

# Statement on East Timor

Sunday 23 September 2007, by [FNPBI](#), [SARI Dita Indah](#), [SYAH Ilham](#) (Date first published: 11 September 1999).

The ballot, offered as a way to resolve the 24-year old crisis in East Timor has been completed. The results show that the Timorese people reject the special autonomy offered by the Indonesian government and have chosen to be a free nation.

The Timorese struggle to be a free nation have gone on for many centuries against Portuguese colonialism and then against the militaristic Indonesian government. They have paid a high price, both physically and materially to wage that struggle. The Indonesian military invasion since 1975 has cost more than 200,000 lives and led to many human rights abuses including beatings and rapes. The international community's response to the military acts of Indonesia depended on the Cold War interests of each country at the time.

After the ballot was completed and a series massacres of pro-independence forces, UN staff and journalists by pro-integration militia members (supported by Indonesian military and police) commenced, the international community has again taken a position on the issue of East Timor. In this case, the international community has condemned the Indonesian government who are thought of as no longer able to provide security in the territory.

Condemnation and international pressure has come from Australia from its government and through the call for bans on Indonesian products by Australian trade unions. In one instance, there was even the incident of flag burning at a demonstration outside an Indonesian consulate. The response to this by several forces was to retaliate and burn the Australian flag and to invade the Australian Embassy in Indonesia.

These actions show the low level of understanding of the history of the struggle in East Timor and the shifting of the conflict from the massacres carried out in East Timor to a conflict between two countries.

In responding to the situation that has arisen since the ballot in East Timor, the National Front for Indonesian Labour Struggle (FNPBI) hereby express:

- a. Our full support for the results of the ballot in East Timor, as a reflection of the aspirations of the East Timorese to determine their own fate
- b. Our condemnation of the anti-democratic acts committed by the pro-autonomy forces of TNI and POLRI (Indonesian police)
- c. Our condemnation of all acts of murder and destruction by TNI and POLRI committed against the innocent civilians of East Timor
- d. Our condemnation of all acts of violence by TNI and POLRI which have driven out the Timorese from their own country

The FNPBI therefore demands:

- a. Immediate withdrawal of TNI and POLRI from East Timor

- b. Disbanding of militias which are supported and armed by TNI and POLRI
- c. Formation and entry of international peacekeeping forces into East Timor
- d. That all forces to respect the results of the ballot which is a reflection of the aspirations of the Timorese
- e. End to all support given by the Indonesian government to the militias
- f. End to the sending of Indonesian security forces to East Timor

We declare our full support for all the solidarity actions and strikes conducted by trade unions worldwide.

We call on the international community, especially the workers to maintain pressure on the Indonesian government through strikes/industrial action, economic sanctions and other forms of pressure.

Jakarta 11 September 1999

National Front for Indonesian Labour Struggle

Dita Indah Sari, Chairperson

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