



A-N-T-I

ALIANSA NASIONAL TIMOR-LESTE BA TRIBUNAL INTERNASIONAL
National Alliance of Timor-Leste for an International Tribunal

lanarra.del@gmail.com atino@laohamutuk.org and moniz@jsmp.minihub.org

(+670) 77289241, 77402231, 77179655

Website: www.laohamutuk.org , www.jsmp.tl or www.haktl.org

Press Release

**34th Commemoration of the Marabia Incident (10 June 1980 – 2014) and
International Widows Day (23 June 2014)**



"The Indonesian Military took my brother to school... and perhaps it was his intelligence that allowed him to return to Timor, so he could serve and contribute to the development process in Timor. But perhaps it was actually the opposite... and they killed them all... so show us his bones so we can bury him together with his other friends, our heroes. (Amelia Brigada Sarmento, younger sister of Mario Gusmão Freitas, code-name MAU-SEITUI).

The Marabia Massacre, which took place on 10 June 1980, was committed by the military unit known as *Komando Pasukan Sandhi Yudha* (Kopassandha/Kopassus – Special Forces), and led to the death or enforced disappearance of 121 people. Of those 121 who were killed or disappeared, the whereabouts of some 83 victims remains unknown to their families. Moreover, there has yet to be one member of Kopassus brought to account for this crime and other crimes against humanity. Worse still, it is a very real possibility that a former member of Kopassus, Prabowo Subianto, may become President of Indonesia, while, at the same time, survivors along with the widows and orphans are left to mourn for their lost relatives and to live in abjectly miserable conditions.

Although there is no clear information as to Prabowo's involvement in the Marabia massacre specifically, at that time it is well known that he was a member of Kopassus and had demonstrated clear potential which won him the confidence of his superiors. This much was evidenced by the fact he was promoted to attend a number of events in America and Indonesia which sought to increase his knowledge, thus enabling him to move through the ranks. This saw him, within two years of the Marabia Massacre, command the Kopassus unit which committed one of the largest massacres of the occupation, in Kraras (Viqueque) in 1983. According to the testimony of some witnesses, following the Kraras massacre of August 1983, Kopassus continued the search for frightened citizens hidden in the Le-Oli/Viqueque area. Some witnesses recounted that Prabowo and his elements arrested them, along with a number of civilians, on 10 September 1983. In excess of one hundred men and boys were then executed at Tahu-Been (the river near Kraras) following their arrest.

This year, the families and community, together with representatives of the State institutions, gathered together to commemorate the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Marabia massacre. Also present were the representatives of Government who are planning to build a monument there. The commemoration began with a mass according to the Catholic tradition, led by the Bishop of the Diocese of Dili. After the mass, families scattered flowers and lit candles in memory of their heroes. There was also space for the families and community to listen to messages from the State representatives.

On the other hand, some families, whose brothers, husbands or fathers have disappeared, are yet to have the courage to scatter flowers and light candles because they have yet to know for certain whether their family members have died or whether they may still be alive. For these families, the State's plan to build a monument alone is not enough. They insist that the Government of Timor-Leste must collaborate with the Indonesian Government to identify the whereabouts of their missing family members.

On this issue, ANTI approached the relevant State Institutions regarding the outcome of the recent Senior Official Meeting (SOM) between Timor-Leste and Indonesia that took place in Bali in April 2014 and should have addressed the issue of missing persons. ANTI was very disappointed and saddened to learn that the two Governments have chosen to prioritise the establishment of Cultural Centres over the ongoing issue of disappeared persons and separated children.

Therefore, ANTI urges that:

1. The State of Timor-Leste and Indonesia continue their collaboration to establish the Commission to "Search for Missing Persons" according to the recommendation of the CTF.
2. The United Nations, particularly the Security Council and the Human Rights Council, keep the issue of grave crimes in Timor-Leste on their agenda and prioritise the search for those enforceably disappeared and justice for those who have died.
3. Activist and international solidarity friends to continue the fight for a formal process for those perpetrators of crimes against humanity in Timor-Leste so that we might end impunity, establish the truth, and deliver justice for the survivors.

ANTI believes that, without the involvement of the international community, it will be a huge challenge for all of us to finally resolve the ongoing issue of crimes against humanity perpetrated in Timor-Leste during the Indonesian military occupation.

Justice for Timor-Leste and Justice for the World.



Dili, 23 June 2014

Sisto dos Santos
Coordinator