

The La'o Hamutuk Bulletin

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With this issue, the *La'o Hamutuk Bulletin* begins its third volume. Over the last two years, we have researched and explained some of the international institutions active in East Timor, and tried to make them more accountable to the people of this country. During the same period, the transition from United Nations rule to independence has developed, and East Timor will celebrate political independence on 20 May. Although there have been many problems, this is a remarkable achievement both for the East Timorese people and for the United Nations.

In this *Bulletin* we review two of the most important aspects of future life in East Timor: public safety and agriculture. Our lead article looks at CIVPOL – the international civilian police forces who have been in East Timor since before the 1999 referendum and will remain for the first few years of independence. Their relationships with the population and with the nascent East Timor Police Service have been rough, but there are lessons for the future of both East Timor and other UN missions.

East Timor's economy has always been primarily agricultural, and will continue to be so in the foreseeable future. Our second feature looks at the World Bank-managed Agricultural Service Centers, a program whose pilot programs are well underway and could play a key role in how farmers operate. In a related article, we look at some of the risks inherent in non-organic agricultural techniques, and some less dangerous, more sustainable alternatives.

Following some brief reports and news items, this *Bulletin* closes with an article and an editorial relating to past foreign military interventions in East Timor – one about U.S. support for the 1975 Indonesian invasion, and the other about Japan's occupation from 1942 to 1945. Although there has been no apology or closure for these crimes, both countries will have soldiers in again East Timor this year. ❖

An Assessment of the UN's Police Mission in East Timor

In the aftermath of the post-referendum violence committed by Indonesian military and their militias, East Timor was assisted by three types of international security forces. Initially, InterFET (International Force in East Timor) arrived. After 25 October 1999, a military Peacekeeping Force (PKF) and a United Nations Civilian Police Force (CIVPOL) were created. Over the next few months, contingents of these two groups started arriving in East Timor. The Peacekeeping Force arrived to protect the population from outgoing TNI-backed militias and to offer national defense, while CIVPOL came primarily to maintain law and order.

To date, the United Nations mission has had many disciplinary issues with its CIVPOL component. Some of these issues are endemic to the UN and stem from the flawed recruitment and training of CIVPOL. Others are directly related to the negligent and careless attitude exhibited by CIVPOL officers in East Timor. Over the last two years, East Timorese people have faced many problems with CIVPOL officers in East Timor, ranging from incompetence and irresponsibility to gross human rights violations (including rape).

In October 2001, Eirin Mobekk of King's College in London released a report called, "Policing Peace Operations: United Nations Civilian Police in East Timor". This article is based on information in Mobekk's report, as well as investigations done by *La'o Hamutuk* in the eastern region.

The police mission is comprised of two important parts. The first is the establishment and maintenance of law and order. The second is the creation of the East Timor Police Service (ETPS) (sometimes known as the Timor Lorosa'e Police Service). In late 1999 and early 2000, more than 1500 armed and

unarmed CIVPOL were deployed to East Timor. After East Timor's independence in May 2002, CIVPOL will continue under the command of a foreign Police Commissioner well after most of the international civilian component has gone. It is expected that all police college training and law and order duties will be handed over to the East Timor Police Service and its East Timorese Police Commissioner, Paulo Martins, in January 2004.

Currently there are about 1268 CIVPOL from 41 different countries in East Timor. They are fulfilling both components of the mandate described above. CIVPOL officers administer the police college in Dili where ETPS recruits are trained, and they share teaching responsibilities with Timorese instructors. In the maintenance of law and order, the command structure includes 13 District Command Centers and sub-stations in each district. In addition, there are two Rapid Response Units (RRU): the Portuguese GNR (Guarda Nacional de Republica) in Dili, and a Jordanian Special Police Force contingent in Baucau.

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La'o Hamutuk, The East Timor Institute for Reconstruction Monitoring and Analysis

P.O. Box 340, Dili, East Timor (via Darwin, Australia)

Mobile: +61(408)811373; Land phone: +670(390)325-013

Baucau office: +61(438)143724; lhbaucou@easttimor.minihub.org

Email: laohamutuk@easttimor.minihub.org Web: <http://www.etan.org/lh>

Both of these units perform “special duties” such as crowd control and public order management in their home countries, as well as here in East Timor.

Specific Problems

One of the most significant problems with CIVPOL has been the inconsistent and vague application of the concept of “community policing.” In both parts of the mandate – to maintain law and order, and to create the ETPS – a community policing model was planned. Essentially, community policing refers to a system of policing where the community and the police work together to maintain law and order, and to resolve disputes. In Western societies, two conditions are necessary for community policing to be effective: public education and public awareness outreach. Neither was applied effectively in post-conflict East Timor. Furthermore, many CIVPOL officers did not know what the term “community policing” meant or how to implement it. This problem was compounded by the fact that CIVPOL contracts vary from a few months to two years. Those on short contracts have little incentive to establish relationships with the communities in which they work. Furthermore, CIVPOL made no effort to work with local NGOs or to better understand some of the issues at play within the community. The lack of clarity with the concept of community policing, and the failure to work *with* communities was made more problematic by specific operational problems within CIVPOL.

Mobekk’s report outlines several specific deficiencies in CIVPOL’s ability to implement community policing, which have been substantiated by *La’o Hamutuk’s* investigations in the eastern region. These problems can be summarized as follows:

Lack of Effective Communication

Clearly, the ability to communicate with the population is an essential element of community policing. From the beginning, this was marred by the UN’s bad judgment. Notably, there were not enough translators for CIVPOL to use, making communication difficult. This was a problem in all districts, and resulted from two key factors. Firstly, international NGOs paid higher salaries, so translators preferred to work for them; secondly, there were not enough translators to begin with and once civil registration started in March 2001, the UN transferred most translators to the registration section, leaving CIVPOL with hardly any translators. This lack of translators meant widespread confusion. In one instance CIVPOL arrested the victim rather than the perpetrator of a crime; in another case, CIVPOL sat in their car watching a crime being committed and did nothing because they did not have anyone who could speak Indonesian, Tetum or any other local language. These examples are not isolated incidents, but occurred frequently around the country and are concrete evidence of flaws within CIVPOL approach to community policing. Another related problem was the lack of CIVPOL officers with language ability in Indonesian or Portuguese. If more attention had been paid to the recruitment of these officers, the lack of translators may have been less of a problem. Indeed, because the language of the UNTAET mission is English, preference was given to those Officers with English language ability. This also applied to the recruitment of ETPS, where Timorese applicants who spoke English were given preference.

In Baucau, *La’o Hamutuk* spoke with several people who also pointed to the problems caused by lack of translators. Often when conducting interviews with victims, CIVPOL used only English. When CIVPOL did use a translator, the translation was so poor that people felt confused about what was be-

ing discussed. Many times, they were unsure about how to proceed because CIVPOL did not really seem to understand the nature of the problem. This is related to another point raised in the Mobekk report: the lack of cultural awareness.

Lack of cultural and political understanding

If police are to work effectively with the community, they must understand the culture in which the community lives. Initially, the UN did not provide enough training for CIVPOL about the history, culture and society of East Timor. Many CIVPOL officers confirmed that the one-week training given by the UN did not give them a clear understanding of East Timor. Many had no social context in which to put their policing operations and this led to a lack of communication about appropriate forms of behavior in the community, especially in relation to conduct with East Timorese women. This seems like a glaring omission on the part of the UN trainers.

During Indonesia’s violent occupation of East Timor, police under Indonesian military command committed some of the worst atrocities and made the people distrustful of police in general. Therefore, it would seem essential that CIVPOL be educated about the political history of East Timor. By demonstrating a sensitive understanding of Timorese culture, CIVPOL would have been much more likely to earn the trust of the people.

In Baucau, many people complain that the police often demonstrate no cultural understanding of East Timor, nor any awareness of the community’s previous history, contributing to CIVPOL’s inability to investigate and resolve cases. People in Baucau were aware that CIVPOL were not always going to use East Timorese traditional law, but they felt that an understanding of East Timorese culture would have helped CIVPOL implement justice in an objective and fair way. For example, sometimes CIVPOL let the *liurai* handle cases, and at other times CIVPOL attempted to handle the cases themselves. This was inconsistent, and often people in Baucau were not sure whether their case would be resolved by CIVPOL or traditional methods. Local NGOs in Baucau stated that better coordination and communication between the police and the community would have overcome some of this misunderstanding.

In Viqueque, a fight between two high school students on 10 March 2001 escalated over three days to two murders and large-scale rioting that left 59 houses burned and more than 400 people homeless. Although the violence stemmed from long-term rivalries between martial arts groups from different parts of the district, effective police action could have controlled the situation. Many problems were cited by NGO observers and ETPS officers, including poor CIVPOL coordination and understanding of the situation, lack of authority or reliance on local ETPS, police failure to intervene effectively to disperse rock-throwing groups and to prevent one gang from coming into town, slow response of the Baucau-based Jordanian Rapid Response Unit (which arrived only after the riots had ended), and a lack of language skills and interpretation (many translators fled for fear that police could not protect them).

Lack of a clear law

The rules concerning which laws to use have been confusing and inadequate. When CIVPOL Officers arrived in East Timor, they were faced with three operating laws: 1) the Indonesian Penal Code (which has been applied by UNTAET to East Timor except where it contradicts international human rights standards); 2) UN Regulations, including Transitional Rules of Criminal Procedure and; 3) a broad set of international laws including the Convention on the Elimination of all



Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The officers received no training on the substance of these laws and did not know which of these laws to apply at any given time. Because of this lack of clarity CIVPOL sometimes did nothing, rather than take the risk of applying the wrong law. Additionally, CIVPOL officers sometimes used *adat* (traditional) law, but once again, there was no consistency in this. *Adat* was even used when it was clearly inadequate, such as in a rape case in a district where the perpetrator was made to give the victim's family nine water buffaloes. CIVPOL did not follow up the case under any other law (CIVPOL could have investigated the incident as a crime under Indonesian Law, and processed it under UNTAET's Transitional Rules of Criminal Procedure). Moreover, CIVPOL were present at the ceremony, thereby sending a message to the women of East Timor that cases of rape were not going to be officially investigated by CIVPOL.

In Baucau, the same confusion exists. People are concerned that they have not been told which laws CIVPOL will follow at any one time. The issue here is not so much that there are three legal systems operating, but that neither CIVPOL nor the population are aware when each of them applies. The *ad hoc* application of *adat* was also a problem, as people in Baucau felt that there are inherent injustices in the system and the way it is applied.

The problems of communication, cultural sensitivity, and application of laws has meant that many of the crimes that have been pursued have not yet been resolved. In Baucau, CIVPOL have failed to resolve two important criminal cases due to the problems cited above. The first case concerns an attack on Padre Crispin in Gariwari district on 19 December, 2000. In another case, a Muslim Mosque was burnt on 6 March 2001. Several local NGOs have followed these cases and feel the cases could have been resolved if the police had better relations with the community.

Conclusion

Many of these problems stem from lack of training and resources, but also from a lack of UN commitment to set and maintain standards of policing. The newly appointed Canadian CIVPOL Commissioner, Peter Miller, acknowledges the problems and has been working to instigate change since he arrived in East Timor in November 2001. He believes that the UN needs to be more committed to training CIVPOL *before* their deployment, and has noted some improvements in this area. Such training would put emphasis on language and communication, cultural awareness and laws. With this training and commitment some of the incidents revealed in this report may have been averted. In addition, Commissioner Miller feels the UN should be more diligent in setting and maintaining standards among its CIVPOL officers. One way this could be achieved would be if the UN assessed CIVPOL officers' capabilities before they were deployed. Too often, problems with contingents are identified once they arrive in East Timor and then, because of political and financial reasons, they generally end up staying through their contract, and are often deployed on subsequent UN missions. However things are hopefully changing, with Commissioner Miller recently repatriating several newly arrived CIVPOL officers because they did not meet minimum competency standards. Additionally, the UN has started using assessment teams to pre-screen candidates, so future police operations may not face similar problems.

The people of East Timor need an accountable and just police force, both now and in the future. This requires a competent police force, able to set and operate under a high standard. This is not yet the case in East Timor. The example set by many CIVPOL officers has not only discouraged civilians on the process of law and order, it has also provided a negative image for the emerging ETPS. When CIVPOL arrived here, they came

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An Assessment of Pilot Agricultural Service Centers in East Timor

East Timor, under the governance of the UN, faces many challenges in reconstructing the nation following the violence and destruction inflicted by the pro-Indonesia militias and the Indonesian military in 1999. Almost 70% of the physical infrastructure was destroyed, including significant portions of the agricultural sector. Farming facilities, such as food processing machinery, livestock, food stocks, seeds, and farmers' houses were destroyed. Rural markets are not operating well relative to pre-referendum levels, resulting in little access to essentials such as fertilizers, pesticides, seeds and veterinary medicines.

In November 1999 the World Bank, UNTAET, and CNRT representatives conducted a Joint Assessment Mission which identified emergency reconstruction priorities for East Timor, one of which was the rehabilitation and development of the agricultural sector. This assessment outlined the first phase of the Agriculture Rehabilitation Program, known as ARPI, which is currently ongoing. In March and April 2001, a Joint Agriculture Donor's Mission formulated a further assistance plan for the agricultural sector. The recommendations of this Donor's Mission were incorporated into the second phase of the Agriculture Rehabilitation Program, ARP II, due to start in mid 2002. This article will provide an update of the main objectives of the Agriculture Rehabilitation Project and will provide details of one of its specific components – the Pilot Agricultural Service Centers (PASCs).

La'o Hamutuk investigations in 2000 discovered serious flaws with the proposed plan. These included a lack of consultation with the community about the development of the agricultural sector (see *La'o Hamutuk Bulletin* Volume 1, No. 4). Although the World Bank has since published its outline for the second phase of the ARP, which details the "lessons learnt" from the first phase ARP, there continue to be problems in the World Bank's approach to the agricultural sector. Chief amongst these is the push to implement a "user pays" economy, where farmers pay market prices for goods and services (tractors, fertilizers and seeds), and sell their produce directly to the market (consumers and traders).

One role of the World Bank under the current UN transitional government is to manage funds from international donors through the Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET) and contribute to certain projects from its own funds (see *La'o Hamutuk Bulletin* Volume 1, No. 4). The rehabilitation of the agricultural sector is one of the larger World Bank-supervised projects in East Timor. International staff work with East Timorese staff in the East Timor Public Administration's (ETPA) Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in order to implement the aims of the project.

Based on the results of the 1999 Joint Assessment Mission, a four-point framework for the ARP was identified:

- The short-term reconstruction priorities focus on improving food security, increasing agricultural production, and promoting rural growth.
- The rehabilitation phase focuses on restoration of lost assets, supplies, infrastructure and equipment.
- The transition phase will establish building blocks for the sustainable development of the sector.
- The sustainable development phase will focus on the long-term sustainability of the agricultural sector.

The total budget for the ARP is US\$17.8 million from TFET, with small additional contributions from the Consolidated Fund for East Timor (CFET). In addition, various support sections within the ETPA's Ministry of Agriculture, such as the mapping unit, are funded through direct bilateral aid from countries such as Australia and Japan. To achieve the four-point plan detailed above, two phases of ARP have been proposed. The first phase, costing \$5.42 million, will finish in June 2002 and engages in asset restoration (buffaloes and chicks), irrigation and road rehabilitation, and PASC initiation.

The second ARP began in November 2001 and will run until December 2003. It has a total budget of \$8.9 million, comprising \$8 million from TFET, and \$0.9 million from CFET. (See table below for details.)

Based on World Bank assessments of the first phase of ARP, certain lessons have been learnt, and will be incorporated into this next phase. Firstly, it was discovered that distributing a sufficient number of chicks, cattle and hand-tools was difficult and this often left many people empty-handed or disappointed with what they received, contributing to inequality among farmers. Although the list of beneficiaries was compiled after extensive consultation between farmers, the District Agricultural Officer, women's groups and church groups, the ultimate decisions about distribution were made in Dili, far from where the farmers lived. There were also problems with the quality of hand tools distributed, with many of them breaking after only minimal use.

Secondly, there were problems with the definition of poverty arrived at by the World Bank and the Ministry (then Department) of Agriculture. Under guidelines agreed upon by these two institutions, farmers became eligible for compensation only if their buffaloes and cattle had been destroyed during the September 1999 violence. This meant that those farmers who had little or no livestock under the Indonesian occupation have remained desperately poor under UNTAET. Finally, significant problems were found to exist with the PASCs.

Agriculture Rehabilitation Project – Phase 2 (ARPII)		
Activity	Details	Allocated (US\$)
Pilot participatory development and natural resource management	Selection of pilot villages, applied training, facilitation of community proposals and grants.	\$0.9 million
Rapid infrastructure rehabilitation	Community based irrigation, rehabilitation, community based rehabilitation of farm-market access roads, establishment of Water User Association, irrigation training	\$2.7 million
Services to Farmers	Creating sustainable animal health services, pilot agricultural service centers (PASCs)	\$3.1 million
Project Management	Policy and strategy development, project management	\$2.2 million

The inception of the PASCs was one component of ARP I; the Agricultural Service Centers are just now being implemented. According to the assessments of the first phase of the APR, the Ministry (then Department) of Agriculture encountered many problems in the initial stages of creating the PASCs. Some of these relate to the cultural and historical environment in East Timor's farming community, and others to the design and method of implementation of the PASCs themselves.

Pilot Agricultural Service Centers

PASCs (Pilot Agricultural Service Centers) are a relatively new approach to agricultural development suggested by the World Bank, but implemented by ETPA's Ministry of Agriculture. The concept is funded by the World Bank and implemented

by foreign experts who have worked on similar projects in countries such as Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Tajikistan and Zambia. The ARP information brochure describes PASCs in the following way: "The Pilot Agricultural Service Center is not a Project; it is a commercial enterprise. It is a business designed to make money or to make a profit. It can provide goods, supplies and services demanded by farmers at full cost recovery." The program consists of farmers in a particular district forming a commercial business, called a PASC. The company is initially funded by World Bank managed TFET funds, but will eventually have to become a self-sustaining business. PASCs rely on a system of non-subsidized agriculture, where the farmers operate within a free-market system, selling their produce for market value. In addition, the PASC is designed to "own" and rent out the equipment that farmers need, such as tractors, fertilizers and veterinary services.

An Interim Board of Directors, consisting of representatives from the Church, women's groups, civil society, traditional leaders, the business community, and from each of the sub-districts, heads each PASC. The District Agricultural Officer also sits on the Board. A manager oversees the day-to-day organization of the PASC while an accountant maintains the financial details, and a marketer handles the distribution. These people are Timorese, and must come from the community in which the PASC is located. To assist with the initial stages of operation, an international advisor has been appointed to the Bobonaro PASC. The advisor will provide similar assistance to the PASCs in other districts as required. All of these appointments are made by the Ministry of Agriculture, but must be approved by the World Bank (see box for salary details of the Bobonaro PASC). The "members" of the PASC consist of the executive board (manager, accountant and marketer), members (farmers who have registered) and an adviser (foreign expert). For a PASC to be operational, it must have a minimum membership of 3,500 farmers. Membership is free and open to anyone.

The services provided by the PASC are not free and all members have to pay for the fertilizer they use or the tractor they

borrow. The price of each service is determined by the PASC Board and therefore, may vary from district to district.

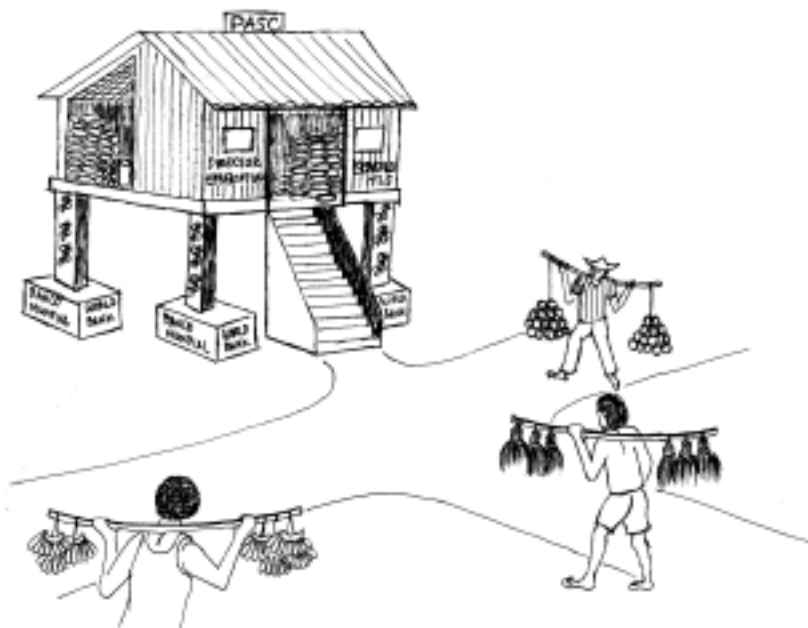
The World Bank has proposed six Agricultural Service Centers for East Timor, but to date only three (Bobonaro, Aileu and Viqueque) have set up operations. Initially 10 districts were targeted as potential PASC locations, and were assigned specific PASC "set-up" activities. The District Agricultural Officer organized subdistrict and district focus groups to assist the farmers in these "set-up" activities. After an assessment was made of each of the districts' activities, Bobonaro, Viqueque and Aileu appeared most suitable for PASC implementation. Three other Agricultural Service Centers will be established as soon as these PASCs have been assessed (and modified as necessary), perhaps in 2003.

According to the international PASC advisor within the ETPA Ministry of Agriculture, the process of setting up PASCs was participatory at all levels. Initially the District Agricultural Officer formed sub-district focus groups to meet with farmers. Within this stage, the concept and structure of PASCs was explained to the farmers, who then decide whether to become members. Once the minimum membership of 3,500 farmers had been achieved, the Interim Board of Directors was put in place by the members and the Ministry of Agriculture. The focus groups

then helped farmers identify which crops they would like to grow, and which particular services (tractors, hand tools, seeds, fertilizers) they would need. The farmers at the sub-district level then put together a business plan for their PASC, and sent it to the Interim Board of Directors. The Board then attempted to harmonize the various plans it had received from each sub-district. Once it had done this, it sent the final proposal to the PASC Office in the Ministry of Agriculture in Dili. The Office then assessed the viability of the project. If it was deemed viable, the proposal was sent to the World Bank for approval. If the Office felt there were problems in the proposal, it was referred to consultants in the World Bank, who would travel to the district and discuss amendments to the plan. Once the District Board, the World Bank and the Ministry of Agriculture had approved the proposal, the PASC was implemented, and the manager and accountant hired. According to the international advisor in the Ministry of Agriculture, proposals were translated into an appropriate language so that members of the PASC could understand the structure.

Problems

The main problem with PASCs can be traced back to the World Bank's implementation of a market economy in a sector that has little experience of this form of exchange. Traditionally, East Timorese farmers have always lived outside a monetized economy, using non-currency forms of exchange, such as bartering. In addition, given their history with Portuguese colonization and Indonesian occupation, East Timorese farm-



Maliana PASC, Bobonaro

The PASC in Maliana is concentrated on rice production for the domestic market and has been funded with an initial \$350,000 from TFET. This money will finance the following activities:

- √ Fertilizer, seeds and tools (\$50,000)
- √ Building an office (\$10,000)
- √ Transportation (\$100,000)

The salary of the Maliana PASC Manager will be \$300 per month, the accountant \$85 per month, and the marketer \$75. Salaries for PASC staff are set according to their qualifications and experience.

Aileu and Viqueque PASCs

The PASC in Viqueque will concentrate on coconut and candlenut, and is also funded by an initial TFET grant of \$350,000. The PASC in Aileu will concentrate on coffee production and is funded by a TFET grant of \$80,000. Both of these PASCs will also engage in the sales and distribution of agricultural tools. To date, no further details of these two PASCs have been released. It is unclear why certain PASCs garner more initial funding. When questioned about this, the international advisor at the Ministry of Agriculture stated that budgets were sometimes amended, but that he felt confident that PASCs with smaller initial funding would be able to receive sufficient grants to complete their activities from other sources within the ARP budget.

ers are, justifiably, risk-averse. This means that farmers are unlikely to embrace an untried concept that has been introduced and implemented by foreigners. In combination, these factors bring into question the wisdom of introducing the PASC program in East Timor.

PASCs are run as businesses because of the World Bank's explicit free-market policies. This compromises the PASCs ability to assist the farmers. For example, a farmer may come to a PASC, hoping to sell his/her surplus of rice. The PASC will sell the farmer's rice to the market, but the PASC also needs cover its expenses and make its own profit, so there will be a difference between the buying price and the selling price. If the PASC wants to make a lot of profit, the price that the PASC buys the rice for will be much lower than the price that the PASC sells the rice at. The PASC will keep the money gained from the difference in these prices. The farmers will gain income from selling their surplus, but this income is determined by the market and by the need of the PASC to ensure profitable operations. Thus, the farmers' needs are secondary to the PASCs objective of covering its costs and maintaining (or increasing) its profit margin. Although the farmer is not obligated to sell his/her surplus to the PASC, government agricultural infrastructure and markets are geared towards supporting the PASCs, thus potentially diminishing farmers' opportunities to sell to other sources. As the PASC's profits increase, what happens to the farmers?

Theoretically, the farmers all "own" the PASC; any profit that the PASC makes belongs to the farmers themselves. This money could be used for any number of things – it could be paid to the farmers as a form of income or it could be used to build a new crop storage facility that all the farmers can use. However, the PASCs have not yet determined the mechanism for distributing profits. A transparent and democratic decision-making mechanism about the disbursement of this money needs to be created in order to ensure that the benefits actually translate back to the farmers. The lack of a clear plan of disbursement is highly problematic and could lead to farmers looking like they have increased their income, when in actuality there has been no significant improvement in their lives.

For example, a PASC could make a profit in a given year. According to PASC guidelines, this money belongs to all PASC members, meaning the farmers. However, if there is no clear method of ensuring that each farmer is able to access this money, then this "profit" exists only on paper, and not in the farmers hands.

Aside from the debatable value of the PASCs, there are also a number of problems with their implementation. The PASC structure is confusing and many questions remain unresolved. For example, why does one PASC receive more World Bank funding than another? What measures are being taken to ensure that the PASCs are run in an inclusive and accountable way? The ARP information brochure states that "membership of the PASC is open to the general population engaged in agriculture." However, problems have been reported in one sub-district where political alliances have influenced the focus group to discriminate against certain members of the community who wanted to join the PASC. Additionally, PASCs are highly centralized, generally existing in the main town of a district. This means that members who live close to the Center are able to participate in the activities of the PASC much more easily than those in outlying subdistricts.

According to a former advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture, there is also a problem with the production and storage of crop surpluses. The selling of surpluses is one of the primary ways a PASC can make a profit, and so is necessary for its financial viability. After the destruction in September 1999, it has been difficult for farmers to meet even their basic requirements for food. Having to produce crops for sale, in order to ensure the financial success of "their" PASC, puts extra burden on an already overworked sector of society. However, even if surpluses have been achieved, it is difficult to adequately store and transport the produce to market. The Advisor noted that, in the past, surplus rice had been eaten by rats due to improper storage facilities.

This investigation has revealed that there are many questions around the suitability of PASC implementation in East Timor. While the World Bank has spent considerable money to attempt to rehabilitate one of the most important sectors in East Timor, their vision of this rehabilitation needs to be questioned. The cultural and economic aspects of instituting a "user pays" system in a non-monetized environment, combined with poor implementation of the system, does not bode well for the sustainability of the PASC structure. In addition, there is a lack of clarity on how farmers are able to increase their wealth in a tangible and accessible way. Most importantly, under the PASC system the farmer's livelihoods become extremely vulnerable to market prices, the quality of storage facilities and the ability of the PASC to adequately transport surplus produce. If market prices are low, rats eat the surplus produce, or there is insufficient transport, it is the farmer, not the corporate entity known as a "PASC," who bears the burden of these losses. ❖

Sustainable Agriculture in Timor Lorosa'e

By Eugenio Fatima Lemos

Agriculture is extremely important to human existence, as everyone in the world needs food. Today, as the world's population continues to grow, the world's natural resources are being depleted. Mindless exploitation of the land for immediate desires has separated us from our true selves.

The largest and wealthiest nations use their power to develop profit-making, private businesses. They use modern technology to conduct large-scale animal and produce farming, and this technology often has a negative impact on the environment. These companies are concerned about their profits, and so try to produce quickly and reach the largest market. With these short-sighted ambitions, they often do more harm than good.

Cases such as this are starting to occur in East Timor. After the extreme destruction and looting of the country's land and wealth by the Indonesian military and their militia, people are now concerned with the immediately pressing question of how to quickly produce enough food to sustain East Timor's 800,000 people. Too often, we are not so concerned about whether these methods are sustainable. During Indonesia's occupation, many farmers were using very expensive equipment that they could not produce or afford, such as tractors, chemical fertilizers, hybrid seeds, pesticides and other chemical products. Our farmers have come to depend on these things. When non-governmental organizations go to base communities to speak with farmers about agricultural issues, the farmers always state their greatest difficulty as lack of tractors, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides. The Department of Agriculture within the transitional government, with assistance from the World Bank, has imported these things without studying traditional agricultural methods, the condition of the land and water, or the topography of East Timor. This has created a serious dependency that will last past the UN's transitional mission in East Timor.

On the one hand, we must be grateful for the assistance

they have provided, but on the other hand, their methods have not given our people what they need to be truly self-sufficient. The tractors and hand tools they have given us are expensive to maintain and replace when they break down. The hybrid seeds that we are asked to plant will not provide for us in the next harvest. Although they yield more, hybrid seeds only produce one crop. Next year, we will have to buy more seeds. Like it or not, this is the current situation we face in East Timor.

UNTAET and various international organizations continue to assist us, but we do not know where we will find assistance once we are a fully independent country. Will our government have to borrow money from the international community in order to buy this kind of equipment? We all know that East Timor has a lot of natural resources, including gas, oil, marble, but these things will one day be used up. Because agriculture is a basic resource for us, and because many other resources are non-renewable, we need to maintain and plan the use of our resources. Starting now, we must think carefully about our future agricultural system and how it can take into good consideration our culture, the condition of the land and water, as well as East Timor's climate and topography. This system must be sustainable. If not, we will quickly destroy our richest land, the quality of our water, and we will be dependent on others, a situation that has happened in many other countries in the world. If we are not careful with the resources we now have, our grandchildren may only know of the richness of our land from stories.

We must start by understanding the condition of our land and by identifying the rich resources we have (not only oil and gas), such as:

Natural Resources

East Timor has many natural resources that we can use in animal husbandry and crop agriculture. We have large expanses of rich agricultural land, forests, water sources, a large

Comparison of Agricultural Methods			
Hi-technology/ Inorganic	Effects	Traditional/ Organic	Effects
Tractor	Faster, but expensive to buy, needs gas and oil to run, requires maintenance, and drivers must be trained to safely operate them.	Water buffalo	Slow, but eats grass, doesn't tend to break down, produce their own offspring, manure makes the land rich.
Chemical fertilizers	Expensive to buy, harmful effects on the environment and the quality of water.	Manure	Made from local resources and buffalo waste, no harmful effects on land and the environment.
Chemical pesticides	Expensive to buy, harmful effects on the environment and on the quality of water.	Organic pesticides	Can be made at no cost from certain leaves and roots.
Hybrid seeds	More yield but expensive, harmful effects on local seeds, more susceptible to disease, do not reproduce their seeds.	Local seeds	Takes time but can be gathered without cost, less susceptible to disease, reproduce their seeds.
Technically skilled people	Bring knowledge of modern techniques but cost a lot of money and do not work with farmers on information sharing.	Small Farmer	Does not have knowledge of modern technologies, practically trained without lengthy training.

variety of animals and fish, and a wealth of fruits and other plants. How will we manage these resources so that all of our people may always have enough to eat? We can make our own fertilizers from animal waste mixed with grass and leaves; we can also make our own organic pesticides from certain leaves and roots put together into a mixture that can kill the eggs of pests that eat our plants. There are many options if we decide to try them.

Human Resources

We have people, and while most do not have a lot of formal education, we must recognize the great knowledge they do have. Our farmers have lived on their land for a long time, and know more about that land and have more practical knowledge than most people with university degrees. While we need to recognize the wealth of knowledge we already have, we should also build a stronger pool of trained scientists. And we must build networks between farmers in rural areas of East Timor and these technically skilled people so that they can learn from one another.

Climate

We have a very good climate, with two clear seasons: the dry and rainy seasons. Our climate is different from nations that have four seasons, and we must start developing our agriculture so that we are able to harvest all year round, even in the dry season. Otherwise, we will have to wait for the rainy season to come before we start to plant our crops such as corn, cassava, squash and pumpkin.

Topography

East Timor has many high hills and mountains. We must look for methods to protect them from erosion. In our agricultural work, the use of chemicals, the burning of the land, and the clearing of wood, and unrestricted hunting can contribute to erosion problems. Big rains will carry much of the land down the hills and over time, our hills will be flattened out and lost.

Given our topography, we find that equipment like tractors are very difficult to use on the slopes; they are designed for flat land. Also, when we use chemical products on the land, there is often a negative impact on the environment. These chemicals do not only remain in the land, but also affect our clean water sources; they flow into our rivers, water sources, wells, and finally into our ocean.

When we use chemicals on our agricultural land, the land becomes leached and barren. Chemical pesticides also kill the insects that keep the ecosystem in balance. In East Timor, we do not want a situation where we will need to buy our water in the supermarket. Therefore, we must protect our water sources, understanding that chemicals in our water will come back us and to our children and future generations. Like a chain reaction, what we do to the land will come back to haunt us.

There are many reasons why inorganic agriculture and equipment is used. Farms that use pesticides and machines can often produce much larger quantities of food, and they can do so quickly. Also, fewer people, animals and strength are required to run a farm using machinery. Finally, farms that use hybrid seeds and pesticides are not so dependent on the weather and insects for their livelihood. However, all of these things have their negative effects and need to be paid for. To do this, East Timor may need to borrow money. Do we want to start our life as a nation in debt, or as a nation that can sustain itself and feed people from our own resources? Food produced by organic agriculture is more sustainable, and often, the produce is of much higher quality. We must also think of the cost to our health, and to our land's health. We should not accept these machines and pesticides uncritically, thinking only of the short term. We must always think carefully about the effects of our methods on the land, the water and on ourselves. ❖

Eugenio Fatima Lemos (Ego) works with Permaculture Timor Lorosa'e, a local organization that promotes sustainable agriculture.

Researcher wanted

La'ó Hamutuk is seeking an international staff member with the following qualifications:

- Solid knowledge of East Timor's history and current situation
- Experienced researcher in the areas of social justice, politics, economics and related areas
- Good writing skills
- Excellent in English, Indonesian and/or Tetum.
- Commitment to work with *La'ó Hamutuk* in East Timor for at least one year.

Women are especially encouraged to apply, and people from the United States are unlikely to be considered. The position is available immediately. Send CV, writing sample and references to *La'ó Hamutuk*, PO Box 340, Dili East Timor or email laohamutuk@easttimor.minihub.org.

Who is La'ó Hamutuk?

East Timorese staff: Inês Martins, Thomas (Ató) Freitas, Mericio (Akara) Juvenal, Adriano Nascimento, Jesuina (Delly) Soares Cabral

International staff: Pamela Sexton, Vijaya Joshi, Charles Scheiner, Andrew de Sousa

Drawings for this *Bulletin*: Sebastião Pedro da Silva

Translation for this *Bulletin*: José M.C. Belo, Hilmar Farid, Djoni Ferdiwijaya

Executive board: Sr. Maria Dias, Joseph Nevins, Nuno Rodrigues, João Sarmento, Aderito de Jesus Soares, Carolina Maria Do Rosario

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In Brief. . .

On 7 December 2001, national NGOs, international NGOs and victims' families commemorated Invasion Day, the day that Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975, in Fransisco Borax park in Dili. These commemorations included speeches, theatre, a photo display, laying flowers in Dili port and showing films on East Timor's struggle. In the gathering, victims' families called to bring to justice those involved in the campaign of terror, torture, rape and killing. Mrs. Domingas Pereira, a representative of the victims' families, appealed to the East Timorese government to make justice a priority because "there has not been justice yet" in East Timor. "We need justice because we lost our families in this war."

On 10 December 2001 (International Human Rights Day) at the Canossian Sisters Seminary in Becora, Dili, a dialogue took place between Deputy Transitional Administrator Dennis McNamara, Vice-Minister of Justice Domingos Sarmiento, Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation spokesperson Jacinto Alves and around two hundred families of victims from 1999. The victims' families asked UNTAET and, in particular, the Serious Crimes Unit to pursue justice cases in East Timor. Many of them requested the establishment of an international tribunal.

On 12 December 2001 the Constituent Assembly voted not to include "sexual orientation" in Article 16 of the Constitution, an article which prohibits discrimination. As adopted, the article reads "No one shall be discriminated against on grounds of color, race, gender, marital status, ethnic origin, social or economic status, political or ideological conviction, religion, education, and physical or mental condition." Milena Pires (PSD), Mariano Sabino (PD), Francisco Branco (Fretilin) and Aderito Soares (Fretilin) were some of the most outspoken advocates of including "sexual orientation." However, 52 of the 88 members of the Constituent Assembly voted against including the term. One of the more vocal opponents was João Carrascalão (UDT), who referred to homosexuality as a "sickness" and an "anomaly," and argued that including the term would create "social chaos." Another deputy claimed that it was not necessary to include the term because "homosexuals are only in other places; in East Timor there are none."

La'ó Hamutuk comment: *East Timor must protect everyone's human rights. The future government should enact legislation that clearly and strongly prohibits discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or any other social, economic or religious categorization.*

From 13-15 January 2002, close to 20 East Timorese organizations met together to strengthen and formalize the work of the Dai Popular. Last year, eleven individuals from local NGOs spent a month in Brazil studying social movements and popular education in Brazil. "Popular education" refers to a philosophy of community organizing in which all people are both teachers and students, working together for social justice and freedom from exploitation. From this experience in Brazil, the group created the East Timorese Network of Popular Educators, referred to in Tetum as the "Dai Popular". At the January meeting, they discussed the principles of popular education as well as concrete strategies to build community literacy, health and economic programs that benefit people at the grassroots, including literacy clinics,

community cooperatives, the development of traditional medicine and eco-tourism. For the coming year, the Dai Popular has three main objectives: 1) to establish a resource center and secretariat; 2) to facilitate exchanges between member organizations that are doing popular education work throughout East Timor; and 3) to facilitate exchanges between East Timorese and organizations in other countries related to popular education.

On 8 January, UNTAET Chief of Staff Nagalingam Parameswaran (Param) resigned, two days before his contract expired (it had not been renewed). Param, a Malaysian diplomat, was UNTAET's third-ranking civilian. *La'ó Hamutuk* and others have criticized his soft approach to Indonesia and his collegial relationship with militia leaders and TNI officials, particularly on issues of refugee return and justice. The outgoing diplomat did not go quietly, leveling charges of racism against UNTAET (which he called 'a "white" mission, an Eastern mission with a Western face') in a bitter letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Although UNTAET and East Timorese leaders strongly denied his charges of racism, which mostly concerned the composition of the top levels of the mission, they also defended their former colleague's performance.

Residents near the UNTAET Transport/Logistics center in Mascarenas, Dili are concerned about motor oil and refuse seeping into the drainage canals nearby. **In early January, a steady stream of motor oil turned the canal that runs along the fence in central Dili into a black toxic mess, spotted with discarded oil filters.** Meliana Luruk, a nearby resident, complained that the smell was terrible and made her sick to her stomach, while another resident, Francisco Freitas Moreira, worried that the oil will contaminate the land nearby, rendering it unsuitable for planting corn. Heavy rains carry the sludge through the Mascarenas's drainage system, contaminating the canals along the way. Residents voiced particular worries about the oil washing into the ocean about a kilometer away and damaging the ocean environment.

UNTAET recommends that the public store their used engine oil until there is a proper system of disposal set up. When *La'ó Hamutuk* contacted UNTAET Transport in mid-January about the matter, we were informed that a private company collects and disposes of UNTAET's used oil, and that the improper disposal methods at Mascarenas would be looked into. Since that time, most of the used oil filters have been removed, and there has been a noticeable improvement in the condition of the canals. However, the damage done by the oil is still apparent in the black stains on and around the canals, and a few discarded engine parts can still be seen in the canal along the wall of the Transport center.

La'ó Hamutuk comment: *Although the disposal or recycling of motor oil may not be a priority for UNTAET, this egregious case stands out due not only to the quantity of oil, but also for the immediate (not to mention the long term) effects on the local environment and its inhabitants. UNTAET, please set a good example!*

On 21 January, the commissioners of the long-promised Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation were sworn in. The seven Commissioners include two women (less

than the 30% of the CRTR legal requirement). The Commissioners are leaders of church, NGO and women's groups, including former *La'ó Hamutuk* Board Member Fr. Jovito Araújo, Yayasan HAK Executive Director Aniceto Guterres Lopes, ET-WAVE Director Olandina Caeiro, and Rev. Agostinho de Vasconcelos who was suggested by militia leaders in West Timor. On 4 February, the CRTR elected Aniceto

as its chairman, with Fr. Jovito as deputy chairman. The CRTR will take testimony on violations between 1974 and 1999, and assign restorative sentences to those who admit to minor crimes during 1999. The CRTR cannot grant amnesty for serious crimes, but will refer them to prosecutors to go through the court system. For more information on the CRTR, see *La'ó Hamutuk Bulletin* Vol. 2 No. 6-7. ❖

Report from the Oslo Donors' Conference on East Timor

After 400 years of Portuguese colonization and 24 years of Indonesian occupation, East Timor faces great challenges in its development. Under the Portuguese, there were no opportunities for the East Timorese people to develop their economy, agriculture, justice and democratic systems, education and health services. Under the Indonesian occupation, East Timor started developing in certain sectors, but in terms of human rights and justice, the situation clearly worsened. In 1999, both before and after the referendum, TNI and the militias they supported destroyed almost all of the infrastructure developments Indonesia had made. The impact of this was immense and the people of East Timor now face many challenges to move toward the collective goal of genuine independence.

The objective of the Donors' Conference on 11 and 12 December 2001 in Oslo, Norway was to evaluate developments to date and to identify development priorities for this critical stage just before East Timor's official transition to full independence in May 2002. In the conference, the donor countries looked to gain a picture of how to support East Timor with human resources, materials and funds. International speakers and attendees included United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, UNTAET Head Sergio Vieira de Mello and James D. Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank Group. There were presentations from the World Bank office in East Timor, the IMF, and various UN agencies and donor countries, with over 30 countries attending.

From East Timor, there were two groups at the meeting: one representing the new East Timorese government led by Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri, and the other representing civil society. The civil society representatives, determined through the National NGO Forum, were Antero Bendito da Silva of the NGO Forum, Maria Dias of the East Timorese Women's Network, and Jesuina Soares Cabral of *La'ó Hamutuk*. These three representatives had little opportunity to speak in the meeting, but presented a statement to the donors which called for greater attention to the following critical issues: justice, gender equality, refugees and returnees, capacity building, a democratic national planning process, and a transparent and participatory process for the use of public funds. (This statement is posted on *La'ó Hamutuk's* website.)

For two years now, during this transitional period, the international community has contributed a great deal to East Timor and there is clear progress in sectors such as security, national governance, infrastructure, agriculture, education and health. By and large, the presentations given on the state of the reconstruction were very positive, focusing on where progress has been made. Despite this progress, there have been problems in the use of donor funds in East Timor and there is still a great deal that needs to be done. A majority of the reports prepared for the conference were only provided in English, which means that most East Timorese were not able to know what was being discussed about their country at this important international forum.

At the Conference in Oslo, representatives from donor governments spoke about the support they have given East Timor since 1999 and their general plans for the future. At one point in a discussion amongst donors, one representative likened East Timor to a newborn baby going through the difficult process of infancy, childhood, adolescence and finally becoming an independent and self-sufficient adult.

Some examples of the promises that donor countries made at the conference are listed here. The European Union promised to give US\$9 million to the new East Timorese government but noted that the government's plan must be clear and based on the result of a national development planning process. Japan promised to continue its assistance by providing US\$30 million for economic development, security, and for Independence Day celebrations on 20 May 2002. Portugal did not mention the amount of funding it would provide in the future but expressed its commitment to continue to support East Timor both in the short term and in the long term. The United Kingdom also stated its general commitment to support East Timor during both the short term reconstruction and the longer term development process. Chile stated its desire to assist East Timor by providing experts to train East Timorese in various technical fields. Finland did not make a concrete promise but stated its commitment to also support East Timor in developing its human resource base. France expressed its intention to support East Timor in diplomatic training and education (specifically to support students who are continuing their study in Indonesia), as well as economic activities in Dili and other districts. France stated its intention that 25% of its contributions will support women's development and their involvement in the national planning process. Sweden expressed its desire to support good relations between East Timor and Indonesia, specifically looking at how the two countries can work together in the area of justice and reconciliation. Australia and the United States both stated general commitments to continue support to East Timor.

Many countries have stated their commitment to support the reconstruction and future development of East Timor. We will need to continue to watch what these statements of support mean in the future. Donors' contributions are necessary to East Timor's continuing reconstruction. Considering the fact that many of the present donor countries to East Timor supported Indonesia's occupation of the country, these contributions are not charity but can be viewed as reparations. The international community must allow full participation of East Timorese in decisions on how donors' contributions are used, and they must look to all levels of society, not only the famous leaders. The East Timorese people have fought hard for independence and their inclusion in every aspect of the development process is critical. ❖

United States Permission for 1975 Invasion Confirmed

On 7 December, 2001, the 26th anniversary of Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, NGO activists released previously-classified United States government documents which proved what many had known for many years: the United States government was informed in advance of Indonesia's plans and approved them at the highest levels. The information, which included transcripts of two 1975 meetings between Presidents Gerald Ford and Suharto, was obtained through the U.S. Freedom of Information Act and made public by the National Security Archive, a Washington-based NGO.

In July 1975, Suharto visited Washington, meeting with Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Although East Timor was still under Portuguese rule, the Indonesian president told the Americans: "... the only way is to integrate into Indonesia," describing Fretilin as "Communist elements."

As Ford and Kissinger prepared for a return visit in Jakarta, Kissinger wrote "talking points" for Ford, including "We note Indonesia has expressed willingness to see a merger of [East Timor] with Indonesia with the assent of the inhabitants of Timor. This would appear to be reasonable solution (sic)." The same memo proposed doubling U.S. military aid to Indonesia.

When the Presidents and Kissinger met in Jakarta on 5 December, U.S. intelligence already knew about Indonesia's imminent plans to invade, which were finalized two days before. Early in the meeting, Ford was "enthusiastic" about building an M-16 munitions plant in Indonesia. A while later, the Indo-

nesian president raised the Timor issue, saying "We want your understanding, if we deem it necessary to take rapid or drastic action." Ford replied: "We will understand and will not press you on the issue. We understand the problem and the intentions you have."

Although Kissinger pointed out that "the use of US-made arms could create problems," both American officials thought the problems could be worked out, especially if the invasion was delayed until Ford was back in the US. But if Indonesia could not wait, Kissinger said: "If you have made plans, we will do our best to keep everyone quiet until the President returns home."

Kissinger asked if Suharto anticipated "a long guerilla war" and the Indonesian President replied "[t]here will probably be a small guerilla war." Indonesia launched their invasion two days later (Ford and Kissinger were in the Philippines), using massive numbers of US weapons. Six months later, according to another just-released document, U.S. State Department officials agreed, "We've resumed all of our normal relations with [Indonesia]; and there isn't any problem involved." The rest is bloody history.

La'o Hamutuk comment: *We reiterate our call to prosecute civilian and military officials, from whatever nation, responsible for crimes perpetrated here from 1975 through 1999. These three officials, as well as their subordinates and successors should be held accountable.* ❖

CIVPOL Assessment *(continued from page 3)*

with guarantees of security, stability and peace, and the people of East Timor have been disappointed. It is hoped that the recent changes in attitude will lift the standards and efficiency of CIVPOL in East Timor, so that the community can begin to truly trust their police force.

Recommendations

Based on discussions with other NGOs, *La'o Hamutuk* offers the following recommendations to the UN for their continuing mission in East Timor, and for future policing missions throughout the world:

- CIVPOL needs to work with communities on clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each group within the concept of community policing. They also need to educate the community about which laws they are using.
- CIVPOL needs to make efforts to learn Tetum or another locally understood language. If this is not practical, then CIVPOL administration needs to ensure that competent translators are available 24 hours a day.
- CIVPOL needs to be trained about Timorese tradition, culture, and social conditions *before* they arrive in East Timor.
- CIVPOL should coordinate with local communities and their representatives to explore all avenues of information. ❖

Why Refuse the Japanese Self-Defense Force? *(continued from back page)*

In East Timor, the tendency of Transitional Government officials to support the dispatch of Japanese Self-Defense Forces to East Timor will continue. While on an international tour, Chief Minister Mari Alkatiri supported their arrival in East Timor. Ramos Horta specifically stated that the protest made by 12 local NGOs did not represent the aspirations of the East Timorese people. These statements were repeated by the Japanese delegation leader Fumio Kyuma who stated that while some non-governmental organizations in East Timor oppose a Japanese military presence in East Timor, their opinion does not represent that of most citizens. (*Tais Timor*, October 2001). This statement was particularly surprising since the protest letter by NGOs had not received any response from the Japanese government. The Japanese government is only interested in meeting with East Timorese leaders. We know well, however, that these demands for justice come from people at the grassroots.

At this time, the dispatch of the military is too late. Japanese military troops should have been dispatched before the 30 August 1999 referendum, when the East Timorese people were in dire need of an international security presence to protect them

from the violence of anti-independence militias. The question arises: why only now is the Japanese government sending troops? If their work will be to build roads, why not send workers and engineers? If the Japanese government wants to help East Timor then the problems faced by the people, such as unemployment and lack of basic service, must be given attention. Money for the East Timorese people should not simply return to Japan in the form of salaries for their own soldiers.

Finally, the request for the Japanese government to apologize and take responsibility is not only for the Japanese occupation during World War II; it is also for the 24 years that the Japanese government supported Indonesia's victimization of hundreds of thousands of East Timorese. Only steps like these will allow the development of strong bilateral ties between East Timor and Japan. East Timor needs financial assistance, and helping to rebuild the devastated nation should be viewed as an obligation of the Japanese government. ❖

Nuno Rodrigues is Director of the Sa'he Institute for Liberation and a member of the La'o Hamutuk Board.

Why Refuse the Japanese Self-Defense Force?

By Nuno Rodrigues

Last year, 12 East Timorese NGOs voiced opposition to the dispatch of Japanese troops to East Timor. In response, Foreign Minister José Ramos Horta stated that NGOs should not participate in matters of foreign affairs and should instead leave this responsibility to the transitional government. In clear terms, Ramos Horta stated, "In the coming year, once East Timor is fully independent we will not open up old sores regarding the past policies of the Japanese government from 1942-1945 during World War II." (*Suara Timor Lorosa'e*, 24/8/2001).

These statements point to a lack of concern on the part of political leaders to push for justice in East Timor related to the Japanese occupation during 1942-1945. Japan is currently the largest donor to East Timor's reconstruction. For humanitarian aid during the emergency phase, the Japanese government contributed US\$34.3 million, while they have offered another US\$100 million for a period of more than three years.

The NGO group asked that before dispatching any troops (which are officially termed the Japanese Self-Defense Force), the government of Japan should apologize and give compensation to the people of East Timor who were victims of military action during the three-year occupation. During this period, the people of East Timor were victims of brutalities carried out by the Japanese army. Many were forced into being *romusha* or slave laborers, as well as *jugun ianfu* (comfort women) — women who were forced to give sexual services to members of the Japanese military.

"As slave laborers, men, women and children were forced to build the main road from Hau through Oli, Kai, Ualele, Uato-Lari, Nunumalau, Haunau, Aedere, Lhare to Baguia. They had no clothes or food. Many people died. When we did receive food, the Japanese military would take it from us and make us watch them eat our food. The Japanese military was very cruel," states Maurubi, 80 years old and one of the survivors. In order to service military members in East Timor, Japan built large houses and forced women to be comfort women. Uato-Binaro in Uato-Lari was one of the main stations for comfort women. (Source: interview by Antero Bendito Silva)

Not many people know that 40,000 East Timorese were killed during the three year Japanese occupation. Thousands were forced into slave labor, and thousands of women were forced to be comfort women. Proof of the brutality of the Japanese military has been gathered through the testimony of witnesses, most of whom are near the end of their lives. The struggle for justice was started during the time of the Indonesian occupation. Due to the tight watch of the Indonesian military, this organizing has not yet covered all of East Timor, but an organization called the Central Communication Forum for East Timorese Ex-Romusha and Comfort Women has identified 3,450 direct victims of the Japanese occupation, 800 of whom were comfort women.

In several international forums, East Timorese survivors have given testimony of Japanese brutality. In December 2000, two East Timorese women gave testimony regarding their experience as Japanese sexual slaves (comfort women) to a people's International War Crimes Tribunal organized

by human rights organizations. The continuation of this Tribunal, conducted in The Hague, Netherlands in early December 2001 decided that the late Emperor Hirohito and other high figures in the Japanese government were guilty of carrying out crimes against humanity with the official practice of comfort women. While this verdict has no legal backing, it represents a push for the Japanese government to apologize to the victims of this practice and to provide them with some financial compensation. Both mainstream media and the government gave no attention to the decision in The Hague; the Japanese government refused to give even one public statement on the matter.

After the Second World War, the Japanese government continued to rub salt into the wounds of East Timor's struggle for independence. During 24 years of Indonesia's occupation of East Timor, on eight different occasions, the Japanese government opposed pro-East Timor UN resolutions by the Security Council and General Assembly, defining Japan as a "loyal supporter" of Indonesia. In the Santa Cruz massacre on 12 November 1991, Japanese-made Hino trucks were used by the Indonesian military to carry the corpses of young men and women who had been slaughtered.

(Continued on page 11)

What is La'o Hamutuk?

La'o Hamutuk (*Walking Together* in English) is a joint East Timorese-international organization that monitors, analyzes, and reports on the principal international institutions present in Timor Lorosa'e as they relate to the physical, economic, and social reconstruction and development of the country. *La'o Hamutuk* believes that the people of East Timor must be the ultimate decision-makers in the reconstruction/development process and that this process should be democratic and transparent. *La'o Hamutuk* is an independent organization and works to facilitate effective East Timorese participation in the reconstruction and development of the country. In addition, *La'o Hamutuk* works to improve communication between the international community and East Timorese society. *La'o Hamutuk's* East Timorese and international staff have equal responsibilities, and receive equal pay and benefits. Finally, *La'o Hamutuk* is a resource center, providing literature on development models, experiences, and practices, as well as facilitating solidarity links between East Timorese groups and groups abroad with the aim of creating alternative development models.

In the spirit of encouraging greater transparency, La'o Hamutuk would like you to contact us if you have documents and/or information that should be brought to the attention of the East Timorese people and the international community.