



A-N-T-I

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Press Release

COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

“Bring them home”

The People of Timor-Leste once again commemorate 30 August as the 14th anniversary of the popular consultation (1999-2013). This historic day led to our independence from the long period of suffering that occurred because of grave crimes committed systematically by the Indonesian military. Since our independence, the people of Timor-Leste have lived in a democratic state under the rule of law. But since entering this independence process, we have started to develop without yet having credible justice for the perpetrators of grave crimes against the Timorese people. Up to now, our leaders in Timor-Leste have not yet had the strong political will to confront the issue of justice for serious past crimes, which is the foundation of the democratic state under the rule of law.

Importantly, 30 August is also the International Day of Enforced Disappearances, families of the missing and those families who still live in misery. Many families continue to mourn and demand for their relatives who went missing during the conflict. In response to these specific concerns, a large group has worked to address this situation, starting with the establishment of CAVR (Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation) and CTF (Bilateral Commission on Truth and Friendship), nevertheless we all wait for the two Governments (Timor-Leste and Indonesia) to commit to implementing the specific recommendations of these two commissions.

For this reason, ANTI, together with the victims' families, organised a public discussion on 28 August and invited the Foreign Affairs Minister, a member of the National Parliament, the Country Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a civil society representative to be speakers at this public discussion. Unfortunately, the representatives from the Government and National Parliament didn't manage to attend.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation was to talk about progress and the challenges in implementing the recommendations of the CTF, particularly relating to enforced disappearances, and the representative from National Parliament was to speak

about the policies of Parliament relation to the issue of enforced disappearances; with civil society to talk about their perspectives on the issue of disappearances.

ANTI, and especially the victims' families, were extremely disheartened that the Government, represented through the Foreign Minister, and the members of National Parliament, were not present at this public discussion, because the victims and their families needed and very much wanted to hear about the efforts of the Government and Parliament in relation to the implementation of the CTF. But in the end, these important speakers did not take part in this discussion.

However, at the same time, the Indonesian Ambassador did attend and deliver some thoughts about the commitment of the State of Indonesia to implementing the recommendations of the CTF.

For civil society, the real concern related to the agreement established three years ago by the PDHJ (Timor-Leste Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice) with Komnas Ham Indonesia (Indonesian Commission on Human Rights), and which has been extended for one year, but has still yet to produce any results.

Yet up to now, with more than a decade gone, there is still impunity, and the consequences are clearly showing. Reality shows that the Government of Indonesia is protecting criminals from accountability for the crimes they committed in Timor-Leste. Currently, there is a strong debate taking place in Indonesia in relation to the general election for the President of Indonesia next year, in 2014, with the names of criminals Wiranto and Prabowo Subianto always mentioned as candidates for the election. ANTI is concerned that their grave criminal acts will continue in other parts of the Indonesian territory because impunity will continue to thrive.

Given the facts outlined above, ANTI delivers the following demands:

1. Demand that the two Governments (Timor-Leste and Indonesia) seriously begin the process of establishing a Commission of Missing Persons in order to deal with the issue of enforced disappearances during the illegal Indonesian occupation, so as to reintegrate those people whom the Indonesian military forcibly removed from their families.
2. Demand that the United Nations put on their agenda to discuss the report of the UN Commission of Inquiry and the CTF, especially the recommendation to establish an international tribunal to try the grave crimes in Timor-Leste, as there is no domestic mechanism in Timor-Leste or Indonesia which can provide justice to the people of Timor-Leste.
3. Demand to the International Community, particularly the nations which were involved directly and indirectly in the occupation by the cruel Suharto regime in

Timor-Leste (USA, England, France, Australia, and others), to provide a formal apology to the people of Timor-Leste and work to improve the lives of the Timorese.

4. Ask that the State of Timor-Leste sign and ratify the International Convention on the protection of all people from enforced disappearances and, in this way, start processing cases of enforced disappearances and ensuring that this issue is never repeated in the future in Timor-Leste, as a democratic state under the rule of law.
5. Ask that the Government of Indonesia respect the principles of human rights and open the path to justice for these grave crimes, particularly the cases of enforced disappearances in Timor-Leste, and, in this way, begin to strengthen bilateral relations between the States of Timor-Leste and Indonesia going forward.
6. Ask to all the people of Timor-Leste to give their support so that we can complete the forms relating to missing persons which the Victims' Association has prepared and is currently circulating, so we can help the process of searching for those people who went missing during the occupation period.
7. Ask to the PDHJ and Komnas-HAM Indonesia to seriously work to carry out the agreement which those two organisations have established, particularly about missing persons, so that we can find those persons forcibly disappeared by the Indonesian military. ***

Sisto dos Santos
ANTI Board Coordinator

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