

East Timor

Map: United Nations 2004



East Timor Christmas

Michael Darby, 1996

This poem was performed by the author at Cascais in Portugal on 6 Dec 97, and at Westminster Cathedral in London on 7 Dec 97, at events commemorating the 22nd anniversary of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor.

At Christmastime around the world the children all can play
With parents and grandparents on this their Saviour's Day.
Many children in East Timor face a Christmas Eve of sorrow
Their grandparents and parents will be missing on the morrow.

Do not forget the lessons which from history we've learned
Let the future bring the freedom which the human race has earned.
Jakarta's cruel invaders for years have done their worst
And the guilty politicians shall on Judgement Day be cursed.

For the future of the children the invaders now must leave
Give the people of East Timor the time they need to grieve.
The souls of all the martyrs at last will have their rest
When peace and independence shall come to Timor-Leste.



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This site is growing, and in due course will include a good deal of material about East Timor.

Please click the appropriate item to view the material presently available:

East Timor report blames Indonesia for 102,800+ deaths

Michael Darby's 1999 correspondence on East Timor

Draft Constitution for East Timor (1998)

**Portugese language version:
Draft Constitution for East Timor (1998)**



[January 20, 2006]

East Timor report blames Indonesia for 102,800+ deaths

(Japan Economic Newswire Via Thomson Dialog NewsEdge)NEW YORK, Jan. 20_(Kyodo)

East Timor's President Xanana Gusmao delivered a report to the United Nations on Friday stating that more than 102,800 people were killed or disappeared during Indonesia's 24-year occupation, and many were subjected to human rights violations, including torture, starvation, sexual violence and napalm attacks.

He handed the final report of the U.N.-sponsored Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Gusmao had received a copy of the 2,500-page document on Oct. 31, 2005, according to the International Center for Transitional Justice, a human rights group.

The report was based on interviews conducted over a three-year period with more than 7,000 victims who gave testimony on violations committed between April 1974 and October 1999.

Earlier media reports put the death toll at between 84,200 and 183,000. "The numbers, the figures, can be disputed, but the essential is to remind not only our future generation not to commit all that happened before again in East Timor, but also to remind the international community to try every day (to make sure) that it doesn't happen again elsewhere," Gusmao told a press conference.

"If we hide the truth, we will not be courageous enough to look at (each) other eye-to-eye," he added. "That is why I believe it is not so important to look at the figures but it's more important to look at the lessons."

Despite recommendations to achieve justice and end impunity for the perpetrators, Gusmao did not want to take such steps.

"We don't advocate the punitive justice, but retrospective justice," he said, emphasizing again that he does not intend to seek such measures.

Indonesia on Friday called the report "unreal" and "impractical." The recommendations are unreal, impractical, because they are purely formulated from the aspect of human rights by those who do not live in East Timor," Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Yuri Thamrin told a press conference.

Thamrin said the authors of the report, who do not live in East Timor, "do not understand the real situation."

Thamrin said Gusmao, who favors reconciliation with Indonesia, will visit Jakarta on Feb. 27 to hand a copy of the report to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

"The commission's final report should remind the world that the Indonesian security forces committed massive international crimes long before the well-publicized atrocities that surrounded their retreat from East Timor in 1999," a release from ICTJ said.

East Timor split from Indonesia through the U.N.-organized referendum on Aug. 30, 1999, and became fully independent on May 20, 2002, after a U.N.-led transition period.

