human rights and also centre left governance - to be a threat to the stability of elitist, Javanese, military neo-corporatism in Java itself.

Historically E. Timor (before the Portuguese came in early 1500's) was sometimes a sultanate, sometimes part of an all Timor sultanate, sometimes *de facto* semi tributary to a Javanese sultanate (not necessarily the Jakarta one). During four and a half centuries as a Portuguese colony it grew apart from the Dutch ruled half of island, whatever previous commonalities may have been. Upland E. Timor was not fully governed by anybody (probably still is not). Coast was pre-European trade and sea power based sultanates' concern and Portugal's during imperial high noon. Later it was a quiet backwater.

Urban Timorese are relatively Westernised in dress, language, religion, vocabulary. This is less true in rural and especially upland areas. If data are correct, the practice of Catholicism has exploded upward and use (in defiance of Indonesian law) of Portuguese risen sharply since the invasion/occupation because these are perceived as national people's symbols.

Just before independence the broad political picture (broad - the details are infinitely complex as Maubere appear to be very fractionalising when free to be albeit this may be appearance not reality - first real political action run up to election under colonialism and exile politics do facilitate spawning of an infinite number of parties most of which turn out to be nearer tea parties than political when given a real test):

a. **Independence Now** (Fretilin) -55%

- b. **Free Association With Portugal** -30+%
- c. **Phased Federation With Indonesia** -15-%
- d. **Immediate Integration Into Unitary Indonesia** -1%

After the election Fretilin - which rhetorically was then Marxist-Leninist as were all major Portuguese Colonial Movements - somewhat unwisely declared unilateral independence and suppressed resistance by b-c-d and Portuguese. In this context it needs to be realised Portugal botched the Angola and Mozambique transitions and had no part in that of Guinea (Bissau) where the remnant garrisons *de facto* flew out under a truce. That Mozambique looked tidy was result of absence of significant black pro-Portuguese or separatist sentiment, of relative lack of cold war strategic concern and of Frelimo backing up departing governor and his demob happy men against (settler) "Dragons of Death". Even so there was next to **no** official level handover and utter administrative chaos. Even had Fretilin sought to work with Portuguese and assuage "b" (free association with Portugal) group, Indonesian provocateurs via "c", "d" would have ensured chaos for Jakarta to sort out. (Part of fighting was in fact Indonesian provocateur organised. How much is very unclear - not all.)

Indonesia moved promptly (4 to 6 weeks) once it was clear to all Portugal had no intention of sending forces to regain control. Its army-navy-air force occupied Dili in hours and lowlands in days. A year later an 'Assembly' purportedly 'traditional' Maubere (who had never had a territorial wide council before the National Assembly with Fretilin majority they'd just elected) but Indonesian organised (including selection of 'traditional' leaders) gave a ringing (whether loud and clear or hollow is disputed) 99% vote for immediate full integration into a unitary Indonesia and continued military presence to protect from 'banditry'.

The UN has never recognised the invasion/annexation but annual resolutions of condemnation (pushed by Lusophone world plus Tanzania with erratic Dutch and Australian support and passive EU, to accommodate Portugal, and OAU, to back Tanzania-Mozambique-Angola-Guinea (B)-Cabo Verde-Sao Tome e Principe, agreement) long ago fell into desuetude.

The UN has *de temps en temps* tried to broker talks. As Portugal wants to save face, to have a decent looking referendum, to condemn invasion and - perhaps - to protect Maubere; Maubere want at least autonomy and choice; Indonesia wants to tidy up and dress up by procuring international baptism and laying on of hands to what it has done these talks have gone nowhere.

## II.

### THE FACE OF THE AGGRESSOR

Post Suharto Indonesia is centralised, militarised, repressive, fearful, elitist, systematically corrupt (but as part of centralised control; 'freelancing' is 'taken out' when identified) and nasty. It is also moderately and increasingly efficient. The reductions in absolute poverty and rises in health, education, nutrition are real and are public policy to demobilise discontent and to raise productivity - modern "bread and circuses" to critics.

Control is all pervasive. For international image (and perhaps providing conduits for secret police penetration) reasons, some trade union, opposition party, independent press and religious organisations which are not overtly nor actually state emanations are allowed. But if they threaten to be independent and genuinely critical, they are either suppressed or suddenly have contrived, state run, 'special' elections to put in a quiet dummy leadership (as has happened in a large church and the main opposition political party over past year).

This is the pretty side of the regime. It came to power by a coup - purportedly against a Communist Coup. Whether the CPI planned a coup and against whom is **not** clear. Probably yes - but against hard right military and intelligence figures e.g. Suharto, Ali Alitas - almost certainly not against President Suharto. In fact there was only one actual coup - the Army's. They did not install the clearly anti Communist, civilian Vice President as head of a civilian government. In fact they killed 500,000 out of perhaps 200,000 CPI members and interned/imprisoned perhaps 2,000,000 more (most gradually released - only a handful now in prison 40 plus years on). The Red Peril theme has been run in a way making McCarthy look amateur and moderate and the Old South Africa understated.

Externally Indonesia has been a bullying aggressor and a friend of useful tyrants. It has claimed - and secured by a palpably fraudulent election - West Irian where it has settled a Javanese majority. It has spoken of East Irian (borderline-New Guinea=Irian so in principle E. Irian could be a geographic term) and more ominously of Irian Irridenta (i.e. PNG). It backed off when Australia and Singapore made clear PNG would not go down undefended by A's troops/fleet and by Singapore's jets over Jakarta.

The offshore islands of Singapore and the interior borders of Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei were invaded. When the Gurkhas, the Australian and Royal Navies and the SAS were whistled up, Indonesia backed down.

Outer island revolts were crushed - blood and iron not mediation was **the** answer. (This in fairness was a Sukarno era practice too. The Javanese majority, on a land scarce tiny island

amid less populated, more oil-mineral - forest endowed ones, strongly believe in centralisation and majority, i.e. Javanese, rule. How much better democratic semi and totally illegal opponents in Java are on this count is unclear. Perhaps.)

The international spokesperson is Foreign Minister Ali Alitas (formerly of 'intelligence' and by repute personally an interrogator and torturer). He has been the hidden (not so very) hand behind giving Burmese junta a place as Associate in ASEAN. Characteristically he has backed down for the time being because he feared something. President Ramos said there was no way he - or he believed his successor - could accept a regime which made Marcos look like a democrat and a choir boy. Blocking ASEAN internal progress was more of a risk than delaying adding Burma. (Malaysia also seems to have muttered about the style of the Ne Win gang and getting ASEAN a bad image and Thailand became tepid. Viet Nam and Brunei held their peace so only Singapore was left with Ali in hard line junta approval society camp.)

With that record an 85% vote in E. Timor against Indonesia in 1975 is hardly surprising and even the rest (bar 1%) wanted phased, federated entry. What reasonable human being, given the choice, would not?!

### III.

#### JACKBOOTS AND JAM POTS: INDONESIA MARCHES IN

The Indonesian invasion initially stalled in the deep rural areas and especially the hills. The Maubere (or at least Fretilin's backers plus some others) were willing to die for their people. While Indonesia has confined the hill revolt, it still exists as do urban riots/demonstrations often turned into killing grounds as in 1991 at Dili cemetery.

The initial war was to crush, kill, wipe out. Whether the subsequent stage marked by provocation and murder by police at initially peaceful (if from an Indonesian perspective vehemently hostile and *de facto* seditious) are a) part of a systematic terror policy; b) *ad hoc* "pour encourager les autres"; c) panicky field personnel or d) a bit of each is unclear. Practice back in Indonesia suggests "d".

Indonesia correctly asserts that it has spent far more in E. Timor in 40 years than Portugal in 450. There are more schools, clinics, irrigation works, extension officers, food distributions, etc. There is also a death toll (war, famine, epidemic) of perhaps 200,000 of a perhaps 600,000-700,000 initial population and an exile toll of 100,000 plus perhaps 150,000 settlers moved in to help hold the locals down. The government financing of Protestant church entry is interesting. Basically the state is pro-Islamic. But Protestant Javanese churches with real

Javanese pastors of real poor Javanese (settler) congregations are useful to throw dust in Indonesian Council of Churches, Asian Council of Churches, WCC eyes. The claims of discrimination against Protestants by a neo-inquisitorial Roman Catholic church seem to trace back to 'intelligence' or to bemused Javanese pastors whose settlers on confiscated land are indeed harassed, but not because they are Protestant nor because the expelled peasants are Catholic.

The national languages (Tetum and Portuguese) are virtually suppressed. There is no provincial assembly (not unique to ET). There is no freedom of association - except to a limited and perilous extent under the wings of the Church. (Bishop Belo is subversive by an Indonesian definition. He believes in the rights of his people as a people and therefore of space in which to exercise them - and to speak them in languages of their own choice. Suharto model governance has no space for that.)

#### IV.

#### CANDLES TO SEARCHLIGHTS? GLOBALISING RESISTANCE?

After the initial international furor died out E. Timor became a forgotten war in a far away, insignificant corner of the world where a few geo-politically and economically irrelevant people (not incidentally successfully 'red washed' by Alitas and his ilk) clashed with a large, strategic, oil rich, big market state. Australia was a partial exception - presumably because it was closer, because Ramos-Horta (ex H.E. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information Jose Ramos-Horta of the short lived Republic) and many other exiles lived there, partly because Indonesia as a land hungry aggressor state with a big army bothers Australia (and especially the two conservative parties Liberal/Country) and partly because the conservative parties in Australia have racist supporters who can relatively less dangerously be satisfied by criticising Jakarta (or Beijing) than by domestic chauvinism.

What interest there was became largely under an individual human rights rubric, which from perspective of a suppressed people was better than silence but deeply unsatisfactory. (The South Africa external support evolved through a similar phase; by late 1950's it was no longer perceived simply or even primarily as individual human rights.)

A handful of external groups did seek to keep the case of the Maubere people visible - the (UK) Catholic Institute of International Relations is an example. Even in their cases hope and a feeling of duty to bear witness to the truth even if only by keeping a lanthorn about a candle in a typhoon was dominant, not hope of immediate or even foreseeable results.

In the past five years the context has changed:

1. the massacre at Dili cemetery took place before the eyes and cameras of the international press and millions saw Sharpeville style 'handling' of a peaceful memorial march;
2. steady reports of Western Arms (notably UK Hawker trainers fitted with guns by Indonesia to serve as ground control fire platforms) came to be believed and to mobilise the core anti arms sale campaigners;
3. the UN's human rights side began to take E. Timor more seriously and to call for open talks without pre conditions treating Ramos-Horta's group as *de facto* an interested negotiating party and Bishop Belo as the mediator of choice (**not** Indonesia's!);
4. In 1994 Philippine NGO's held a solidarity conference with the Maubere. Indonesia believed 'a word to the wise' at the Malacanang would stop that nonsense. Instead it radicalised Philippine NGO thinking, created broad hostility (nationalist - "We are not Indonesia's 64th Province") to Jakarta, caused massive Philippine and broader publicity and backed Philippine government (Ramos) into a corner and thus into defying them.
  - a. Indonesia - gradually escalating - backed demands for ban with:
    - i. seizing half of Philippine trawler fleet;
    - ii. break-up of ASEAN sub-regional (the one centred on Mindanao) investment forum;
    - iii. suspension of \$400 million in Indonesian committed joint project investment;
    - iv. threat to have Philippines' excluded from ASEAN;
    - v. threat not just to halt help in MNLF (Nur Misuami's insurgents)/Malacanang talks but to back upping of violence by MNLF.
  - b. President Ramos was startled - he did not realise how paranoid Indonesia is on the 'Maubere Question' - and appalled:
    - i. he agreed to ban foreign attendance (not by any means fully enforced) and to make clear conference views were not official policy;
    - ii. he (presumably) procured parallel statement from UP Chancellor;

- iii. **but** said his Constitution guaranteed free speech and assembly and having spent 1986-1995 rebuilding rule of constitutional law he would not, could not, had no willingness to violate it (including not ordering UP to throw meeting off campus).
- c. That leaves a Philippine NGO broad base for Maubere, a Philippine press/intellectual deep resentment at Jakarta, a much broader awareness of E. Timor with increased doubts Indonesia talk of Ramos-Horta/Belo as Portuguese colonial puppets is true;
5. the Asian Council of Churches and WCC in their 1995/6 dialogue/workshop shifted from treating E. Timor as an individual human rights violation case toward viewing it as the suppression of a people and their rights;
  6. at the 1996 Bangkok 'Summit' of NGO's prior to Asia-Pacific summit. **Asian** NGO's, including Indonesian, spoke out on East Timor and the Maubere people's agony;
  7. Indonesia in 1996 acted to avert the rise of a genuine opposition by removing Founding President Sukarno's daughter as head of the main 'licensed/tame' opposition party by holding a fraudulent special party congress and used basically peaceful mass reaction as an excuse for violence, sedition indictments and trying to relaunch 'red tsunami' rhetoric - with corrosive international credibility results. (Similar actions against a Protestant church in 94/95 had helped sensitise WCC to the Regime's nature);
  8. By its not very disguised opposition to Burma's entry into ASEAN tied to junta's treatment of 80% majority party and the political and literal heir of the Bogyoke U. Aung San (founder of modern Burma), the Philippines restaked out its willingness to say decent governance matters and to look Indonesia in the eye. Alitas blinked - agreed 'no hurry' i.e. no willingness to rerun confrontation;
  9. The Nobel Prize mantle descended on Bishop Belo **and** Ramos-Horta with a ringing citation not only of Indonesia's sins in E. Timor but an equally ringing endorsement of Belo and Ramo-Horta as men of good will and peace as well as of the struggle for justice;
  10. In response the Vatican issued its first unequivocal endorsement of Bishop Belo's struggle for justice for his people **as a people**;
  11. Indonesia both choked and vituperated. Significantly its spin doctors chose virtually to ignore the Belo half of prize. (Suharto promptly went to E. Timor to dedicate another development project. He sat beside the Bishop on a helicopter but - pointedly - did not mention Nobel or reasons behind it; youth and evangelisation were his themes.) Alitas

side-stepped Belo but denounced Ramos-Horta as a "political adventurer". The implication is clear - they now fear to denounce Bishop Belo because they believe it would be internationally, in Indonesia and in E. Timor counterproductive.

The **ground has shifted. E. Timor is visible. Indonesia is on the defensive.** It has made itself look like SE Asian Iraq and fears that point will be made and while it can still count on ASEAN quiet support (even Philippines recognises annexation and given Indonesia's ability to launch Muslim insurgencies Maubere can not expect activist state backing from any likely Malacanang occupant) believes new Australian government fears and despises them and could turn nasty playing the Indonesian criticism card as acceptable "racism with a human face". (That is **not** quite a fair reading of motivation - then PM Fraser led Commonwealth push against RSA and he was a Liberal/Country PM and, whatever else they are, Boers are white and most ANCers black.)

The present issue is **where next?** How can momentum be sustained? And to what possible resolution - doubtless far short of the New Jerusalem but at least giving a chance of peace, life and wholeness for the Maubere **as people and as a people.**

## V.

### WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN NEGOTIATION

My own view is that possible resolution might be:

- a. **de facto** confederation with E. Timor 'provincial government' having power over:
  - i. land ownership/residence (to avoid swamping with forced immigrants)
  - ii. language rights/use
  - iii. substantial own revenue (if share of customs/indirect taxes then to be kept in Dili **not** remitted, claimed back)
  - iv. separate public service with ET public service commission
  - v. elected governor and assembly (ET to set electoral law, registration, voter qualifications **except** permanent resident Indonesians can vote)
  - vi. some share (e.g. 50%) of all offshore oil/gas revenues (broadly defined) in ET zone to ET **direct** from companies;



vii. environmental/pollution law in respect to vi. and as to forests etc. in ET

b. together with *de facto* external monitors/guarantors:

- i. panel of facilitating states (e.g. Australia, Netherlands, Portugal, Brazil, SA/Mozambique) to mediate on Jakarta/Dili differences, to have ongoing relationship (including as core of direct to Dili aid consideration).

This is *de facto* confederation with *de facto* international surveillance. It could meet Maubere needs. Because it is *de facto* it would be seen as a lesser evil to Indonesian regime if growing international outcry about invasion/annexation/destruction of a people was perceived to threaten economic and security links.

The Maubere are **not** traditionally a very united people so whether they could cohere around this type of negotiated solution I have no idea. I do not object to Ramos-Horta's plan (see Annexure) in principle; but I see no way Indonesia could be pressured enough to agree because in Jakarta view W. Irian, South Moluccas, parts of Sumatra, perhaps Borneo and even Bali would follow. (Except for WI, I **doubt** the peoples in question want more than federalism in a decent human rights context.)

What I think just and practicable is of no great import. That a moderately well informed analyst can see something potentially viable may be of some use in guiding supporters of Maubere people. It is no good telling their leaders any of us can mobilise the pressure to get them independence however just it may be.

## VI.

### CANDLE TO TORCH TO CELEBRATORY BONFIRE: HOW?

The case for solidarity with the Maubere people is compelling. Events over the past five years have opened up space and altered climate to do more than hold a shield around a guttering candle in a raging midnight typhoon. How? A set of possible elements follow.

But first it is prudent to reflect briefly on the (very close) analogue to the Suharto Regime - Saddam's Iraq and on the most tenacious, gradually snowballing and ultimately successful global churchpeoples' support effort - South Africa.

It is not necessary to accept Northern motivations in respect to Saddam Hussein's Iraq to recognise it as evil. Like Indonesia it invaded and annexed its neighbour, set up a military regime slightly papered over with a few collaborateurs and waged terror against the people.

In both cases this flowed from a history of aggressive expansionism and in both was related in part to greed for more hydrocarbon reserves by the rulers of an already oil rich state. In both there has been a genuine - economic advance and political demobilisation focused - drive to reduce absolute poverty and build toward universal access to primary education, health services and pure water. There are divergences - unlike Iraq, Indonesia backs down when resistance to and disapproval of expansionist endeavours raise costs, because it fears world opinion and becoming regular CNN a theme topic. Therefore its poverty reduction/basic services drive has continued and, indeed, operates in occupied E. Timor parallel to repression. Second, Indonesia, unlike neo-totalitarian Iraq, views limited but not nil space for religious groups (which like Iraq it manipulates to serve its ends), independent print publications, trade unions, etc. to be the most useful policy. Not all criticism is barred - only that which the regime fears could build up to a threat to its stability (especially when Suharto goes - well after the millennium) - is forbidden. The space for autonomy and dissent fluctuates and (deliberately) is kept unclear as a means to encouraging 'speak mildly and survive' attitudes. As a result Ali Alitas has an easier brief than his present parallel Tariq Azia (or his parallel of the 1930's, Count Ciano of Mussolini's 'New Empire'). In both bases **international** law is against the aggressor. Kuwait was and is a sovereign state (whatever its relationship with Baghdad of the Caliphs) and E. Timor was and is a Portuguese colony in the last stages of self determination - at international law and as affirmed by the United Nations as well as by Portugal. The issue is not whether one actually favours re-establishment of Portuguese suzerainty, but that without the free consent of the Maubere people and of Portugal the Indonesian occupation is an undeniable violation of international law in general and the Charter of the United Nations in particular. No possible "domestic affairs" defence exists.

The South African case above all underlines the need for **determination** never to give up, always to plod (if nothing more is possible) on and to make use of opportunities to publicise and broaden the support base. (e.g. Some North American churches and voluntary bodies - e.g. World University Service - were campaigning at grassroots on aspects of apartheid by the mid-1950's so that by 1994 their track record was that of a working lifetime. Dating the Maubere people's agony to 1975 suggests one should be prepared for - **not** accept - two more decades of solidarity in struggle.) Because church action/representation **alone** will not be enough - the walls of Jakarta may fall to trumpets but the chorus must include the governmental and economic - Christian action needs to be **inclusive** (not least to preempt Jakarta's predictable efforts to cloak the occupation in the mantle of a Jihad against the 'intrusive' cross) and to **utilise** every event that sheds discredit on the Suharto Regime or adds legitimacy to the parallel foci of struggle - the national church symbolised and led by Bishop Belo; the overseas informational, demonstrational and diplomatic movement led by Shr. Ramos-Horta and the internal struggle by demonstration and by continued (if isolated and small) armed Maubere resistance to the occupation of their people's lands.

## PEOPLE'S NOT ONLY PERSONS' RIGHTS

One weakness of support groups and efforts has been to **perceive** the E. Timor 'problem' as one of **individuals' human rights violations**. The systemic nature of these violations (which are more pronounced in, but by no means unique to, E. Timor as opposed to Indonesia) is frequently not clearly recognised. Further E. Timor is treated as if it were 'internal' to Indonesia. It is **not** and therefore the rights 'question' is not merely cases and systems of violation of individuals' rights but also (and in the context of) the total suppression of a **people's rights** (including that of self determination whether as independent or confederated with either Indonesia or Portugal - the only options conceivably enjoying significant present Maubere support). It is **important** that those groups which see this point clearly act to broaden the understanding of others with whom they network by providing background material, discourse and dialogue with exiled Maubere.

## FAREWELL TO ARMS?

A clear pressure point is **arms and multi purpose or arms supporting technology and materials** sales to Indonesia - more precisely working for an **embargo** on them. Hawker planes and also armoured cars and artillery are of significant importance to Indonesia in respect to the occupation as are fast patrol boats. (Larger naval vessels and other military aircraft are more relevant to the Paracel and Spratly Islands disputes and - potentially - to blackmailing its neighbours.) Beyond that Indonesia has a flourishing arms and aircraft industry as well as shipyard capacity.

**Dual purpose technology** to backup the 'information' (secret and military police control) system, to wage anti guerilla war and to substitute domestic naval, aeronautical and heavy arms production capacity for imports should be a parallel target. Most computer technology and advanced electronic items, a broad range of machine tools and civil aircraft fall in this category. Loss of access to them would cripple the state security apparatus and also the vital mining, hydrocarbons and heavy manufacturing sectors.

It is important not to expect too much choking off of flows (as opposed to publicity and forcing governments to rethink and to seek to justify such sales) in the short run. Japan, South Africa, probably Israel, Pakistan, possibly India and certainly China will be hard cases.

## AN ARCHIPELAGIC REACH?

E. Timor is **not** lawfully part of Indonesia. But it is under Indonesian rule and cannot be seen outside the Indonesian context.

Indonesians do suffer under systemic abridgement of basic human rights and a large number of case of infringement of individuals rights. Indonesians do organise within the space open to them - and frequently go beyond it into suppression (by fraudulent new leadership installation, arrests and/or police/army terrorism masquerading as "law and order"). Many of these groups - judging by what they said at the 1995 Asian 'People's Summit' - are sympathetic to the E. Timorese peoples' (and probably people's) struggles.

What they can do requires **exploration with them**. This is particularly true in respect to Indonesian churches. These are licensed and subject both to revocation of licenses and to imposed leadership changes. The Indonesian Council of Churches is a Council in at least semi captivity. It has made the first Constantinian bargain - accepting state benign approval and recognition of legitimacy (not Establishment, the second bargain which is actually post-Constantine) in return for broad acceptance of the regime and its overall goals and policies. In particular the state has prevented Islamic (also licensed) groups from mobilising against Churches (at least so long as their evangelisation was not seen as provoking unmanageable tensions). The recent anti-Christian statements of (officially recognised) Islamic bodies are almost certainly a Regime warning to the Churches to reduce their criticisms and tone them down. In this context the fairly consistent - if rather low key - raising of individual human rights cases in E. Timor is an act of more bravery than it may seem. So too Protestant pastors in E. Timor do feel and experience hostility by Maubere people, which the Regime tells them is Catholic aggression. As most are Indonesians serving (poor) Javanese settler colonists brought in by the Regime to hold the Maubere down (often on confiscated land) hostility is real and communication with Maubere or the Catholic church near nil. Such communication leading to dialogue and understanding is something Indonesian churches might reasonably be pressed to encourage and facilitate.

## **A REGIONAL BASE**

The E. Timorese need a base in Asia - for information, dialogue, diplomacy and politics. For geographic and cultural reasons Australia is far from ideal. (Australia has a water border with E. Timor **but** one several thousand kilometres from Sydney or Canberra.)

There is a real potential for creating such a base in the Philippines (Manila). Philippine ngo support built up for 1994 conference continues including some NCCP members and leaders. The Philippines is a largely Catholic country (like E. Timor) with a substantial body of lay and ordained Catholics in support on inter church cooperation. (The Cardinal Archbishop Cebu is more disposed to such actions - and sympathetic to the Maubere - than the Cardinal Archbishop of Manila appears to be.) In 1996 the Catholic Bishops Conference has protested the refusal of a visa to Shr. Ramos-Horta to attend the pre-APEC people's organisation conference. (See Annexure.)

The government would not suppress Filipino activity or support groups. It would be surprising if it banned Maubere church or church related figures attendance at NCCP, NCCP/Catholic, AACC WCC, or Peace and Justice sponsored dialogues and conferences. Low key entry by Maubere less prominent than Ramos-Horta has usually been possible - residence permits may or may not be. President Ramos recent answer to a query whether Ramos-Horta would be given a visa to come to the Philippines during Suharto's pending visit was breathtaking (even if visa at time of visit/APEC summit was subsequently denied) - he said he would "cross that bridge when I come to it". Ramos is perfectly aware Indonesia will take that as a deadly insult and a threat and could have cancelled the Suharto visit. The interesting statement in Annexed story is that of Ramos ally/populist politician positioning himself for 1998 presidential run, speaker de Venecia who virtually urges Ramos-Horta to come, but later. The fact APEC People's Forum asked R-H to address opening session underlines continuing domestic/regional people's organisation support for Maubere - especially as main focus of meeting is on trade. Whether Ramos successor will be as ready to stand up to Jakarta as the ramrod backboned West Pointer is not clear but after 1994 the Indonesian Regime has few friends in the Philippines.

#### **TOWARD GLOBAL NETWORKING**

There are networks of Maubere supporting groups but - except in Western Europe - relatively thin and - apparently - limited communication ones. This is an area WCC, Peace and Justice and the better informed national network leaders (e.g. CIIR) should seek to strengthen.

For the avoidance of doubt outreach should not be limited to Church or Christian affiliated groups. All groups of goodwill (e.g. human rights, arms trade) should be approached with a view to networking and common action. At present potential leadership in Europe, North America and the Philippines probably will be largely from Christian oriented groups. This may not necessarily be true elsewhere in the world (albeit ACC may be the most appropriate catalyst in Asia either alone or jointly with ACHRO).

#### **"A PEOPLE DEPRIVED"**

A strength of the broad anti-apartheid movement was the volume of well written, factually grounded, well produced publications it produced. To date there is no comparable flow on E. Timor and what there is something (e.g. by CIIR, the UN and the WCC/ACC 1995 Consultation Report, it is not very widely available. It is doubtful, for example, that most network groups (much less members) have seen Ramos-Horta's 1992 proposals for a mediated settlement (summary by R-H. appended).

No one publication will 'solve' the information and publicity deficit. However, WCC, CIIR, CA might usefully consider commissioning a serious, in depth study analogous to UNICEF's **Children On The Front Line**. That document (over a quarter of a million copies in three editions and three languages were distributed) was deadly for the apartheid regime. It began with pre-independence history and early independence goals in Southern Africa and the human and economic costs of war writ in deaths, social facility destruction, GDP loss. (The last edition included South African social conditions and data.) It was carefully researched and reasoned and, if anything, was understated rather than rhetorical. Despite - or because? - of that, the message that came across to many readers was "Botha Butchers Babies" (words quite deliberately not in the document). South Africa was furious but - interestingly - decided the case made was too well supported to make attack profitable and remained silent even while doing its bureaucratic best to hamper UNICEF operations in the region (and bursting out in wrath against the organisation and the first listed author - "That evil man , Professor Green" in private to Europeans it thought sympathetic).

Clearly there are differences between the South African periphery and "war to make Southern Africa safe and profitable for apartheid" and Indonesia's occupation and annexation of E. Timor and suppression of the Maubere people. But an analogous approach to COTFL's might well be a way to broaden knowledge and outreach. More political discussion - and appending of key documents - would be possible as the proposed sponsors are not bound by the 'keep out of politics' rules relevant to UNICEF (albeit in the case COTFL saving infants and children's lives was both squarely within UNICEF's mandate **and** strategically political because the apartheid regime had made it so).

The study would **need to be well and carefully done**. Indonesia will look for errors and rhetorical political partisanship and use them to seek to demolish any such venture. To collect the material will require quiet contacts (especially to get vignette case studies and actual people's words - as used effectively in COTFL). A full time researcher for six months plus, an editor for two to three and an expert editorial/advisory group would be needed plus networking to make an initial printing of at least 5,000 necessary. (The present writer is willing to put time where his mouth is - certainly on editorial/advisory group and - if his Institute could be paid to 'loan' him - probably as editor or co/editor.)

## VII.

### "BECAUSE WE HAVE GONE ON TRYING"

The above suggestions are not, nor intended to be, a complete strategy but notes toward one.

The chances of massive short term breakthroughs are low and of ultimate failure not inconsiderable.

In answer to that criticism, the response of a UN agency field representative to his headquarters' warning that the Great Southern African dearth of 1992-93 would kill hundreds of thousands or worse and that a low profile to avoid blame for failure would be prudent is apposite - "I agree it may be too late to avert massive death tolls. But if we do not even make the attempt history will not forgive us." Nor should it have - national, regional, NGO bilateral and international agency efforts did avert mass deaths (except where war prevented relief in Angola and Mozambique) so that over 90% (perhaps 95%) of the 3,000,000 human lives at risk were saved.

- Reginald Herbold Green

#### **Distribution:**

Ian Linden, CIIR  
Paul Spray, Christian Aid  
Susie Smith, Oxfam  
Rob van Drimmelen, WCC  
The Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, WCC  
The Rev. Fely Carilho, ACC  
Reinhild Traitler  
William S. Ellis  
Maitet Diokno, Freedom From Debt Coalition  
The Rev. Gavin Ashenden  
The Rev. Andrew Robinson  
The Rev. Rob Esdaile

# Only Portugal and Indonesia Can Settle the Case

111 16-X-96  
By Irawan Abidin

JAKARTA — The East Timor issue is not as far away from a solution as it might appear. Portugal and Indonesia came close to an internationally acceptable settlement a few years ago. They could still achieve a similar breakthrough, provided Lisbon is prepared to be reasonable.

The issue arose in the mid-1970s when East Timor was being decolonized. A civil war erupted as the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor, known by its Portuguese acronym as Fretilin, moved to eliminate its rivals through violence. The colonial power, Portugal, could neither restore order nor put the decolonization process back on course. It simply abandoned the territory.

Subsequently, in 1976, an overwhelming majority of the East Timorese people, in a

political exercise based on their traditions, chose to declare independence through integration with Indonesia as the republic's 27th province.

Years after the decolonization process was completed, Portugal claimed that it was still the administrative power, despite the fact that the decolonization process it started had been completed. East Timor is now enjoying much more progress than it ever experienced in four centuries of Portuguese rule, and there is no turning back the hands of time.

This is the issue that Portugal and Indonesia are trying to resolve through talks under the auspices of the UN secretary-general. He first suggested resumption of diplomatic relations, but Lisbon ruled that out.

He then suggested the opening of interest sections in the two capitals. Indonesia accepted the proposal; Portugal rejected it.

In 1987, the UN secretary-general suggested a comprehensive, just and internationally acceptable solution: He would form a delegation of five or six countries that would go to Indonesia on a fact-finding mission to East Timor. They would make a thorough investigation of the situation in East Timor and submit a report to the secretary-general that would contain no recommendations. He would then submit the report to the UN General Assembly.

The assembly would be called into special session. A free, fair and open debate would take place on the report. Indonesia and its supporters would argue that decolonization had taken place in East Timor, that this reality should be accepted and that the issue should be removed from the UN agenda. Portugal and its supporters would marshal their arguments against that position. At the end of the debate, a vote would be taken, and both sides would have to abide by its result.

Indonesia accepted the proposal. Portugal turned it down. In 1991 there was an attempt to revive the plan. Again Portugal blocked it.

When Foreign Minister Ali Alatas went to the eighth round of the UN-sponsored talks with Portugal earlier this year, he was hoping to hear something more positive from Lisbon. Instead, Portugal rehashed a proposal that it had previously rejected and gave it an unreasonable

twist, making it impossible for Indonesia to accept.

Lisbon said it would agree to the creation of interest sections in the two capitals if Jakarta released East Timorese political prisoners. But the "political prisoners" in question were convicted of common crimes before Indonesian courts. Releasing them would undermine Indonesia's justice system.

Then the Portuguese foreign minister expressed his wish to travel to Indonesia to meet Jose Xanana Gusmao, an East Timorese convicted of common crimes as the leader of a separatist movement. This was an affront to Indonesia. A foreign minister of a country should go to another country to talk with its government, not to talk solely with a prisoner. Of course, Mr. Alatas rejected the suggestion.

Nonetheless, Indonesia continues to hope that the UN-sponsored talks on East Timor will soon make progress. A new government is now in place in Portugal, one that is at least looking for ways to deal with the problem instead of simply rejecting proposals.

Meanwhile, the all-inclusive dialogue between the East Timorese factions will go on trying to build goodwill. But that is all it can do. The solution can come only when the governments of Portugal and Indonesia negotiate with an equal measure of sincerity, instead of one trying to outsmart the other.

*The writer, currently ambassador to Greece, is a former director of information in the Indonesian Foreign Ministry. He contributed this comment to the Herald Tribune.*



## THE WORLD

# E. Timor ruffles Suharto

## Cool reception for Nobel laureate

By Ian MacKenzie  
Reuters

DILI, East Timor — Indonesian President Suharto snubbed Nobel Peace Prize winner Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo on Tuesday during a brief visit to troubled East Timor.

The Indonesian leader twice shook hands with Belo during a ceremony in the territory's capital of Dili but did not speak to him.

But Belo, an outspoken advocate of Timorese rights, was congratulated by some of Suharto's cabinet ministers and armed forces chief Gen. Feisal Tanjung. Asked if Suharto's coolness surprised him, Belo said, "I am surprised that I am congratulated by foreign people, but not from Indonesia."

Indonesia invaded East Timor in December 1975 and annexed it the following July in a move the United Nations has refused to recognize. Belo has served as peace-maker during sometimes brutal confrontations between the military and local activists.

Indonesia reacted with surprise to the Nobel announcement on Friday, tersely acknowledging the award to Belo but denouncing the joint award to Australia-based Jose Ramos-Horta, whom Foreign Minister Ali Alatas described as a "political adventurer."

Suharto and Belo sat side by side during a helicopter ride to allow Suharto to view a 90-foot statue of Jesus Christ erected on a headland overlooking Dili Bay. But Belo later said they discussed neither the Nobel award nor East Timor's political future. He said Suharto asked him about the church and his work among the youth in East Timor.



By Muchtar Zakaria, AP

**Few words:** Indonesian President Suharto, left, shakes hands with East Timor Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo during a visit Tuesday to Dili, East Timor's capital.

In his Dili speech, Suharto spoke of the need for unity and stressed religious tolerance. He did not mention the Nobel award.

He spoke in mainly-Catholic East Timor at a time when Christian churches have come under attack on the most populous island of Java.

The leader of the largest Muslim group in Indonesia on Tuesday blamed the attacks on religious intolerance. "The community should be re-oriented by its leaders towards tolerance and mutual understanding with other religions, to accept other religions and to be at home with plu-

ralism in religion," Abdurrahman Wahid, head of the 30-million strong Nahdlatul Ulama, said.

Suharto was making his third visit to East Timor since coming to power 30 years ago. He inaugurated six public works projects covering highway, road and irrigation construction.

In Sydney, where the other Nobel laureate lives in self-imposed exile, Ramos-Horta described the president's visit as a publicity stunt. Asked if he agreed with Indonesian criticism, he added, "They look at Ramos-Horta as their enemy, but for me (he is) a human being and we must respect that."

# East Timor: To Peaceful Self-Determination in Three Stages

By Jose Ramos-Horta

14T  
16-X-96

SYDNEY — Despite the oppression and suffering in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor since Indonesia's invasion nearly 21 years ago, I and others leading the movement that is resisting the Indonesian occupation continue to seek a peaceful settlement.

We have tried to convince the government of President Suharto in Jakarta that its intransigence on East Timor will only prolong conflict and instability in the region.

Aware of Indonesia's interests and the difficulties of abruptly reversing an illegal occupation, the National Council of Maubere Resistance, the umbrella organization of the pro-independence forces, which I represent abroad, has proposed a three-phase peace plan.

It is intended to assist the UN secretary-general, who has a mandate from the United Nations to find a solution to the East Timor conflict. The plan is in line with statements by East Timorese Catholic Bishop Carlos Belo. It could assist Jakarta in extricating itself from the East Timor quagmire.

*Phase 1 (one to two years):*

Talks between Indonesia and Portugal under the auspices of the UN secretary-general, with East Timorese participation, to end armed activities in East Timor; release political prisoners; reduce Indonesian military personnel and civil servants; remove armaments; expand activities by the International Committee of the Red Cross; carry out a population census; provide entry to UN specialized agencies working in the fields of public health, development and environmental protection; restore all basic human rights; remove re-

strictions on the Portuguese and Tetum languages; establish an independent human rights commission; appoint a resident representative of the UN secretary-general in East Timor.

In return, the East Timorese resistance forces would halt all hostilities against Indonesia and all acts that embarrass Jakarta.

*Phase 2 (five years from the end of Phase 1):*

This would be a transition stage of autonomy in which East Timorese would govern themselves democratically through their local institutions.

There would be a UN-supervised election for an Assembly.

Only East Timorese would be eligible to vote and be elected. The Assembly would elect an East Timorese governor.

Powers of the Assembly would include legislation on investment, property, immigration and foreign trade.

During Phase 2, all remaining Indonesian troops would withdraw, and there would be a further reduction in the number of Indonesian civil servants.

The territory would have no army of its own, but a police force, organized by the United Nations, would be placed under

the command of the governor.

Phase 2 could be extended by mutual consent between Indonesia and the East Timorese population expressing its views through a referendum.

*Phase 3: A self-determination referendum, under UN supervision, would be held within a year of the start of this phase. The population could choose between free association with Indonesia, integration into Indonesia or independence.*

I wrote personally to Mr. Suharto in March 1994 to give him an assurance that we would scrupulously respect any choice freely made by the majority of the East Timorese people.

We have tried repeatedly to open a dialogue with the Indonesian government on our peace plan. So far we have been ignored. Nonetheless, we remain open to talks.

It is time for Indonesia to show courage and start a constructive and sincere dialogue to resolve the East Timor conflict and redress past mistakes.

*The writer was awarded the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday, with Bishop Carlos Belo, for "work toward a just and peaceful solution" in East Timor. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.*

Independence  
15-X-96

# A prize shames the world into action

The Nobel award should end international complacency at the plight of East Timor, says Ian Linden

By awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Bishop Belo and José Ramos Horta, two key campaigners for justice in East Timor, the Nobel Committee has sent a strong signal that it is time to end the long betrayal of East Timor. But, as Indonesia's outraged response illustrated, it is not going to change hearts and minds in the Suharto regime.

In contrast to the destruction visited on Iraq after it annexed Kuwait, Indonesia invaded East Timor in December 1975 with impunity. Since then, and in the face of 10 UN resolutions calling for withdrawal and upholding East Timorese rights to self-determination, the Indonesian military has presided over the death by extra-judicial execution, war, famine and disease of some 200,000 East Timorese people.

Until now Indonesia has assumed that time is on its side, and that guerrillas fighting for independence could be wiped out. Encouraging some 100,000 Javanese settlers into East Timor's tiny population of about 850,000 has consolidated Indonesia's position.

The Vatican appointed Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo as apostolic administrator of Dili, the East Timorese capital, in May 1983 in the hope that he would not rock the boat. It was a miscalculation.

With growing skill the youthful Belo walked the tightrope of the East Timorese resistance's guerrilla war and Indonesian occupation. He inherited a church that provided both solace and a cultural space for the East Timorese. There was no doubt where his heart lay: in 1989 Belo wrote to the UN secre-

tary-general calling for a UN-supervised referendum on self-determination. He warned that East Timor was "dying as a people and as a nation". There was no reply.

It took the massacre of some 200 East Timorese civilians by Indonesian forces at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili in 1991 to help turn the tide of world opinion. The British journalist Max Stahl caught the slaughter on video and the film was broadcast worldwide to international outcry.

In 1994 the John Pilger/David Munro documentary *Death of a Nation* was shown on Central TV. A response line was jammed with callers until 3am the next morning. Timor had ceased to be a small unknown island in the Indonesian archipelago. It was a popular cause.

Against this background, the UN established talks between the old colonial power, Portugal, and Indonesia. After several rounds without much progress, the parties agreed to all-inclusive talks. The first meeting took place in June 1995. Despite manipulation by the Indonesian government, the wide range of Timorese represented reached a consensus statement, in large part due to bridge-building by Bishop Belo.

International pressure and reaction to repression within Indonesia are now beginning to make inroads. Indonesia's foreign minister, Ali Alatas, has called the Timor issue "gravel in Indonesia's shoe" hobbling his country's ambitions on the world stage.

The low-level guerrilla war has a corrosive Vietnam-style effect with secret night flights taking the Indonesian war dead

back to Jakarta. Although the nationalist guerrilla leader Xanana Gusmao was captured in 1992, in prison he threatens to assume the mantle of a Mandela.

The European Union adopted a Common Position on East Timor in January 1996, providing a basis for concerted action in defence of human rights and in favour of a peace process. In June the European Parliament called on all EU member states "to halt all military assistance and all arms sales to Indonesia".

These developments do not sit easily with the public position of the Foreign Office. Indonesia is an Asian tiger economy in the making, seen as a potentially vast market of 194 million people and a strategic linchpin in South-east Asia. It is a profligate purchaser of arms and concluded \$201m of arms sales with Britain between 1988 and 1992. In June 1993 British Aerospace was awarded a £500m contract for 24 Hawk fighter/trainers.

Those visiting the Foreign Office to advocate an arms embargo know the refrain by heart: concern about human rights ... impracticable to monitor regularly ... no evidence that Hawk aircraft are used for repression ... Indonesian government assurances ... need to consult our EU partners. But without the stick of an arms embargo and the carrot of enhanced international status for Indonesia, the future for East Timor looks grim.

The Nobel Prize adds three things to the picture. First, it enhances Bishop Belo's credentials as a mediator, a role that the UN wants him to play. Belo's mediation in the

East Timorese dialogue has already complemented UN involvement.

Second, it will strengthen the hand of Ramos Horta, the exiled leader of the East Timorese resistance, and perhaps revive the movement's peace proposal. This calls, within a two-year period, for a ceasefire, release of political prisoners and the reduction in number of Indonesian troops to 1,000. A referendum with independence as one option would be held after five years.

Finally, the prize highlights how East Timor is unfinished business from the period of decolonisation. It has turned the gravel in Mr Alatas's shoe into a very large stone indeed. There are some simple things his government can do to remove it: stop the arbitrary arrests, detention and torture of East Timorese; release political prisoners, support on-site human rights monitoring by the UN, and start negotiations with the East Timorese resistance, including Xanana Gusmao, backed by the UN.

Yet without more concerted action by the international community, Indonesia is unlikely to negotiate seriously before the Suharto regime departs the stage. External pressure is a prerequisite for progress in the faltering peace talks. The best means available, recommended by the European Parliament, is to halt arms sales to Indonesia now.

*The author is director of the Catholic Institute for International Relations, 190a New North Road, London N1 7BJ, which this week publishes 'East Timor: The Continuing Betrayal'.*



Island hero: Timor's Bishop Carlos Filipe Belo

## ASIA/PACIFIC

# Manila Bars Visit by Nobel Peace Laureate

*The Associated Press*

MANILA — The Philippine authorities on Monday barred a winner of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, Jose Ramos-Horta, from entering the country.

The ban stemmed from a directive by President Fidel Ramos denying entry to all foreigners who might disrupt the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting, Immigration Commissioner Edgar Mendoza said.

"We have no choice but to ban Horta and other foreigners whose presence here could endanger our national security," he said.

Mr. Ramos-Horta is a roving emissary of the East Timor resistance movement, which opposes the Indonesian military presence in the former Portuguese colony. He was named the joint winner of this year's Peace Prize with the Roman Catholic bishop of East Timor, Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo.

President Suharto of Indonesia is among 18 leaders scheduled to attend the economic summit meeting of the organization, known as APEC, beginning Nov. 25 in Manila.

Mr. Ramos-Horta had been scheduled to address the opening on Nov. 22

of the People's Forum on APEC, a gathering of 400 delegates from the Philippines and other countries, including the United States and Japan.

The forum opposes APEC's efforts to establish free trade in the region, contending that such a policy would hurt poorer countries whose industries cannot compete in the global market.

Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975 and annexed the territory in 1976. Human rights groups say Indonesian troops have tortured, beaten and killed civilians in a bid to stifle separatist aspirations.

Filipinos were divided on the ban on Mr. Ramos-Horta.

The speaker of the House of Representatives, Jose de Venecia, said that Mr. Ramos-Horta was welcome to visit the Philippines but not during the APEC meeting.

"In respect to President Suharto, we are requesting he come another time," Mr. de Venecia said.

J. V. Cruz, a columnist in the independent Manila Chronicle newspaper and a former diplomat, said Mr. Ramos-Horta should stay away "because his problems with Indonesia are none of our business."

## FOCUS ON ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

# APEC critics denounce Philippines

## Security moves for Nov. summit ignite firestorm

By Don Kirk  
Special for USA TODAY

MANILA — The Philippine government's refusal to grant a visa to Nobel peace prize winner Jose Ramos-Horta is turning into a cause celebre among groups opposed to next month's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

Critics including the nation's Catholic Bishops' Conference are protesting the exclusion of Ramos-Horta, co-winner of the prize along with Catholic Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo for their struggle for human rights for victims of Indonesian oppression in East Timor.

President Fidel Ramos, anxious for the APEC summit on Nov. 24-25 to showcase his country's economic progress, included Ramos-Horta in a general ban on the entry "of any foreigner who . . . may disturb these APEC meetings and activities."

Ramos' top security advisor, Jose Almonte, enraged APEC foes by declaring that Ramos-Horta "falls under that category" and "our assessment is it will cause embarrassment to the nation."



Ramos: Philippine president



Ramos-Horta: Nobel winner

Those remarks reflect not only the fear of the government that its foes will jeopardize security but also Ramos' desire not to embarrass Indonesian President Suharto, who might otherwise cancel plans to attend the summit.

Indonesia helped mediate talks that led to the signing of a peace accord between Manila and Muslim separatists.

Ramos insists it's against "our national interest" to allow Ramos-Horta in the Philippines but denies his presence would threaten national security.

He admits, however, security concerns, including the possibility that Islamic terrorists may seek revenge for Philippine cooperation with the FBI in breaking up a Pakistani group linked to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

"It is now acknowledged by President Clinton that the actions of the Philippine government may have prevented

the bombing of at least 10 airliners between the United States and the Philippines," said Ramos.

Philippine bishops argue that Ramos-Horta, far from inspiring terrorist activities, would be a force for peace if he were able to visit the country during APEC. He was to have been the keynote speaker at one of several forums for APEC critics before the summit.

Monsignor Pedro Quitorio of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, denounced the ban as "anti-democratic," but Almonte called Ramos-Horta "a political and security threat."

Ramos-Horta, who lives in Sydney, said he had "no intention of going to the Philippines to create a disturbance." Rather, he wanted "to engage in public forums to discuss a peace process with possible Philippine mediation."

He told reporters in Australia he viewed the ban as "silly" and was "amazed that an individual like me, without an army and navy behind me, can be considered a potential disturbance."

Authorities in this often violent society are taking no chances on security miscues at what they view as the biggest event in the country's history since the People Power Revolution that drove President Ferdinand Marcos from power in February 1986. More than 50,000 government troops reportedly are patrolling the countryside around Subic Bay, the former U.S. Navy base, where

the 18 Asia and Pacific leaders, including President Clinton, will hold some of their sessions.

So acute are security concerns that soldiers in some areas are forbidding farmers from harvesting their crops until after the summit. The government plans to issue special passes for anyone entering the city of Olongapo, surrounding the Subic Bay post, now a special industrial zone with factories and offices in the former U.S. Navy facilities.

Authorities have already notified thousands of workers in Olongapo not to go to their jobs in shops, hotels and other establishments during the summit. Instead, soldiers are being trained to replace them where needed.

The question of whether the government is overdoing the security is a topic of front page headlines and commentaries in the national papers.

Rafael Mariano, organizer of one of the conferences critical of APEC, decrying the ban on harvesting during the summit, asked, "What would the government want the farmers to do with their produce — abandon them and wallow in hunger?"

He and other critics charge that the benefits of the economic gains under Ramos are not trickling down to most of the nation's 70 million people.

The government does not ban such criticism, as long as the critics don't get in the way of the summit participants.



By Pat Roque, AP

Protesting APEC: Demonstrators show their opposition to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation during picketing in Manila.