



EAST TIMOR

Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR)



Sponsor: United Nations Transitional Administration for East Timor

Date of Commission: 2002-2005

Dates Covered: 1974-1999

Final Report Released: October 2005

In 1975, East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, was annexed by Indonesia and for the next twenty-five years, East Timorese suffered under a harsh regime in which an approximate 200,000 people were killed and even more were displaced. With the fall of General Soeharto in 1999, the East Timorese were given the right to hold elections. Although they suffered active intimidation, the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence; militias responded by killing over 1,000 people, displacing thousands more, and destroying property and infrastructure in several towns and cities. In the ensuing transitional period, the United Nations governed East Timor and in 2002, East Timor became an independent state, Timor-Leste. In 2002, The United Nations Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET) helped establish a Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) to investigate human rights violations and atrocities committed between 1974 and 1999. The commission was given a two-year mandate and during that time it held a series of public hearings, collecting testimony from more than 7000 witnesses and victims. In addition to investigating facts about the conflict, the commission was charged with helping perpetrators and their victims reintegrate into their communities and with making recommendations for the prevention of future abuses. The commission delivered its final report to President Gusmao in October 2005 and it was made available to the public in 2006.

Status of Archives:

The archives of CAVR (20,000 pages and 800 hours of audio and visual recording) are in immediate danger of physical destruction, or of being lost or concealed.

Primary Resources:

Official Site: <http://www.easttimor-reconciliation.org/>

Final Report: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/features/846.html>

Internet Resources:

ICTJ: East Timor

<http://www.ictj.org/en/where/region3/628.html>

Yale East Timor Project

http://www.yale.edu/gsp/east_timor/index.html

Human Rights Watch: East Timor

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=asia&c=eastti>

Secondary Resources:

Academic/Publications:

Babo-Soares, Dionisio. "Nahe biti: The philosophy and process of grassroots reconciliation (and justice) in East Timor." *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*. Vol. 5, No. 1, 15-33. 2004. Available online through Taylor & Francis.

Burgess, Patrick. "Justice and Reconciliation in East Timor. The Relationship Between the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Courts." *Criminal Law Forum*. Vol. 15, No. 1-2, 135-158. 2004. Available online through IngentaConnect.

Cohen, David. "Intended to Fail: The Trails Before the Ad Hoc Human Rights Court in Jakarta." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. August 2003. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/where/region3/628.html#resources>

Farid, Hilmar and Rikardo Simarmatra. "The Struggle for Truth and Justice: A Survey of Transitional Justice Initiatives Throughout Indonesia." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. January 2004. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/where/region3/628.html#resources>

Hirst, Megan and Howard Varney. "Justice Abandoned? An Assessment of the Serious Crimes Process in East Timor." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. June 2005. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/where/region3/628.html#resources>

Hone, Tanja. "Justice without judiciary in East Timor." *Conflict, Security and Development*. Vol. 3, No. 3, 335-357. 2003. Available online through Taylor & Francis.

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Lanegran, Kimberly Rae. "Truth Commissions, Human Rights Trials, and the Politics of Memory." Vol. 25, No. 1, 11-121. 2005. Available online through Project Muse.

Linton, Suzannah. "Cambodia, East Timor and Sierra Leone: Experiments in International Justice." *Criminal Law Forum*. Vol. 12, No. 2, 185-246. 2001. Available online through SpringerLink.

Nevins, J. "Restitution over coffee: truth, reconciliation, and environmental violence in East Timor." *Political Geography*. Vol. 22, No. 6, 677-701, 2003. Available online through Ingentaconnect.

Pigou, Piers. "Crying Without Tears. In Pursuit of Justice and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste: Community Perspectives and Expectations." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. August 2003. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/where/region3/628.html#resources>

Rae, James. "War Crimes Accountability: Justice and Reconciliation in Cambodia and East Timor?" Vol. 15, No. 2, 157-178. 2003. Available online through Taylor & Francis.

Reiger, Caitlin and Marieke Wierda. "The Serious Crimes Process in Timor-Leste: In Retrospect." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. March 2006. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/where/region3/628.html#resources>

Stahn, Carsten. "Accommodating Individual Criminal Responsibility and National Reconciliation: The UN Truth Commission for East Timor." *American Journal of International Law*. Vol. 95, No. 4, 952-966. 2001. Available online through JSTOR.

News/Reports:

Powell, Sian. "UN Verdict on East Timor." *The Australian*. 519 January 2006. Available at: <http://www.etan.org/et2006/january/14/19truth.htm>

"Timorese Truth Commission Report Reveals Shocking Brutality, Calls for End to Impunity." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. 20 January 2006. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/press/release/773.html>

"The Price of Peace." ABCTV. Available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/compass/s1468301.htm>

"East Timor: U.N. Security Council Must Ensure Justice." *Human Rights Watch*. 29 June 2005. Available at: <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2005/06/28/eastti11231.htm>

"UN Commission Recommends Ultimatum on Justice for Timor Victims." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. 27 June 2005. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/press/release/267.html>

"Timor-Leste: New Report Lays Out Failures in Serious Crimes Process." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. 10 June 2005. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/press/release/271.html>

"Timor-Leste: Serious Crimes Unit and Special Panels Mandate Must be Extended to Preserve Hope of Accountability." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. 27 April 2005. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/press/release/273.html>

"Indonesia and Timor-Leste: New Commission's Defects Must be Remedied to Achieve Justice and Truth for Victims." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. 9 March 2005. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/press/release/278.html>

"Timor-Leste: A Claim for Justice Still Denied." *International Center for Transitional Justice*. 19 August 2003. Available at: <http://www.ictj.org/en/news/press/release/462.html>

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