

## EAST TIMOR; INDONESIA AND AUSTRALIA

Extract of speech by the Indonesian Ambassador of Australia Mr. August Marpaung, 20th June 1984.\*

Another question of Australian public interest is East Timor. East Timor has been an integral and inseparable part of the Republic of Indonesia since July 17, 1976 and its status is now irreversible. Cocos Islands of course is also an integral part of Australia.

The process of decolonization in East Timor has been completed through the implementation of the right to self determination by the people of East Timor. The process of decolonization was terminated when the Territory became independent through integration with Indonesia in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions, namely Res 1514 (XV), 1541 (XV) and 2625 (XXV).

Much has been made of the non-involvement of the United Nations when the people of East Timor were actually realizing their right to self-determination. In fact, a delegation of the Provisional Government of East Timor was despatched to New York and Geneva with the sole purpose of meeting with and inviting the relevant UN organs to participate in the decolonisation process. Regrettably, all of these invitations were accorded a negative response. Nevertheless, the

\*(His Excellency addressed the National Press Club, Canberra on 20 June 1984. The text of the extract of his speech relating to East Timor was made available by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Canberra.

Provisional Government of East Timor never failed to report each and every stage of the decolonisation process to the Secretary-General of the UN, to his Special Representative, to the Security Council and to the Committee on Decolonisation. Principle IX (b) of Resolution 1541 (XV) states that with regard to integration, "the United Nations could, when it deems necessary, supervise these processes." It is clear, therefore, that the participation of the UN in the process of decolonisation, while laudable, is certainly not mandatory.

Claims have been made suggesting that Fretilin was the predominant party in East Timor in November 1975, when it unilaterally declared independence of the Territory. Nothing is further from the truth. As a matter of fact, Fretilin was only one of five parties existing in East Timor. Fretilin was the only party which refused to participate in the Macao conference in 1975 and other meetings organised by Portugal to discuss the orderly decolonisation of East Timor. The other four parties were Apodeti, UDT, Kota and Trabalhista. By Portugal's own admission, and as widely recognised by unbiased observers, the UDT was clearly the largest party among the five, since it received the support of 230 of the 472 existing *sukus* (clans) in the Territory. Hence, the four parties clearly represented the overwhelming majority of the people of East Timor and were in actual control of the Territory in May 1976 at the time of the election.

The Indonesian nation is not based on racial considerations, within its length and breadth it encompasses a mosaic of racial and ethnic groups, mostly of Malay-Polynesian-Melanesian stock but also comprising millions of Chinese, Arab, Indian, and European ancestry. It is simply ridiculous to suggest that the East Timorese are of different ethnic origin than their kin in West Timor and the surrounding islands of the Indonesian archipelago. It is true that there are still remnants of the Fretilin wandering around in very small groups in isolated places, robbing food from the population, killing villagers and once in a while disrupting village governments by surprise attacks to civil defence units (HANSIP).

Within the frame-work of our national defence system, Indonesia is stationing its defence forces all over the archipelago for the maintenance of peace and security.

The stationing of around 7000 troops in East Timor, except for the maintenance of law and order, is also meant to build infra-structure in the island, like roads, bridges, irrigation systems, clinics, housing in resettlement areas etc. This development effort is an implementation of the dual function of the Army, a doctrine practiced by the Army since 1945.

However, I do acknowledge that there is still a Fretilin element in East Timor. It is in the order of a few hundred and they threaten villages at times. As a military movement, Fretilin is spent.

In the field of economic development, the level of expenditure per head of population in East Timor, which by comparison is bigger than other provinces, reflects the aim of the government to develop the capacity of East Timorese to eventually contribute to, and share in, the prosperity of the country as a whole. The provincial budget for 1983/1984 is about 54 million US dollars. Although we still face a number of obstacles in East Timor in the field of economic development, unbiased observers would agree that the progress and welfare of the East Timorese has been steadily enhanced.

Outside assistance has been provided, and is continuing to be provided by such international bodies as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Catholic Relief Services and UNICEF. Progress has been observed and commented on by visiting groups and individuals, including your own Australian Parliamentary Delegation in July and August last year.