

## NEOLIBERAL EDUCATION IN CRISIS AND BRUTALITY OF THE NATIONAL POLICE OF TIMOR-LESTE (PNTL) AGAINST TEACHERS IN TIMOR-LESTE

(Background: the Timor-Leste government through the Minister of Education has dismissed close to a thousand contracted teachers, many of them volunteer teachers with long-term experience, throughout the country)

The protesters of the National Council of Timor-Leste's Teachers consist by the contracted teachers who been teaching as teachers in all part of the country. Mostly had been teaching more than 10 years. They are experienced, dedicated to their career as teachers. Unfortunately their career have been ended by the unfair decision of the Minister of Education of the Gusmão's Government.

Related to this unfair decision most of the schools in various part of the country included Dili have been left without teachers. This will affect education progress in Timor-Leste, especially for children whose parents are economically poor in the districts and the capitals city as well (except the children of the elite). The students couldn't attend the examination in the beginning of March because insufficient teachers were available. This has also affected permanent teachers, who must increase their teaching hours, similar to the teachers who were teaching during Portuguese colonial times, so that 1 teacher teaches more than 100 students a day inside a tiny room.

This is why most of the contracted teachers united to protest the blind decision from the Minister of Education since January until now. Even though they faced a variety of abuses especially from police authority when they are fighting for their civil rights, but the teachers is consolidated themselves and continue to protest peacefully. From January to this month almost 20 teachers and students have been arrested by the police and detained at the National Police of Timor Leste/PNTL. To end this statement, we call on the police to unconditionally release all those arrested: they are educators not corruptors nor HR violators in this country.

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