

EAST TIMORThe population of East Timor

Amnesty International fears for the safety of the entire population of East Timor. Armed pro-Indonesian militias and Indonesian troops have complete control of the territory and are committing grave human rights violations with impunity. An unknown number of people have already been killed, thousands have fled to the hills, and tens of thousands have been forced at gunpoint to neighbouring West Timor by Indonesian soldiers. Amnesty International has already received reports of arrests and killings of East Timorese independence supporters who have been forcibly relocated to West Timor.

The only international observers left in East Timor are around 200 staff from the United Nations Assistance Mission to East Timor (UNAMET) and a handful of journalists, all of whom are under siege in the UNAMET compound in Dili. Their supplies of food and water are running out. Local human rights monitors were forced from the territory on Monday 6 September; the Indonesian military have ensured that no one is left to witness the atrocities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Indonesia invaded East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, in 1975, and has committed grave human rights violations there ever since, including extrajudicial killings, torture and "disappearances". The Indonesian occupation of the territory was never recognised by the United Nations. In January 1999, President Habibie of Indonesia announced that the people of East Timor could decide their own future. Indonesia, Portugal and the United Nations signed Tripartite Agreements on the future of East Timor in New York on 5 May. Under the Agreements, UNAMET was to organize a popular consultation process in which the East Timorese people would vote to accept or reject autonomy within Indonesia. The Indonesian authorities were mandated to ensure a secure environment in East Timor. The ballot took place on 30 August: the result was an overwhelming majority in favour of cutting ties with Indonesia. According to the Agreements, arrangements should now be made for the peaceful transfer of authority to the United Nations, during a transitional phase before full independence for East Timor. However, since the results were announced on 4 September, armed pro-Indonesian militias, working with Indonesian soldiers, have wreaked havoc throughout the territory, in open violation of the terms of the Agreements.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in your own language:

- expressing your horror at the situation in East Timor, and your fears for the safety of the entire population;
- noting that the United Nations is a party to the 5 May 1999 Agreements, and has an obligation to the East Timorese people, who, despite threats and intimidation, courageously exercised their right to self-determination by participating in the popular consultation on 30 August 1999;
- asking what, as a member state of the United Nations, your government is doing to protect the rights of the East Timorese people;
- urging your government to impose an immediate moratorium on all transfers to Indonesia of military, security and police equipment, weaponry, personnel or training which could be used by the army, police or militias to commit human rights violations. The moratorium should include all financial and logistical

support for such transfers, including spare parts and maintenance, licensed production, brokering and government-to-government agreements.

APPEALS TO:

Your President or Prime Minister

Your Foreign Minister

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 October 1999.