



DIPLOMACY
TRAINING
PROGRAM

2006 People's Diplomacy and Human Rights Training Program

The Report on DTP's 16th Annual Training Program

Held in Cooperation with the Peace and Democracy Foundation
26 November – 13 December 2006
TIMOR LESTE

AFFILIATED WITH THE FACULTY OF LAW UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
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Report of the 16th Annual Human Rights & Peoples' Diplomacy Training

In Cooperation with the Peace and Democracy Foundation

East Timor, 26 November – 13 December 2006

Executive Summary:

In November/December 2006, the 16th Annual Regional Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) was conducted in the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste. Twenty-seven human rights defenders from twelve countries across the Asia-Pacific region completed the program.



For the second time in its sixteen-year history, DTP's annual regional human rights defenders program was held in Timor-Leste. It was organised in partnership with the Peace and Democracy Foundation (PDF) at the invitation of the Diplomacy Training Program's Founder and Patron, His Excellency José Ramos-Horta.

For 18 days, participants and trainers learnt about the UN and international human rights law, discussed human rights in the region, and learnt from each other's experiences. There was considerable East Timorese input into the program – through PDF, through the East Timorese trainers and participants and through a focus on the lessons from East Timor's history and current challenges.

DTP and its participants were particularly appreciative of the high level of involvement of José Ramos-Horta in the program – both through hosting the Opening and Closing Ceremonies at his home and the time he made available for a session with the participants at Dare Catholic Seminary at the end of the first week.

This report provides information on the participants and the human rights challenges they face, and identifies some of the key themes of the training program and its outcomes. It draws on the comments and evaluations of participants.

The Diplomacy Training Program would like to express its appreciation to the Peace and Democracy Foundation for their invitation to hold the program in Timor-Leste and for their work to make the program successful. DTP would also like to acknowledge all those who funded the program and to record its gratitude to them. Program funders were the

Governments of Norway and New Zealand, AusAID, Caritas Australia, Oxfam Australia and a number of private donors in Australia.

Generous in-kind support was provided by International Organization of Migration, The Embassy of Brazil in Timor-Leste and the Office of Prime Minister of Timor-Leste. DTP would also like to register its deep appreciation and gratitude to the trainers who generously donated their time and shared their expertise and knowledge during the program. Finally, DTP would like to thank the participants who contributed so much to the success of the program.

Background and Context of the Training

The Asia/Pacific region is the only region without a comprehensive regional rights instrument or an institutionalized regional human rights mechanism. It has a low level of ratification and implementation of UN treaties and ILO conventions.

During 2006, there have been deteriorating human rights situations on the ground in a number of countries. The coup in Nepal at the beginning of 2005 grew into an open conflict between the Nepalese people and the King, although a peace agreement in late 2006 provided some hope. Conflict has reignited in Sri Lanka. Defence of human rights



in Bangladesh is growing increasingly difficult, with political stalemate between the two major parties, a breakdown of institutions and weakness of the justice system. The ruthlessly repressive government of Burma remains in power and impunity fuels the cycle of conflict and violence in Jammu and Kashmir. In Thailand, the Prime Minister was deposed in a military coup amid accusations of corruption and against the

backdrop of the growing conflict in the south of the country. In the Philippines, the level of political killings and disappearances has risen sharply with human rights defenders, Indigenous Peoples and environmental advocates targeted. While a peace agreement has also brought hope to Aceh following the devastation of the tsunami, the lack of progress in resolving the case of murdered human rights defender, Munir, and continuing reports of human rights violations in Papua is causing concern to the domestic and international human rights movement.

The need for stronger solidarity and partnerships at local, national, regional and global levels to address human rights issues across the region is now more important than ever.

Globally, the newly established UN Human Rights Council (HRC) presents challenges and opportunities in addressing human rights abuses around the world. Whilst there is hope that the HRC will encourage higher standards among its members and greater accountability by states through the Universal Peer Review mechanism, there are grave

concerns over the future of UN's Special Procedures on human rights and more limited possibilities for participation by NGOs, particularly from the South.

Through the UN reform process, the outgoing UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan ensured that human rights are seen to be at the centre of the UN's mission. There are hopes that a new UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon coming from the region, will continue this emphasis and will be sympathetic and responsive to human rights voices from Asia

The situation in Timor Leste in 2006

With their history of resistance to foreign occupation, the Timorese people have a longstanding commitment to self-determination and their struggle was fought in the name of human rights. Following independence in 2002, East Timor signed and ratified the seven core International Human Rights instruments.

However 2006 was a turbulent year for Timor-Leste, as it faced the challenges of overcoming its recent past. Predictions that it had been premature to scale down the UN presence and support seemed to be justified when tensions within and between the military and the police erupted into violence. The violence led to extensive internal displacement with at least 150,000 fleeing their homes in and around Dili. Camps for the internally displaced people (IDPs) sprang up across the city. While the violence was largely restricted to some parts of Dili, a state of emergency was declared and, at the request of the government, an international force arrived in May in an effort to restore peace. The Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri resigned his post in June in response to mounting public criticism and to a request from President Xanana Gusmao. Former Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence Jose Ramos-Horta replaced Alkatiri as Prime Minister.

In response to appeals from the East Timorese government, the UN Security Council established a new mission for Timor Leste in August 2006 in anticipation of national parliamentary and presidential elections scheduled for 2007. By late 2006, the situation had been substantially stabilised and steps taken by the national leadership and other actors towards national dialogue and political reconciliation. Many IDPs still remained in camps either unwilling or unable to return home.

The extent of the trauma suffered by the people of East Timor was made clear when, after almost five years in operation, Timor–Leste’s Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation (Comissao de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconcilio de Timor–Leste, CAVR) submitted its final report (“Chega”) to parliament in November 2005. A copy was handed to the UN Secretary General by President Gusmao in January 2006. The 2000 page report documents the human rights violations which took place in East Timor



between 1974 and 1999. The report concluded that “the demand for justice and accountability remains a fundamental issue in the lives of many East Timorese and a potential obstacle to building a democratic society based upon respect for the rule of law and authentic reconciliation between individuals, families, communities and nations.” The report contains over 200 recommendations for the Timorese government, the UN, and the international

community. In July 2006 the UN secretary–general issued a report on justice and reconciliation for Timor–Leste in which he recommended the resumption of the investigative functions of the Special Crimes Unit but not the judicial functions of the Special Panels. The report did, however, note that crimes against humanity, gross violations of human rights, and grave breaches of humanitarian law were committed in East Timor in 1999, and there should be no impunity regarding such acts.

In addition to the trauma of past human rights violations detailed in the report the new nation, and its emerging institutions, face the challenges of a shattered infrastructure, widespread poverty, unemployment and underemployment, and a young and rapidly growing population.

It is in this context that the revenue from petroleum and gas reserves off the coast of Timor Leste takes on such significance. The revenues have the potential to transform the lives of the East Timorese now and into the future. The Australian government refused to accept independent arbitration on maritime boundary issues through the International Court of Justice and negotiations were long drawn–out and led to anger and frustration in Timor–Leste. In January 2006 Australia and East Timor signed the *Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea*, agreeing to share more equitably the natural resources in the Timor Sea. The challenge is how to channel its natural resource wealth into poverty eradication, health, education, infrastructure, and the realisation of all human rights for all.

In addition to effective institutions and administration, an active civil society will be vital to ensuring effective spending of the petroleum revenues. The local media and civil society must be strengthened and nurtured to ensure an accountable government. The government has recognized the need to have a wider engagement of civil society as demonstrated by

its support for the NGO Forum but there is still need to build the capacity of local organizations to contribute to development and to engage effectively with officials at the local and national level.

The challenges that Timor-Leste faces today are challenges facing other societies across the region:

a culture of impunity created by the shortcomings of the local and international justice processes; making the transition from a violent, divided past into a more peaceful present and developing a human rights culture, of finding the methods to peacefully resolve community conflicts, how to manage natural resources sustainably and manage their revenues to promote the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights; how to build effective state institutions, how to nurture and support an engaged civil society, and how to retain the interest, support and involvement of the international community in making the transition from the traumatic past to a peaceful future.



The people of Timor-Leste have made remarkable progress in the few short years since independence, although facing major challenges, they have both the human resources and the natural resources to build a successful, peaceful and prosperous society.

Participants

Selection process

The program was widely advertised through regional networks and Indigenous networks in Australia. From over 100 applications DTP program staff carried out a screening process and produced a short list for discussion with the DTP training committee. The primary criteria were relevant experience in human rights, ability to apply the training in their own context, proficiency in English, regional representation, gender balance and motivation. Referee reports were also relied on. There was an increase in applications from women over previous years and several applications from Africa.

Unfortunately, some selected for the June program were unable to attend when the program was rescheduled for November/December 2006 and further offers were made from the original list of applicants. In October 2006 a specific call for participants from East Timor was sent to some local and international NGOs.

Selected participants

Twenty seven participants completed the program. Ten were women. There was a good balance of ages from younger to more experienced advocates.

The countries represented by advocates in the training were: Australia; Bangladesh; Burma (2); Cambodia (2); East Timor (7); India – Tamil Nadu and Kashmir (2); Indonesia (4); Nepal (2); South Korea; Sri Lanka (3) Philippines and Thailand.

Mainly from civil society organisations, the participants worked on a wide range of human rights issues in their countries and across the region including issues relating to disability, child labour and child rights, poverty, torture, political killings and disappearances, migrant workers' rights, reconciliation, peace building, transitional justice and conflict resolution, labour issues, HIV/AIDS, self-determination, Indigenous Peoples' rights, environmental protection and advocacy, access to land and resources, violence against women, and access to justice.

Several have been working on human rights concerns associated with some of the longest running conflicts in the region in Burma and Kashmir.

The East Timorese participants were the largest national group in the program and they valued the opportunity to “host” international participants. Holding the program in East Timor was seen as a reaffirmation of the Timorese commitment to human rights principles and standards. Their warmth and generosity of spirit in sharing their experiences brought a particular richness to many individual sessions and the program overall.

The Program

Preparations

Preparations for the training program commenced in February 2006 with the intention of holding it from 5–23 June 2006. When the security situation deteriorated sharply in late May, after reviewing the situation with PDF, DTP decided to postpone the program. The situation was kept under review and in October after discussions with DTP's founder and patron, HE Jose Ramos-Horta, the DTP Board decided to reschedule the program to begin on November 26th. The decision reflected the Board and Executive Director's view that there was particular value for DTP and human rights advocates from around the region to show solidarity with the Timorese at this difficult time.

The program schedule was reviewed to reflect the current issues in Timor-Leste and to seek to draw some wider lessons for the human rights community. There was an increased emphasis on peacemaking and peace building, overcoming past violations – issues of truth, justice and reconciliation and issues around development and human rights – economic, social and cultural rights and the rights based approach to development.

Once again DTP received a warm welcome in East Timor, expressed clearly by large banners strung over two of Dili's main streets. Participants arrived in Dili on Sunday 26 November 2006. After a local orientation and introductions, participants received a security briefing from two members of the United Nations Police Force.

The Opening Ceremony of the 16th Annual Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy Program was held on the evening of Sunday, 26 November at José Ramos-Horta's house in Dili. Participants were officially welcomed by José Ramos-Horta, Dr Sarah Pritchard of the DTP Board and the Executive Directors of PDF and DTP. The program ran for the next 18 days, starting each day at 8.30 am and going through to 5.30pm or 6.00pm.

Week One

The first week of the training took place in the renovated Catholic Seminary at Dare high in the hills overlooking Dili. Dare has a particular place in the history of East Timor's struggle for independence. In 1999, thousands of people fled to the hills and sought sanctuary at Dare. For a month they sheltered there fearful that they would be attacked at any time by the Indonesian military or the militias they controlled.

International intervention under UN auspices finally ensured the safety of those seeking safety in Dare.

On the first day, a panel of East Timorese advocates provided background on East Timor's struggle for self-determination, justice and peace and its current challenges. The panel members were Joaquim Fonseca, Human Rights Adviser to the Prime Minister, Joao Freitas de Camara, a former political prisoner and now Secretary, Ministry of Foreign affairs and DTP alumnus Angelina Sarmiento, Coordinator of Forum NGO.



The main focus in the first week of the program was on the international framework of human rights law that has been developed and adopted by the global community over the past sixty years. It was these sessions led by Dr Sarah Pritchard that provided the foundations for the remainder of the course. Practical exercises deepened participants' understanding of human rights and the UN system and encouraged interaction and sharing of

knowledge and experience.

On Wednesday the participants travelled down to Dili where Luis Vieira, Chief of the IOM Mission, provided an overview of the human rights issues facing IDPs in Timor-Leste. This was followed by a special presentation from Max Stahl, the journalist and filmmaker. Max's courage in filming the Dili Massacre and in smuggling the film out of East Timor played a major part in putting the plight of the East Timorese on to the world agenda. Participants had the opportunity to see Max's films and to discuss these with him.

Media coverage of the Dili Massacre broke down the image being carefully created by Indonesia that the situation in East Timor was improving and that resistance to its rule was a thing of the past. It was the fact that the Dili Massacre was captured on film and broadcast to the world that made it a pivotal event in the East Timorese struggle. Max's images galvanised international solidarity for the East Timorese and his evidence of human rights violations became the focal point for lobbying and advocacy work at the UN. This session provided an opportunity for participants to learn how the media can change perceptions of an issue, and play a crucial role in advocacy strategies.

Video advocacy, understanding the potential power of video, how to integrate video technology into advocacy work was returned to as a major focus for the second week.

Following the introductory sessions on international human rights standards, the focus moved on to look at the substantive content of economic, social and cultural rights, and their relationship to poverty – as one of the most pressing global human rights challenges. The sessions were presented by Catherine Anderson, who had worked with the Timorese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on preparing Timor-Leste's reports to the UN Treaty Bodies and who now works with the World Bank in Timor-Leste.



Patrick Earle, Executive Director of the DTP, then led participants in discussion around the issues of effective advocacy – the need to be strategic in making choices about action, and some of the principles involved in determining whether campaigns succeed in making change – such as the importance of credibility, focus and timing.

On Friday, a day's session was dedicated to internet training with Philip Chung. It proved impossible to find anywhere in Dili that could accommodate 27 participants with computers and high speed internet access, but the training took place in an internet café in Dili. The physical conditions were therefore less than ideal for the internet training – even if they are reflective of the great digital divide that exists across the region. Despite the difficult conditions, the feedback on the session was generally positive.

The highlight of the first week of the training was provided by José Ramos-Horta's reflections on Timor Leste's struggle for independence and how international support for this had been painstakingly built over 25 years. Meeting informally with participants in the peaceful surrounds of Dare seminary he explored widely the complexity of nation building and the ongoing issues raised by unfulfilled expectations in the early post-independence years. The importance of creativity, flexibility, persistence and of understanding the positions of others and the changing context in which a campaign operates were all richly illustrated with examples from personal experience. There was also discussion in general terms of current global international relations and the state of

the region in terms of many peoples' struggle for human rights and democracy in the region.

On the Friday evening participants, trainers and PDF staff relaxed in the gardens of Dare where they were entertained by a local band.

Week 2



The second week of the training program was held in Baucau, Timor-Leste's second city. There was a three-hour bus journey up over the hills out of Dili, along the dramatic corniche road. The journey gave participants a view of the east of the country and of Timor Leste's physical beauty. Evidence of the occupation and its violent end was visible everywhere in abandoned military posts and burnt out and still-abandoned buildings. Several IDP camps en route

serve as a reminder of the most recent unrest and ongoing tensions. Goats, pigs, buffalos and dogs roamed and small children played and waved as we travelled through the villages.

The focus of the second week was on developing knowledge and skills in effective advocacy. Sam Gregory, Program Director with WITNESS delivered a two day workshop on video advocacy. WITNESS is the New York based NGO that specialises in building the capacity of human rights defenders to integrate video and new technology into their advocacy work. . This was the second time that Sam has trained with DTP and his sessions proved a highlight for many participants. Sam was able to draw on many examples of the use of video and worked through practical examples to develop participants' understanding of how video can be used effectively in different settings and for different purposes – in generating media coverage of human rights violations, providing testimony of victims and survivors in meetings with officials, and for supporting reports before UN bodies. The sessions emphasised many of the broader principles of effective advocacy and media work and also provided participants with the opportunity to develop their skills in using video.

On Wednesday 6 December Tina Redshaw, former British Ambassador to Timor-Leste and Janelle Saffin, former Australian parliamentarian and long-time advocate on regional human rights issues, including Burma, focussed on effective lobbying practice. Tina and Janelle were able to give practical advice and insight based on their respective experiences as diplomat and parliamentarian. There were two role play exercises in which participants prepared for meetings with Ambassadors and also with parliamentarians.



On Thursday 7 December Jose Caetano and Pat Walsh, from Reception, Truth and Reconciliation Commission

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(CAVR) made the long trip to Baucau. The focus of the full day's presentation was the lessons to be drawn from Timor-Leste's experience with transitional justice and reconciliation. The groundbreaking report of CAVR, which documents human rights abuses from the period around the declaration of East Timorese independence in 1975 and through the Indonesian occupation was officially launched in November 2006 under the name "Chega!", a Portuguese word which translates as "No More!", "Stop!", or "Enough!" .

The Final Report covers a period of some 25 years (1974-1999) and looks at the roles and responsibilities of East Timorese parties and individuals, including the resistance as well as the Indonesian military and the international community – much of which stood by quietly as the human rights violations occurred.

The report represents the culmination of 3 years of work by the Commissioners and staff, involving hearings, fact-finding missions and research. However, the real significance of the Report lies in its contribution to the ongoing reconciliation processes within Timor-Leste, in giving voice to the victims of human rights violations and in the process of seeking some accountability for the violations of the past, including where appropriate redress and reparations. The report looks to the future and the steps that need to be taken to build a human rights culture in Timor Leste. It is therefore important that the whole community, as well as the international community, be made aware of the contents of the Final Report. The effective dissemination of the CAVR Final Report in Timor-Leste, and implementation of its recommendations has been acknowledged by the Prime Minister and President as vitally important steps in the ongoing reconciliation process.

Few of those responsible for the terrible violations of human rights that occurred have been held to account. Those responsible in the Indonesian military returned to Indonesia, as did many of the high ranking members of the militias that wreaked such destruction in 1999.

The voices of some victims, supported by human rights organisations, are demanding justice in the form of an international process to hold those responsible to account, while the government of Timor Leste is negotiating an alternative path with the Indonesian government and the international community that would involve acknowledgement of the crimes committed. The international community found that crimes against humanity took place at the time of the referendum in 1999 and it is therefore an obligation of the international community to hold those responsible to account.

There was the opportunity to explore some of the dilemmas that Timor-Leste now faces in relation to truth, justice and reconciliation. The principles of justice and accountability, and the needs and demands of the victims, are in clear tension with the practical realities of Timor-Leste's government. Timor-Leste has to build good relations with its larger neighbours, and has very limited capacity for influence with either of its largest

neighbours, both of whom are identified in the *Chega!* Report as having responsibility in relation to the history of human rights violations.

In much advocacy work, tensions arise between principle and pragmatism. The gap between the standards governments agree to adhere to and the political choices they make and actions they take is often wide – and closing the gap is a constant challenge faced by human rights advocates. Non-governmental advocates also have to choose what it is possible to achieve – and this will change at different times. Understanding the perspectives and positions of others, the influence of timing and the importance of credibility and flexibility to changing circumstances are all a part of the process of effective advocacy.

The case of General Pinochet in Chile was raised as one example – the impossibility of holding Pinochet to account immediately after the re-establishment of democracy in Chile when institutions were weak and democracy fragile, the persistence of the victims in seeking justice and accountability, international solidarity and the gradual strengthening of democratic institutions led to a situation in which Pinochet was stripped of his power and influence and charged before the courts in Chile.

Discussion of the tensions and issues around questions of peace and justice, truth and accountability and processes of transition and reconciliation was enriched by the experiences and perspectives of participants from Cambodia, Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and India (Jammu and Kashmir). Great admiration for generous spirit of the East Timorese was expressed as well as great interest in the transitional process in Timor-Leste and the lessons that could be drawn from it.

The final day at Baucau focused on discussion of the human rights based-approach to development. This approach seeks to understand and respond to the complex relationships between peace, justice, development and human rights.

Patrick Earle introduced participants to the key concepts of the human rights based, approach to development, and provided some background to its evolution as the dominant policy approach among official and NGO development agencies. The need for development to address the poverty, marginalisation and discrimination, which is frequently the underlying cause for conflict, the need for development processes to involve the participation of those most affected and for the accountability of government and development agencies were highlighted. The set of human rights standards agreed on by



the international community and the commitments made on international cooperation and the Millennium Development Goals provide a coherent framework for development policy and practice.

Catherine Anderson then outlined how the approach could be applied in practice and led participants through an exercise in how an understanding of government commitments to human rights might affect a policy such as privatisation of water. The privatisation of utilities is a policy being heavily promoted by international institutions such as the World Bank and Asia Development Bank and bilateral donor agencies, but is raising great concerns among NGOs and communities concerned about the impact on the poor in particular. Through the exercise participants looked at how human rights principles and obligations such as non-discrimination, participation, accountability and universality might be used to challenge the imposition of particular policies.



Week 3

On Saturday December 9th, participants travelled back to Dili in preparation for the final week of the program. The Brazilian Ambassador very generously made available the Centre for Business Development, Vocational Training and Social Promotion in Becora.

On Sunday 10th December, participants attended a ceremony to commemorate International Human Rights Day and the 10th anniversary of awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta and Bishop Belo in 1996. With the participation of the country's national and community leaders, the aim of the traditional Timorese peace ceremony was to focus the nation's attention on the need to find a path to unity and peace through forgiveness, mutual tolerance and national solidarity.

The participants issued a public statement to mark International Human Rights Day on the occasion of the 58th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and were invited to deliver their statement from the podium at the Palacio do Governo. This was a very practical exercise of putting to use the lessons learned in the course, and an example of international solidarity in action. The participants stated that “we have been humbled to learn about the suffering experienced by the East Timorese and by the welcome we have received. We believe that in Timor-Leste as in all of our countries, accountability for human rights violations must be the foundation on which peace and justice is built.”

“On Human Rights Day, Timor-Leste is to be applauded for its leadership in ratifying the seven core human rights treaties. These treaties address the pressing problems of the region. We applaud the adoption of the new UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons and we urge our governments to follow this lead by ratifying and implementing

this and the core human rights agreements and adopting the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a priority.”

On Monday 11 December the morning session was delivered by the UN Human Rights Unit. The first part considered the UN treaty bodies and the reporting process which is designed to assist governments to implement their human rights commitments. The second part focused on human rights monitoring and investigations, reports and documentation emphasising the importance of accuracy and clarity and concerns about safety and security.

Participants then moved to the Offices of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Dili for the final sessions of the day. The Commission is housed in the gaol that was used during both the Portuguese and Indonesian occupation to detain and torture political activists. An introductory tour was given by Pat Walsh, a leading human rights defender from Australia and by a colleague. For over twenty years, Pat was an advocate for East Timor and human rights in the region, and was invited to help establish and work with the Commission, where he has worked for the past six years.

A special session was then held in the courtyard of the former prison with Bishop Gunnar Stalsett, Norway’s Special Envoy to Timor-Leste. Bishop Stalsett, the former Lutheran Bishop of Oslo and long serving member of the Nobel Peace Prize committee and has extensive experience in peacemaking and peacebuilding across the globe and was one of the key facilitators of the peace agreement in Guatemala that brought an end to decades of gross human rights violations against Indigenous Guatemalans. Bishop Stalsett has been invited to advise both the President and the Prime Minister on how best to bridge the gaps between the various political and social actors in Timor-Leste.

In his address and the following discussion he emphasised the relationship between poverty and conflict and the important role that human rights defenders and community advocates had in finding peaceful pathways to resolving difference and reaffirming common human dignity. This was the first occasion that Bishop Stalsett has participated in the Diplomacy Training Program and Professor Paul Redmond, who chaired the session, expressed the deep appreciation of the Diplomacy Training Program’s Board.

The final session of the day was presented by Joaquim Fonseca, former NGO leader and now Prime Ministerial adviser on human rights. He led participants through the role and functions of the UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures, based on the practical experience of Timor Leste.

In the evening participants were entertained at Arte Moris, East Timor’s free art school. Its primary aim is to use art as a building block in the psychological and social reconstruction of a country devastated by violence, with special emphasis on helping its young citizens. It was a very special evening of music, dance and food.



On the final full day of the program, participants were provided with an introduction to the role of National Human Rights Institutions by Horatio de Almeida of the Provedore's Office. The Provedore is one of the newest national human rights institutions in the Asia-Pacific region and Horatio explained its role in Timor-Leste, as well as introducing participants to the role of national human rights institutions more generally. Although

NGO perspectives of the value of these institutions is mixed, in certain countries and at particular times they have played an important role in the promotion and protection of human rights and this has highlighted their potential value. Experience has also shown that such institutions are most effective when they engage and work effectively with human rights NGOs.

In the final sessions, participants focussed on some of the emerging human rights challenges associated with processes of economic globalisation. There is an increasing focus by the human rights community on the issues of trade, and international and bilateral trade frameworks and on the role and responsibilities of corporations. Trade and trade regimes, such as those negotiated through and policed by, the World Trade Organisation, have a profound effect on the extent to which people can realise their human rights, and on the capacity of governments to act in specific areas such as health. Professor Paul Redmond, Chair of the DTP Board, provided participants with a solid grounding in the debates and emerging standards on corporate accountability and human rights. As the role of governments in many areas of economic and social life recedes, the role and influence of corporations has increased posing new challenges for human rights advocates. The OECD Guidelines on Multi-National Enterprises and the UN Draft Norms on the Human Rights responsibilities of companies were a particular focus.

The Closing Ceremony was held at the home of the Prime Minister H.E. Jose Ramos-Horta by his kind invitation, and Professor Paul Redmond and Jose Ramos-Horta formally presented the participants with their certificates in a ceremony that was notable for its warmth and hospitality.

The following morning, participants were brought together for a final feedback and evaluation session. Participants provided very positive feedback on the program and in particular the value of holding the program in Timor Leste. The generosity of the hosts, and in particular the Peace and Democracy Foundation was acknowledged with gratitude and appreciation.

Training Methodology

The Diplomacy Training Program's training methodology is based on principles of adult learning. It was designed to be interactive and discursive rather than in the style of

formal lectures. Participants are encouraged to make comments and voice opinions about the human rights issues before them and about course materials. Group exercises and role plays were conducted throughout the program usually featuring the roles of governments, special Rapporteurs and local and international human rights NGOs discussing some hypothetical human rights problem. At all times the sessions stressed the importance of debate.

Participants prepared and delivered presentations on their own situations and work, which helped to keep the course grounded in practical realities. These presentations enabled participants to practice their presentation and public speaking skills as well as providing valuable opportunities for learning and sharing experiences and the development of solidarity links.

Participants also made a major contribution to the organisation and running of the course itself, dividing into groups to manage the days, keeping the course on time and keeping each other refreshed and energised through innovative exercises, songs and dancing

Course Materials

The DTP Manual was the core reference material for the course. Introductory chapters were mailed to participants in the weeks before the training. The course materials were provided in both hard copy and on CD Rom at the conclusion of the training, along with copies of the presentations and papers prepared by many of the individual trainers and the participants. This provides participants with a very valuable and useful resource to take away, to use and share with others. A separate instruction manual was provided on Internet Advocacy.

Program Objectives

The program objectives were:

- To provide training in human rights law and advocacy skills to human rights defenders in the Asia-Pacific region.
- To enhance the capacity of community advocates and human rights defenders to access and participate in governmental and inter-governmental processes to promote and protect of human rights and the rule of law.
- To encourage and facilitate the development of support networks between human rights defenders in Timor-Leste and the region.
- To provide specialised human rights training to officials and NGOs in Timor-Leste

Evaluating the program



The Diplomacy Training Program and the Peace and Democracy Foundation successfully provided an intensive regional human rights training program to 27 human rights defenders and community advocates. The program was delivered in difficult local circumstances.

The impact of a human rights education program is difficult to assess. DTP relies strongly on participant and trainer feedback to guide the direction of its programs. At the end of the program, all DTP participants complete two anonymous evaluation questionnaires. In this program the response was very positive. DTP also endeavours to evaluate each individual trainer at the end of each session. All the individual trainers were positively evaluated by the participants in the 16th Annual Program. The collaboration with WITNESS was particularly well received. The range of styles and approaches of the different trainers clearly adds to the richness of the program and provides participants with a wide range of perspectives. There was a good balance in the program between theory and practical skills and a number of the participants commented on the value of being able to draw on East Timor's practical experiences of engagement with the UN system.

To take advantage of the location there was a commitment to integrate East Timorese issues and case studies into the program and East Timorese resource people and experts were heavily involved – particularly in the first and final weeks. Being able to learn from Jose Ramos-Horta's experiences was the highlight of this, but the opportunity to learn from other East Timorese advocates made for a very rich learning experience. The capacity of the East Timorese to overcome such conflict and trauma and to win their struggle for self-determination against such overwhelming odds was inspiring to many of the participants.

Once again PDF saw the hosting of the program and the collaboration as a learning experience – part of building the capacity of their staff. Supporting the program was a great drain on the organisation's human and financial resources at a time when it was juggling many other demands. However, the success of the program was as much the result of the collegial way PDF and DTP staff worked together as much as the good humour, patience and commitment of the participants. The Diplomacy Training Program would like to acknowledge in particular the contribution of its volunteer (and graduate) Alma Mir of Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education for her contribution in making the program a success.

The diversity of backgrounds and issues being worked on by participants posed both challenges and opportunities for trainers. There was also a range of English language skills. However the program proved to be a very positive experience for participants, enabling the sharing of experiences and perspectives and the development of a broader view of the human rights challenges of the region. Over the course of the program a number of trainers commented on the atmosphere of mutual respect and support shown for each other by the participants. The feedback from the evaluations indicated that one of the highlights of the program was the openness and sharing between participants.

During the program, most of the participants made a presentation about the issues of concern to them and what they were working to achieve. Through these presentations, participants and trainers received personal insights into many of the human rights issues in the region. The presentations provided the catalyst for further discussion, and for the development of support and solidarity. The presentations and the opportunity to develop bonds of solidarity and friendship was clearly a highlight of the three weeks.

Locating the training in Timor Leste provided an opportunity to build greater knowledge and understanding of East Timor's situation among wider networks in the region. East Timorese NGO advocates are comparatively isolated from the regional networks of the Asia-Pacific region through cost and distance. Learning from the East Timorese experience was seen as a highlight by many participants. The East Timorese participants welcomed the opportunity to share their experiences, as well as to learn from the experiences of others. The program reinforced the need to ensure that East Timorese advocates continue to participate in regional human rights networks.

The situation in East Timor and the deferral of the course from June to November meant that some of the regular DTP trainers were unable to participate in the course. It also meant that the objective of using the presence of international trainers to provide training to others in East Timor (officials and NGOs) could not be achieved on this occasion.





Participant Evaluations

I learned a lot from this training and I will use some of it for lobbying with governments and other UN agencies to pay attention to the disability movement in East Timor.

The knowledge of human rights and the UN system have really opened my mind that there is an international mechanism which can support our work

The best part of sharing experiences is that I've learned the way other participants work for their organizations and I've gained ideas from other participants that can help me to broaden my knowledge about human rights

The skills provided by this training will help our organization maximise our approach and strategy.

The best thing were the people; the group work; learning about East Timor; learning about other struggles in the region; learning how I can do my job better by having more skills in the international area. All the instructors were great.

The best thing about the training was the family spirit, the openness and sharing; interacting freely; the country presentations and the wider knowledge of the struggle for self determination in each country.

The best thing is how we as NGOs can put reports to UN and also how we can lobby other countries for support.

Teaching the participants on UN level with examples of newly independent east Timor; participatory approach; sessions handled by high level people including the Prime Minister.

The best thing is that it was practically oriented. Besides having the theoretical knowledge the role plays were insightful enough to help understand the issues better.

Advocacy and lobbying with UN General Assembly and all the Conventions explained; lobbying with the parliament and other relevant authorities; rights based approach and video filming; all these very useful to lobby for peace in our respective countries.

It was useful to distinguish the economic, social and cultural rights of people and what responsibilities and accountability governments have.

The knowledge of human rights I gained from this training will help a lot in clearly describing the issues, in order to better develop approaches to the programs related to children.

Teaching participants to analyse the case.



Reflections and Recommendations

DTP's annual regional program remains one of the most intensive experiences in human rights education in the Asia/Pacific region. While the annual program has been held in many locations over the years, the invitation to hold the course in Timor-Leste in 2005 and 2006 has been greatly valued by the Board of the Diplomacy Training Program. Through its Founder and Patron, Jose Ramos-Horta, and through many participants in its

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courses, the Diplomacy Training Program has had a very long and close association with the struggle of the East Timorese for justice and peace and the realisation of human rights. That struggle continues today, albeit with different challenges and in a different environment. Many of DTP's East Timorese alumni have faced the challenge of moving from being opposition activists and government critics to the having the responsibilities to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights as government officials. The last two annual programs in Timor-Leste have therefore been highlights in the organisation's history.

Following this course, The Diplomacy Training Program will explore with its partner, the Peace and Democracy Foundation, how DTP may be able to continue to be engaged in



offering support to advocates in East Timor through capacity building programs. The Peace and Democracy Foundation has expressed the wish to explore whether the East Timorese alumni of the Diplomacy Training Program can be more actively used as a network to help promote human rights, peaceful dialogue and conflict resolution.

The Diplomacy Training Program is also interested to explore whether a program targeted at developing understanding of the relationship between human rights, peace and development might be a useful contribution to the work of civil society advocates in Timor-Leste.

This program has reinforced the need for continuing international NGO engagement with East Timor. Through including East Timorese advocates in its range of specialist thematic programs, the Diplomacy Training Program can help meet the objective of ensuring East Timorese advocates are enabled and encouraged to develop links with the broader human rights community in the Asia-Pacific region. The Diplomacy Training Program also needs to reflect on how to incorporate the lessons from East Timor into its course – in particular the challenges of making the transition from conflict to post-conflict societies and the relationships (and tensions) between peace, justice and reconciliation.