



# 32nd Annual Regional Human Rights & Peoples Diplomacy Training Program Program Report



12 - 23 August, 2024



The Diplomacy Training Program's 32nd Annual Program received support from the Australian Government's Australian NGO Cooperation Program, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

# 1. Executive Summary

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*I believe that this program very helpful for all people who need to fight for the right, Justice and peace.*

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The Diplomacy Training Program's (DTP) 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy Training for Human Rights Defenders in the Asia-Pacific (Annual Program) was held in Timor-Leste from 12 - 23 August, 2024 with the Global Campus of Human Rights (Global Campus), in partnership with the UNTL Human Rights Centre (HRC), Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), the Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), and The Judicial System Monitoring Program (JSMP).

Twenty-nine human rights defenders from 14 different countries<sup>1</sup> participated in this two-week intensive residential program of learning, sharing and skills building. The participants work on a diverse range of human rights concerns including rights of migrant workers, women and children, LGBTQI+, gender justice, the rights of persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples' rights, peace-building and struggles for self-determination, the environment and climate change.

Trainers in the program included DTP's Founder and Patron, President José Ramos-Horta, Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Professor Surya Deva, DTP Board member and international child rights expert, Dr Noam Peleg, and Joshua Cooper, Hawai'i Institute for Human Rights. Leading up to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Timor-Leste's vote for independence celebrations, the program acknowledged and paid tribute to the many victims and activists in the Timorese struggle for the right to self-determination and democracy, touching on the on-going struggles taking place around the world today – from New Caledonia/Kanaky to Myanmar, from Indonesia/West Papua to Palestine - with the importance of solidarity across the region stressed. Participants explored human rights in the context of the climate emergency, geopolitical concerns, shrinking civil society space and commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This year in a new collaboration with the Global Campus, it also included a focus on peace and human rights.

Knowledge sessions focused on the right to development, rights of women, human rights and business, LGBTQI+, migrant workers, Indigenous peoples' rights, child rights, and the rights of persons with disabilities. Skills building included advocacy and media strategies and the opportunity to apply program content in practical exercises including group role-plays, and exercises to engage with the UN Human Rights System and diplomats.

Timor-Leste with its Asian and Pacific identity is an ideal place for advocates from the two regions to learn and to share together, strengthening linkages and human rights movements in both regions. It enables the sharing of lessons of organising human rights advocacy under repression, of effectively using international law and the UN system, of building effective solidarity for human rights, and of building peace and reconciliation out of conflict. The field visit to Centro Nacional Chega!, housed in a former prison, and the Santa Cruz cemetery, site of the 1991 massacre of pro-independence demonstrators, in conjunction with dialogue with the Timorese, grounded reflections on democracy movements and human rights struggles in the region, the power of advocacy and global solidarity.

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*This DTP is very valuable for human Rights defenders in their work and country/region.*

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<sup>1</sup> Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu.

Participant evaluations at the end of the program reiterated the value and need for this regional human rights program and inform this report. DTP thanks its partners, its trainers for their pro bono contribution, the participants who shared their knowledge, and DTP's donors and funders, the Australian Government, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - and the President of Timor-Leste.

## 2. Purpose

***To enhance the effectiveness of civil society representatives working to promote and protect human rights across the Asia-Pacific region.***

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*I feel more empowered to effectively advocate and campaign for human rights as a result of this life and game changing program.*

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This annual, comprehensive human rights and advocacy course is the longest established human rights training program held in the region. Now in its 32<sup>nd</sup> delivery, it recognises the role that training can play in enhancing the effectiveness of advocates and advocacy, and the value of building support networks among human rights defenders and diverse movements for human rights. Underpinning the program is an understanding of the critical role of human rights defenders and community advocates in protecting and promoting human rights – and of ensuring human rights agreements are implemented. This program is part of DTP's longer-term strategy of building capacities and networks for the diverse human rights movements of Asia and the Pacific. To this end, DTP works with its partners and alumni to select participants to attend the program, who will take their learnings back to their movements and organisations, continuing the work to promote and protect human rights across the region.



## 3. Program Methodology and Materials

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*The connections both with other participants and trainers was an unexpected highlight of the DTP.*

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Since 1990, DTP has established its reputation for delivering relevant and practical human rights training programs for human rights defenders in the Asia-Pacific region. A respect for the lived experiences,

perspectives and skills of participants forms the basis of DTP's participatory program methodology. The program is run and shaped by the participants at every stage. They manage the day's program, participate in daily reflections that amend and guide the program, and are encouraged and expected to share experiences and lessons with each other and trainers throughout the course of the program. Trainers are briefed about the collaborative nature of the training and they are encouraged to incorporate group work, role plays, case studies, exercises and small group discussion into their sessions.

Participants expressed that this was a unique feature to the DTP training that they valued, feeling more connected and involved with the program. The participatory nature and sharing of experiences also helped to ground the dense theoretical content. Based on their feedback, advice and requests, the course schedule is continuously reviewed and adapted.

Throughout the two weeks, all participants deliver a short presentation on their work. This helps participants to develop skills and confidence in presenting, encourages sharing of experiences and strategies and builds knowledge on the diverse and shared human rights issues of the Asia-Pacific region. A comprehensive DTP manual complements the training. The DTP Manual and trainer and participant presentations are provided to the participants in soft copy for future reference.

## 4. Participants

DTP and partners aim to have 25-30 participants on the program, including at least 5 from Timor-Leste. Information about the program and the call for applications was distributed widely by DTP, its partners and alumni through NGO networks across the Asia-Pacific region. The 29 participants were selected through an open and competitive selection process. Efforts are made to ensure gender balance, geographic and age representation, and a mix of human rights issues. Priority consideration is given to Indigenous peoples' advocates and women. Disability inclusion remains a challenge for programs in Timor Leste.

This program attracted a record 722 expressions of interest in attending the program, resulting in 267 applications. Over 40 applicants were initially selected, however, due to withdrawals for personal reasons, visa issues, lack of travel documents etc, 28 participants joined the program in Timor-Leste. These participants included lawyers, researchers, advocates and human rights/community trainers working on a broad range of human rights issues. This diversity contributed to the richness of the program.



DTP acknowledges the commitment of the participants, many working on challenging human rights issues in the region, thanks them for their energetic participation, for sharing their knowledge and experience and the support they extended to each other throughout this intensive learning program.

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*I have new friends, network and build solidarity together not only for my situation in my island but also stand for other friends with their situation.*

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## 5. Trainers

Along with the participants' sharing of their lived experiences and knowledge, DTP's programs are further enriched by the wealth of knowledge imparted by its trainers, who teach on the program pro



bono, sharing DTP's commitment to investing in human rights defenders. A number of trainers, presenters and facilitators regularly return to participate in DTP's Annual Program.

Trainers, presenters and facilitators in the program included DTP's Founder and Patron, President José Ramos-Horta, Professor Surya Deva (UN Special Rapporteur on the right to development), Virgilio da Silva Guterres (Timor's Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice), H.E. Marc Friedrich (EU Ambassador to

Timor-Leste), Ian Martin, Joshua Cooper, Noam Peleg, Professor Adriano Remiddi, Dr Suphatmet Yunyasit, Dr. Naparat Kranrattanasuit, Fritzie Rodriguez, Patrizia DiGiovanni, and Patrick Earle, as well as Timorese experts and activists, Professor Armindo Maia, Norberta Vicente Soares da Cruz, Celso da Fonseca, Hugo Fernandez, Casimiro Dos Santos, Maria Jose da Fonseca Monteiro de Jesus, Bella Galhos, Milena Pires, Judite Dias Ximenes, Ivete de Oliveira, Zelia Fernandes and Nelson Santos.

DTP and the participants enjoy when DTP alumni return and teach on the program, providing participants a further opportunity to network with alumni. For this program, at least seven DTP alumni were trainers and facilitators.

A highlight for many was the discussion with DTP's Founder and Patron and Timorese President, José Ramos-Horta on human rights in the region and his experiences as a human rights advocate.

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*Its great pleasure to be with this team. Specially patrick want us to get all opportunities from this training. He is very keen on that. I saw his dedication and the spirit to give us more knowledge on this short period.*

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## 6. Program Description and Highlights

### **Welcomes and Opening**

Held at the University of Timor-Leste, participants were warmly welcomed by the University's Rector, Professor Joao Soares Martins, alongside Ana Paula Marçal, Executive Director, The Judicial System Monitoring Program (JSMP), Professor Armindo Maia, Director of the UNTL Human Rights Centre, Adriano Remiddi, Head of Unit – Capacity Development, Global Campus of Human Rights, and Patrick Earle, Executive Director, DTP. This was followed by the keynote address from Timor's Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice, Virgilio da Silva Guterres.

Speaking from his experiences as both an activist and as the Ombudsman, Mr da Silva Guterres provided participants with a good overview of the current state of human rights in the country. He shared the successes the country has achieved with civil and political rights, as well the challenges faced with fulfilling economic, social and cultural rights, stressing the importance of defending the principles of human rights.

### **Sharing on Timor-Leste's Struggle for Self-Determination and Human Rights in Timor-Leste Today**

Professor Maia gave a powerful presentation on the struggle for self-determination in Timor-Leste. He reflected on the struggle, building Timor's democracy and shared what the human rights landscape is like now in Timor-Leste. In an open and frank discussion, he drew from his own experiences in the fight for independence and how it led him to his position as Director of the Human Rights Centre and the work they presently do continuing the fight for human rights in modern day Timor.

DTP alumna Norberta Vicente Soares da Cruz shared the experiences of the fight for disability rights in Timor. Along with Celso da Fonseca, they discussed the stigma that still surrounds people with disability, the struggle to ratify the convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and then the implementation of the Convention. There has been a number of successes for the disability movement in Timor, but still a long way to go until people with a disability can full enjoy their rights.

### **Introduction to Human Rights – and Human Rights Education**

Adriano Remiddi introduced the concept of human rights, focusing on the right to human rights education. Looking at the history and ethos of the Global Campus of Human Rights, he went through the background of the right, exploring why people study human rights and the importance of this. Participants then engaged in a participatory group work activity where they had to pitch a human rights education training activity to a university board. The exercise forced participants to think about all aspects of training programs – from the concept, outline, and budget, to countering arguments thrown up in opposition to the activity.

### **Introduction to Human Rights – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Bill of Rights, Human Rights Treaties, The Human Rights Council, and The UN’s Special Procedures and the UPR**

Patrick Earle engaged the participants as he briefly charted the development of international human rights standards and the UN Human Rights System. He provided participants with an overview of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and the avenues for bringing their issues to the UN.

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Human Rights session with Special Rapporteur, Prof Surya Deva. His sharing in how dealing with the complaints [is] important for CSOs so that they know what they were dealing with.

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The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development, Professor Surya Deva, followed this up with a look at the UN Special Procedures. These sessions provided participants with an overview of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and the avenues for bringing their issues to the UN. Surya explored with participants the benefits but also the limitations of the system, engaging them in a lively Q&A, stressing the importance in networking when making use of the mechanisms in order to get your issue seen and heard in the system.



Joshua Cooper’s sessions on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the end of the program provided a wonderful opportunity to consolidate the two-week’s worth of learning. Drawing on his extensive insider experience working on different country reviews over the years, his anecdotes of representing different groups offered practical tips and prepared everyone for their mock UPR session – always a highlight of the program. The UPR simulation has each participant taking on a different role in a UPR session. During the final morning of the session, the participants prepare for and conduct the UPR of a

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*UPR role play... it was very necessary for my work as it was easy for me to understand and made my work easier.*

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member state (Fiji). Participants put into practice the knowledge, strategies and skills developed during the program.

### **Integrating Human Rights and Development – a new model for Planet Centred Participatory Development**

In the discussion of his mandate as Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Surya investigated what development is. He introduced the model of development that he is working with – a planet centred participatory development. He shared the work already completed on this and what he aims to do during his term. Through group work discussions during the sessions, participants worked on their understanding of the right to development, and interrogated problems with the current model of development, particularly in barriers for participation.

### **Human Rights and the Environment – the Right to A Clean Safe and Sustainable Environment – New CRC General Comment and the SDGs, The Climate Crisis and Human Rights –**

The effects of climate change have driven the recognition of the right to a clean, safe and sustainable environment as a human right in 2022 and Surya shared the background behind this, stressing the link between climate change/the environment and human rights. Participants considered the rights impacted by climate change, agreeing that all rights are affected.



Climate change and its impact on human rights was later discussed in the second week in relation to child rights with Dr Noam Peleg, in reference to the new General Comment 26 on children’s rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change. He also stressed the important role human rights defenders have in informing treaty body committees and other UN bodies/mechanisms in of the very real situation on the ground in their countries. Noam led participants in an exercise concerned with treaty body reporting. Participants were asked to draft recommendations in regard to child rights and climate change that could be presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child for use in the Concluding Observations for

their country.

Joshua Cooper also led a session on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the climate crisis and human rights. He touched upon the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which demands unified action on limiting temperature rise and strategies to deal with the impact of climate change. He shared his experience in SDG negotiations and the battle of language in international documents. He clearly explained the process of setting human rights and sustainability goals.

### **Understanding the Responsibilities of Business to Human Rights**

Surya provided a background to business and human rights using examples from participants about issues in their own countries. He explored the challenges of the state/corporate nexus in the field and the need for legal and social licences for business to ensure human rights are respected, protected and abuses remedied. Participants looked at the UN Guiding Principles and the OECD guidelines and their utility in addressing human rights violations. Access to remedy was also discussed, with participants being walked through the process of making a complaint to National Contact Points (under the OECD Guidelines).

Recent developments in the space were also explained and explored, in particular the European Union’s Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. Through role play, participants were able to dive deeper

into the issues as well as practice their advocacy and lobbying skills, presenting a case to the Special Rapporteur and his staff.

### **An Introduction to Advocacy for Change – Some Tools for Developing Strategy – Deciding Who to Target and How**

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*I have to approach people and make connections a lot. It is good to understand what people think, especially the lobbying session.*

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Advocacy, engagement and solidarity are key drivers of accountability and better governance. One of the key focuses of the program is to build participants' skills in strategic advocacy in order to make change for human rights. Patrick Earle led a session on campaigns and advocacy, sharing the DTP story as well as his many years of working in this space, and drawing directly on the participant's own experiences. The interactive session focussed on the difference between advocacy and campaigns, stressing the importance of evaluation and reflection in campaigning. Participants were then tasked with brainstorming ways to make change, reflecting on successes and challenges in their own work.



### **Building Media Skills for Strategic Advocacy**

Building on the introductory session from Patrick, Fritzie Rodriguez from FORUM-ASIA, spent a day with the participants looking at story-telling and media campaigns. Participants were shown examples from FORUM-ASIA and asked to critique their effectiveness. They examined how to craft a narrative as well as change a narrative, common mistakes made in story-telling and how effective first-hand accounts and voices from the ground can be in advocacy. Fritzie also took participants through knowing your audience and using this to target your communications and advocacy. Participants were engaged in role plays and group work in brainstorming key messaging, pitches and knowing your audience. A highlight for participants was the elevator pitch exercise where they had to tell their story to Patrick.

### **Human Rights and Peace – Building them Together – Drawing out the Lessons**

Drs Suphatmet Yunyasit and Naparat Kranrattanasuit provided participants with an introduction to human rights and peace – a topic area that was introduced into the program this year. They outlined the key concepts in peace studies: Conflict, violence, peaceful means and peace, as well as the approaches and concepts in conflict/peace studies, with an in-depth focus on conflict transformation. Looking at examples from Thailand, participants had the opportunity to unpack what peace means to different people as well as the different forms of violence in communities, bringing the concepts



together to look at how they intersect with human rights.

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*...very helpful and reenergising as it gave me some more faith in what I am working on at home.*

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### **CRPD – The Rights of Persons with Disability: Timor Leste and Using Treaties**

In the second week, Dr Naparat Kranrattanasuit and Celso da Fonseca returned to the rights of persons with disability, starting with an exploration activity that simulated the experiences of people with disabilities. This was a great practical exercise which the participants found very effective and challenging. Naparat led the participants through a range of activities of what people with disability need to participate in conferences and events. Celso then shared the experience of Timor-Leste, building on what Norberta had shared about her experiences on the first day. Focusing on policies and the laws on disability inclusion, he explored the assessment of these policies in the Timorese government as well as the indicators for inclusion. The practical nature of this session was a highlight for participants.



### **Human Rights in Timor-Leste – Reflections on advocacy and SOGIE, GBV and other challenges**

Leading women’s and LGBTQIA+ activist Bella Galhos shared her story, reflecting that she was a lifelong activist and that making change in society is a long struggle. Having recently married her long term partner in Australia (same sex marriage is not legalised in Timor), she opened up to participants about the backlash she and her partner faced in the wake of their marriage and that the discrimination against them in Timor, extends to their daughter. She recounted the many struggles faced by LGBTQ+ people in Timor – rejection from their families, risk in community as no support/protection from family, attacks from family and community and the increased levels in suicide among the population, to name a few. The Catholic Church has enormous influence in the Timorese society and the upcoming visit of the Pope was cause for much anticipation and celebration in the country. Despite her high profile and wide support for her work for Timorese independence, women’s rights and LGBTQIA+ rights in Timor, Bella faced discrimination, sharing her thoughts on the visit and impact of the Church asking her not to be part of the delegations meeting him. She encouraged all participants to “speak the truth and do the right thing.”

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*Bella Galhos really got us to understand we may be from different countries but we all share similar struggles.*

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## **CEDAW and Gender - Engaging the Treaty Bodies / Treaty Body Advocacy / Sharing Experience from Timor's Report to CEDAW Treaty Bodies**

Following on from Bella's session that focused on gender and LGBTQI+ rights, participants were joined by four leading Timorese women's rights activists – Milena Pires, Judite Dias Ximenes, Ivete de Oliveira and Zelia Fernandes – for a discussion on CEDAW, gender, and women's rights in Timor, both past and present. They provided a background on the Convention, the reporting process and the role of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Timor has had a number of women participate in UN processes and mechanisms, which they were proud of. They offered a critique of the success of the implementation of the Committee's recommendations following Timor's review last year, finding progress in a number of them but not enough has been done. Gender based violence, health and poor education outcomes continue to remain key problem areas for women and girls in Timor. Milena explained the Optional Protocol communications procedure, giving two examples of its use in Timor. These case studies – one dealing with the criminal justice system and the other sexual abuse victims – grounded the theory for participants and illustrated how the mechanism can be utilised with success.



## **An Introduction to Human Rights Diplomacy and Building Solidarity**

DTP alumnus and Timorese diplomat Nelson Santos led a practical session on peoples' diplomacy. Beginning by providing participants with his own history as an activist in exile as a refugee in Australia and then, following independence, government advisor and diplomat. He gave clear examples of diplomacy, stressing the importance of face-to-face meetings, preparing the class for mock diplomat/government minister meetings. In groups, participants approached and attempted to initiate a discussion with Nelson. Nelson's response to and further interaction with the group was then based on the way they presented themselves and their methods of engaging him. Participants appreciated the immediate feedback from Nelson in regard to their different approaches of engaging diplomats and the opportunity to try different strategies in a safe environment.

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*I learned a lot of tactics and insights on international lobbying on human rights issues.*

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## **The UN Convention the Rights of the Child – Key Concepts and Issues**



UNICEF's Patrizia DiGiovanni began the session on the rights of the child providing the participants with a history of the organisation, its mandate and what they do in-country. The group was then joined by Noam Peleg who introduced the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). He discussed the background of child rights, the development of the Convention and outlined the four principles of the Convention: *non-discrimination, best interests of the child, the right to survival and development*, and respect for the views of the child (*child participation*). He took time with the participants

exploring with participants the Lundy Model for Participation and the Best Interest of the Child threefold concept. He led the group in an exercise on drafting recommendations to be included in a country's Concluding Observations in regard to climate change (described in the human rights and the environment section above).

## **Human Rights and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – Indigenous peoples in the UN System**

Joshua Cooper also delivered a session on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and their involvement with the UN system. Mixing first-hand experience of solidarity and advocacy with a clear history of the establishment of Indigenous peoples rights in the UN system, he shared the inspiring stories from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century of powerful Indigenous leaders whose international advocacy ensured spaces for Indigenous peoples in the UN System and secured the adoption in 2007 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by the UN General Assembly. He touched on the place of Indigenous peoples in the SDGs and unpacked the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). He stressed the importance of reflection and socialising experiences with communities back home for Indigenous activists.



## **Field Visit: Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation - Guided Tour & Reflections on the Struggle for Independence - Building International Solidarity, Peace and Reconciliation**

Early in the program, participants spent an afternoon visiting the Centro Nacional Chega! and the Santa Cruz cemetery. Housed in the Old Balide Prison, a Portuguese-era prison where the Indonesian military interned Timorese resistance figures during the occupation, Chega! provided participants with the opportunity to learn firsthand of the Timorese struggle for independence. Unfortunately the museum's was undergoing renovation and so participants were unable to see the major exhibition. Participants were provided with an overview of the truth and reconciliation process in Timor-Leste and where they stand now with presentations by CNC Director Hugo Fernandez, JSMP Deputy Director Casimiro Santos and Maria Jose da Fonseca Monteiro de Jesus, ACBIT. Participants engaged deeply with the presentations at Chega!, and the nuances of reconciliation, documentation and remembering were teased out by the speakers. This led into a broader discussion on justice post-independence.



Participants then visited the Santa Cruz cemetery where the tragedy of Indonesian occupation took physical form for the participants. Here 270 peaceful demonstrators were massacred in November 1991. Led by survivors, participants visited the grave of the late Max Stahl, documentary-maker whose smuggled film footage of the massacre showed the tragedy of Timor to the world. Participants then wound a path through the cemetery to the grave of Sebastião Gomez, the independence activist whose murder prompted the demonstration.

Personal recounts are powerful, and the discussion ended with strong shows of solidarity between participants.

## **Special Session with President José Ramos-Horta**

A highlight for participants and trainers alike was two sessions with the President of Timor-Leste and DTP's Founder, José Ramos-Horta at the Nicolau Lobato Presidential Palace (the official workplace of the President). The second visit took place on the last day of the program and included a lunch at the Katina Matak - an on-site presidential cafe that serves up 500 free meals a day to neighbourhood kids, run by leading LGBT+ advocate, Bella Galhos and her wife – with other special guests to Timor as well as some of the neighbourhood kids. However, the afternoon of the first day saw the President meet with the participants at the Kantina for a special session. The President spent time talking with and fielding questions from participants. The discussion covered a wide range of topics, mixing personal anecdotes,

humour, local politics and global events. President Horta's personal story is an inspirational one for human rights and democracy defenders, and his continuing support for human rights defenders greatly appreciated.



**Session with Diplomats – Human Rights in Foreign Policy – Building Skills in Human Rights Dialogue: Session with H.E. Marc Friedrich, EU Ambassador to Timor-Leste**

Participants were joined by H.E. Marc Friedrich, EU Ambassador to Timor for a special session on human rights and diplomats. The Ambassador shared the EU's approach to human rights, including a discussion of the EU's Human Rights Defenders Guidelines. These mandate action by diplomats to protect and promote the work of human rights defenders. The ambassador also discussed the EU's role in Timor-Leste followed by a Q&A with participants. This was a great opportunity for the participants to engage with a high-ranking diplomat in a safe and welcoming environment where they could discuss the role of diplomats, what they can do as well as their limitations.

**Human Rights and the UN System in Today's World: Session with Ian Martin**

One of the benefits in holding the program close to the anniversary of the referendum vote is the opportunity to hear from key international figures involved in the process when they return for the different milestone celebrations. This year Ian Martin, who has held a number of UN mandates including Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the East Timor Popular Consultation and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, visited the program. He shared his experiences of the UN running the referendum (the lead up, the vote and the aftermath), reflecting that the UN would not be able to do this nowadays. He also provided the participants with a succinct breakdown of the UN, not glossing over its limitations, challenges and failings but knowing the UN can mean knowing which parts of it can work and be important in advocacy and engagement strategies.



## **Solidarity Night: 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of HAK**

During the program, the Timorese NGO HAK Association celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the program was invited along to the celebrations by its current Director and program participant Feliciano da Costa Araujo. Held at their office, there was panel discussion chaired by DTP alumna Joanita Antonita Pinto, musical performances, expressions of solidarity and the sharing of their own experiences from participants from Myanmar and Sri Lanka and a birthday cake. Patrick Earle was invited to represent DTP joining key figures in HAK's important history of human rights advocacy and solidarity.



## **7. Program Evaluation**

As part of DTP's participatory methodology, and in order to ensure that the workshop was better able to meet the needs of the participants, the program coordinators gave participants the opportunity to reflect on and adjust the program through involving daily reflections and trainer evaluations. At the end of the training, participants completed extensive anonymous evaluation questionnaires – and this was followed by a final group sharing of reflections. These processes give program coordinators valuable insights as to how they can adjust the course for greater impact in the future, and allows the participants to reflect on what they have gained from the course and share ideas amongst themselves on how they can best implement what they have learned into their work.

All 29 participants in the program submitted the end of program evaluation. This was the first year that this evaluation was conducted online. There were some initial problems when some of the participants were submitting the survey due to internet connectivity, however, all participants were able to submit their evaluations online and on the final day of the program.

Overall, the feedback received affirmed that the success of the program and that it had a significantly positive impact on the participants. As can be observed in part A of the questionnaire, the data was consistent in demonstrating that aside from one outlier, participants agreed, with 71-75% of participants strongly agreeing, that the course provided them with new knowledge and skills across all four criteria provided.

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*I have learned and gained an important lessons and activities related to DTP during two weeks and I believe that will apply in my life and will share with my coworker or friends in my work place and continuing fight to support vulnerable people.*

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<b>WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM:</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
a. I have gained knowledge of international human rights standards, principles and mechanisms	20	7		1
b. I have built knowledge and skills in engaging the UN human rights accountability mechanisms and UN system	21	8		
c. I have gained practical skills in strategic advocacy, video advocacy, lobbying, and 'peoples' diplomacy'	21	7		1
d. I have stronger networks in the region to enable the sharing of information and support	20	8		1

The data from Part B of the questionnaire was clear in showing that the course was very successful in meeting its objectives. The program met the expectations of all participants and exceeded the expectations of 17 of them (58.6%) and, by and large, the course left participants feeling satisfied that the experience they gained and connections they built will have a positive impact on their work. 21 participants (72.4%) strongly agreed, and 6 agreed (20.7%), with the statement that they felt more able and likely to apply the knowledge and skills gained through the program into their work. Furthermore, 22 participants (75.9%) viewed the program content as very relevant to their work with only 1 (3.4%) stating it was not at all relevant. *NB. It is possible given the qualitative answers from this participant that they misread the scale, as their comments were very positive about the program.*

The degree of difficulty of the course seems to be pitched at an effective level, with only 2 participants (6.9%) finding the content very difficult and 26 (89.7%) thought the course was either somewhat or not very difficult.

While previous iterations of DTP's Annual Human Rights and Peoples Diplomacy Program have run for between 2.5 weeks to a month, in more recent years the program has largely run over 12 days. Despite its shortened program, it remains DTP's longest training program. In recent years there has been feedback from partners and some participants that the program is too short for the content needed to be covered. The responses from this year's participants provides some support for this. The majority of participants felt that the program was the right length (65.5%), with 27.6% reporting that it was too short (up from 8.7% last year). Only 6.9% (2 participants) felt it was too long.

Looking at their reflections, it was clear that the program was useful for participants, particularly when it came to networking and forming connections and giving them more confidence and motivation to continue with their work in defending human rights.

As in previous years, the UPR sessions /role play were found to be some of the most useful of the program. This is largely due to the practical nature of the sessions and the relevance to the participants' work. Other sessions that were useful for the work of the participants included the ones on business and human rights, the right to development and advocacy skills. While a number of participants indicated that all sessions were useful (12, 41.4%), the sessions that were identified as being less useful were the CEDAW session and the number of sessions focussed on Timor-Leste experiences. Participants felt the CEDAW session had too many speakers and so there was little time to delve into the issue, whereas in regard to the focus on the Timorese experience, participants indicated that while it was good

to know the context, there was just too many sessions in a packed schedule. Reducing the time spent here could have been used to explore other issues in more depth.

Participants were also asked for suggestions of how the program could be improved. Some of these are out of the organisers control, such as internet access and speed at the venues and more reliable transport. Others can be taken into consideration for future iterations of the program. These included having an expert on the Sustainable Development Goals to co-present with Joshua Cooper, having a work space for participants to work together following the sessions, the inclusion of some security training for human rights defenders, increasing the presentation time for the participant presentations so the group can learn more about the work they all do, and to include some community type event with local NGOs.

In terms of follow-up support, a number of participants requested alumni gatherings and future workshops (14, 48.3%). Other suggestions included opportunities to engage with diplomats in-country, linking participants with other organisations in their country working on similar issues, powerpoints and resources they can use to share with the teams back home, and deeper courses on some of the topics covered in the training.

## 8. Reflections and Lessons Learnt

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*There is so much packed in, but it was all very relevant and appropriate to our work and that of our networks.*

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### 8.1 Program Location in Timor-Leste:

Timor-Leste is a special location for this program. The personal story of DTP's Founder, President José Ramos-Horta and the history of the Timorese struggle for independence is an inspiring one for human rights defenders across Asia and the Pacific. International solidarity, international law, and the UN system are all elements of that story and central to DTP's work. It was particularly evident this year – the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the vote for independence. The participants were given the opportunity to hear reflections from those associated with the Timorese struggle for independence and the anniversary brought to Timor and number of international experts that enabled participants to hear from those intimately involved. The location provides an opportunity for DTP participants to see theory in action, and to learn from lived experience. Timor-Leste leads in democratic freedoms and civil and political rights in a region of increasingly authoritarian governments.

- **Support from DTP's Founder, President José Ramos-Horta** is a compelling reason to organise the program in Timor-Leste. He was personally generous with his time, and perhaps most significantly, there is nowhere else that human rights defenders can interact with, and receive such support and encouragement for their human rights work from, a head of state This was highlighted by participants.
- **DTP's partnerships and relationships:** DTP's association with the Timorese struggle for self-determination means that it has an extraordinary range of relationships spanning generations, government and civil society. It is hoped that these partnerships with the Justice System Monitoring Project and the Human Rights Centre at the National University of Timor-Leste can help DTP's programs to have a more sustainable and lasting impact in Timor-Leste and enable more thematic-focused programs in Timor-Leste as well.
- **Increased Costs of Travel:** The increased post-pandemic travel costs make Timor-Leste an even more expensive place to organise this program. Transit visas, and transit accommodation through Indonesia and from the Pacific add to the costs. Transit accommodation for Pacific participants in Brisbane and Darwin adds significantly travel costs.

- **Travel, Visas and Logistics:** Timor-Leste allows visas on arrivals for all and the process is simple and efficient. However, participants from most non-ASEAN countries require a transit visa for Indonesia (or Singapore) or Australia for a number of Pacific participants. This adds to costs, and timelines, particularly for participants from Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- **Internet:** Internet access and speeds remain a challenge in Timor-Leste, affecting content delivery and making navigating websites live during sessions difficult
- **Costs in Timor-Leste:** The costs of hotel accommodation and catering in Timor-Leste are higher than elsewhere in the region, although staying in convents/seminaries is economical
- **Location, Accommodation and Venues:** The program was held in three venues, two in Dili and one in Dare (30 minutes outside Dili). Basic accommodation was a mix of twin-share and single-rooms.
- **Transport:** Moving a group of 30 plus around different venues, and on field trips etc can be challenging. UNTL provided the use of one of their buses plus a car. JSMP also provided cars.
- **Trainers:** DTP was able to call on many excellent Timorese trainers with lived experience of human rights work and building international solidarity.

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*change my perspective about conflict, violence and peace.*

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## 8.2 Responding to the Human Rights Emergency in Myanmar

- DTP prioritised participation from Myanmar (Diaspora) to respond to the human rights emergency in Myanmar. The need to build solidarity with the people and democracy movements in Myanmar was a constant theme of the program. The Timorese trainers and participants emphasised the role of Asian solidarity in their own struggle, and expressed the commitment to stand with those in Myanmar who were now looking for their help.

## 8.3 Participants:

- **Numbers/Selection:** DTP called for expressions of interest (EOIs) through its eNewsletter and alumni/partner networks, resulting in 720 EOIs and a record 267 applications. DTP's partners were involved in the selection process applying agreed selection criteria – ensuring balance on gender, geographical and issues/movements. The aim was to have 30 participants. DTP extends its apologies to those that missed out.
- **Gender/Disability/Indigenous/Age Balance:** Most participants were in their 20s and 30s. There were more female than male participants; 16 female (57.1%) to 10 male (35.7%), with 2 identifying as non-binary (7.1%). 1 participant identified as having a disability (3.5%) and there were 16 participants (57.1%) who identified as Indigenous.
- **Regional Distribution:** Costs, visa, funding allocations and organisational issues skewed participation towards ASEAN participants. The high costs of travel impacted South Asia and Pacific participation in the program.
- **Range of Human Rights Issues:** It is a strength of this program that it draws participants working on such a wide range of human rights issues including disability, LGBTQIA+, Indigenous peoples rights, self-determination, gender-based violence, poverty and the environment being just some





of them. There was a range of prior knowledge of international human rights standards and the UN system among the participants – and for some it was their first introduction.

#### 8.4 Program Content and Curriculum

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*I initially didn't want to come to this training course because it will be taught entirely in English and I will be travelling a long way from my country to visit here. I was afraid. But after visiting here, I feel that if I had not visited here, I would not have learned a lot of things... necessary for my work here, and in the future.*

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- **Content range/depth.** This program aims to give a comprehensive introduction to international human rights laws, and to the UN system, helping advocates see these standards and mechanisms as tools to be used in their advocacy strategies for rights and justice. The sources of content and human rights knowledge have been growing, but the time availability of advocates has been shrinking, which makes the balance of depth and range a constant challenge. The emphasis on peer-to-peer learning is a valuable part of the process of network building. The inclusion of peace and human rights and human rights education was new.
- **Length of Program.** This is an intensive two-week program – with 10 days of training, divided into 40 x 1.5 hour sessions. It has been shortened from the previous 3-week program, and there is value in continuing to review the length of the program.
- **Timorese/International content/experience.** This program drew more than others on the context and history of Timor, and the knowledge and experience of Timorese advocates. This gave the program the richness of lived experience, but there could have been more emphasis on the development of the international law of human rights and how it has evolved.
- **Field visits.** The field visits to learn the history of Timor's struggle and to engage with survivors and the families of victims were an important part of the program, enabling the sharing of practical lessons. All of the international participants were moved and inspired.
- **Program Materials:** DTP provides participants with a hard/soft copy Manual. This is supplemented by PPTs and extra resources from the guest trainers. All are provided to participants in soft copy at the end of the program. There is a need to review the materials/program manual.



#### 8.5 Partnerships:

- **Regional/Global.** DTP and its regional partners aim is to use this program to help support and build the capacity of movements for rights, a valuable opportunity to invest in current and future leaders, and to help connect their various different causes and movements. The partnership with the Global Campus of Human Right provided opportunities to learn and reflect on different methodologies.
- **Timor-Leste.** DTP's local partners are JSMP and the Human Rights Centre (HRC) at UNTL. Discussions continue with both on how to increase impact and sustainability.

#### • 8.6 Funding:

- The program was supported with funding from DFAT, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and DTP's individual supporters.
- Unlike previous programs, DTP was not able to raise funds through participant fees, though some participant's travel costs were met by their organisations.
- Lack of additional funding support for travel costs impacted on participation.

### **8.7 Disability:**

- DTP is committed to promoting the rights of persons with disability and the inclusion of persons with a disability in its programs.
- None of the shortlisted international applicants / participants identified as having a disability.
- One participant indicated a social/emotion disability.
- DTP included sessions on disability/ CRPD and one session was led by a DTP alumna who heads up a DPO in Timor and was involved in advocacy for its ratification and following implementation of the CRPD.

### **8.8 Program Impact and Follow-Up:**

- Participants positively evaluated the program.
- A Participants WhatsApp group continues to be active months after the program.
- Participants said that they planned to share learnings with their organisations and networks.
- Impacts on the participants and their work can only be assessed over time, and through follow-up surveys and engagement, and importantly through feedback from partner organisations.
- DTP is continuing to follow-up with some participants based on their needs and requests.

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*Love it... want to do it all again.*

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## Annex I: List of Participants

Country	Name	Organisation
Australia	Jade Thompson	Reconciliation WA
Cambodia	Mariny Oy	Women Peace Makers Organization
Fiji	Lusia Gasaucalayawa	Social Empowerment Education Programme
Fiji	Tailasa Vue	Social Empowerment Education Programme
India	Sachoiba Inkah	Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights
Indonesia	Annisa Azzahra	Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Right Association (PBHI)
Indonesia	Fitri Wahyuni	The Union of Indonesian Migrant Workers (SBMI)
Indonesia	Lend Keroman	West Papua National Committee (KNPB)
Indonesia	Samuel Womsiwor	Young Student Movement and the Papuan People. (Bahasa: Gerakan Mahasiswa, Pemuda dan Rakyat Papua – GempaR-Papua)
Malaysia	Stanley Anak Jeffry Den	Jaringan Orang Asal SeMalaysia (JOAS)
Malaysia	Victoria Antai Belayong	Persatuan PEMANGKIN Kesedaran Sosial Kuching (Kuching Social Awareness Catalyst Society)
Myanmar	Aung Si Kyaw	Youth Internet Governance Forum Myanmar
Myanmar	Nyein Chan Aung	ALTSEAN-Burma
Myanmar	Su Ei Zar	Burma Lawyer Council
Nepal	Shreya Parajuli	INSEC (Informal Sector Service Centre)
Philippines	Gianna Francesca Catolico	Alliance of Youth Peace Ambassadors (AYPA), Development Academy of the Philippines
Philippines	Jimrex Calatan	Indigenous Peoples International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba)
Solomon Islands	Kenya Kenieroa	Solomon Islands Environmental Law Association (SIELA)
Sri Lanka	Adikarki Mudiyansele Madawa Mewan Bandara Eriyagama	Human Rights Office - Kandy
Sri Lanka	Mireka Nageswaran	Aham Humanitarian Resource Center (AHRC)
Sri Lanka	Tharushi Dishara	Centre for Society and Religion and Law and Society Trust
Thailand	Athip Pitakanjanakul	Asylum Access Thailand (AAT)
Thailand	Fatin Jamjeree	The Network of Civic Women for Peace (Civic Women)
Timor-Leste	Feliciano da Costa Araujo	HAK Association

Timor-Leste	Jubilena Alves Exposto de Matos	Feminist Revolutionary & Girls Out Loud (GOL)
Timor-Leste	Paulina Gomes Soares	Secretary State of Equality
Timor-Leste	Vidal Campos Magno	Ba Futuru
Vanuatu	Jenny Ligo	Vanuatu Women Against Crime and Corruption (WACC Vanuatu)



**DTP 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Human Rights & Peoples'  
Diplomacy Training Program**  
**With Global Campus of Human Rights, Asian Forum for  
Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), Pacific  
Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), Judicial System  
Monitoring Program (JSMP), The Human Rights Centre of the  
National University of Timor-Leste (HRC-UNTL)**

**Timor-Leste  
12-23 August 2024**

**PROGRAM SCHEDULE v12**

Week 1	August 12 – Monday	August 13 – Tuesday	August 14 – Wednesday	August 15 – Thursday	August 16 – Friday	August 17 – Saturday
8.30 to 9.00	Welcome and Introductions: JSMP/UNTL-HRC/DTP	Recap & Participant Presentations	Recap & Reflection on CNC Visit/Santa Cruz	Recap & Participant Presentations	Recap & Participant Presentations	Field Trip
Morning 1 9.00 to 10.30	Opening Ceremony – Welcome from Partners Ana Paula Marcal – JSMP Dr. Armindo Maia – HRC Adriano Remiddi - GCHR Keynote: Virgílio da Silva Guterres – Provedor for Human Rights	Introduction to Human Rights – and Human Rights Education	Introduction to the UN’s Human Rights Special Procedures  UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development	Understanding the Responsibilities of Business to Human Rights and the Environment	Building Media Skills for Strategic Advocacy  Part 1: What is media and what media matters for human rights	Travel to Maubara via Liquica
Facilitated	DTP/JSMP/UNTL-HRC	Adriano Remiddi - UNTL Human Rights Centre	Professor Surya Deva	Professor Surya Deva	Fritzie Rodriguez	Sunday – Free Day in Dare
Break 10:30-						
Morning 2 10:45-12:30	Introductory Session: Introductions and Expectations, Course Outline and materials. Logistics Local Orientation	An introduction to human rights in the UN System – Human Rights Treaties, The Human Rights Council, and The UN’s Special Procedures	Integrating Human Rights and Development – a new model for Planet Centred Participatory Development	An Introduction to Advocacy for Change – Some Tools for Developing Strategy – Deciding Who to Target and How  Understanding the Responsibilities of Business to Human Rights and the Environment cont’d	Building Media Skills for Strategic Advocacy –  Part 2: Setting media objectives and messages to support advocacy – practical exercise	
Facilitated	DTP/JSMP/UNTL-HRC	DTP	Professor Surya Deva	DTP / Professor Surya Deva	Fritzie Rodriguez	
Lunch 12:30-1.40				Travel to Dare		
1.40 – 2.00		Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	
Afternoon 1 2:00-3:30	Sharing on Timor-Leste’s Struggle for Self-Determination and Human Rights in Timor-Leste Today Panel: Professor Maia – HRC Norberta Vicente Soares da Cruz – Disability	Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation - Guided Tour & Reflections on the Struggle for Independence -Building International Solidarity, Peace and Reconciliation - Hugo Fernandez - Casimiro Dos Santos - Maria Jose da Fonseca Monteiro de Jesus	Human Rights and the Environment – the Right to A Clean Safe and Sustainable Environment	Understanding the Responsibilities of Business to Human Rights and the Environment cont’d	Building Media Skills for Strategic Advocacy –  Part 3: Getting your message to your target audience  Tips on building good media relationships	
Facilitated	HRC	Jose Pereira - JSMP	Professor Surya Deva	Professor Surya Deva	Fritzie Rodriguez	
Break 3:30-3:45						
Afternoon 2 3:45-5:30	Celso da Fonseca – Human Rights and Human Rights in Timor.  Special Session with HE President Jose Ramos-Horta	CNC Panel – Timor-Leste’s Struggle for Human Rights – Justice Visit to Santa Cruz Cemetery – Site of the Dili Massacre	Using the Human Rights Special Procedures – Practical Exercise in using Rights in Advocacy – Role Play	Practical Strategy Exercise – Developing Cases and Issues	Building Media Skills for Strategic Advocacy –  Tips on safety working with media/online	
Facilitated		JSMP / Nov 12 Victims	Professor Surya Deva	Professor Surya Deva	Fritzie Rodriguez	
	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	
Evening	Welcome Dinner	Dinner together @ Dilicious	Free Night	Cultural Night	Film Night	

WEEK 2	August 18 – Sunday	August 19 – Monday	August 20 – Tuesday	August 21 – Wednesday	August 22 – Thursday	August 23 – Friday	
8:30 – 9:00am	Free day in Dare		Recap & Participant Presentations	Recap & Participant Presentations	Recap & Participant Presentations	Recap & Participant Presentations	
Morning 1 9:00-10:30		Leave Dare for JPII. Dili (Comoro)	CRPD – The Rights of Persons with Disability  Timor Leste and Using Treaties - Dr. Naparat Kranrattanasuit	Child Rights in Timor Leste – Patrizia DiGiovanni – Country Director of UNICEF Intro to the Convention on the Rights of the Child - Key Principles Dr Noam Peleg	Human Rights and the UN System in Today's World  Session with Ian Martin	Bringing It All Together – UPR Role Play Preparations	
Trainer(s)			HRC – Celso da Fonseca	DTP	HRC/DTP	Joshua Cooper	
Break 10:30-45							
Morning 2 10:45-12:30			Human Rights Quiz and Recap	Human Rights in Timor-Leste – Reflections on advocacy and SOGIE, GBV and other challenges	Treaty Body Reporting Exercise - Climate Change, Children and the Rights of Future Generations	The Rights of Indigenous Peoples – Recognition, Standards and UN Accountability Mechanisms	UPR Role Play
Trainer(s)			DTP	Bella Galhos	Dr Noam Peleg	Joshua Cooper	Joshua Cooper
Lunch 12:30-1.40							Lunch with HE President Jose Ramos-Horta at
1.40 – 2.00			Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Katina Matak, Presidential Palace
Afternoon 1 2:00-3:30			Human Rights and Peace –  Building them Together – Drawing out the Lessons  Dr Suphatmet Yunyazit & Dr. Naparat Kranrattanasuit	CEDAW and Gender - Engaging the Treaty Bodies / Treaty Body Advocacy / Sharing Experience from Timor's Report to CEDAW Treaty Bodies Milena Pires Judite Ximenes Ivete de Oliveira Zelia Fernandes	Session with Diplomats – Human Rights in Foreign Policy – Building Skills in Human Rights Dialogue Session with H.E. Marc Friedrich, EU Ambassador to Timor-Leste	SDGs, The Climate Crisis and Human Rights – Bringing it All Together	
Trainer(s)			HRC	HRC – UNTL	GC/DTP	Joshua Cooper	
Break 3:30-3:45							
Afternoon 2 3:45-5:30			Human Rights and Peace –  Building them Together – Drawing out the Lessons  Dr Suphatmet Yunyazit & Dr. Naparat Kranrattanasuit	An Introduction to Human Rights Diplomacy and Building Solidarity  Nelson Santos	Debrief of Lobbying and Advocacy with Joshua Cooper	Uniting People for Rights –  Introducing the Universal Periodic Review and How to Use it for Human Rights Advocacy	Next Steps – DTP alumni networks  Feedback and Evaluations
Trainer(s)			HRC	DTP	DTP	Joshua Cooper	HRX/DTP
			Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Closing Ceremony / Party with JSMP
Evening		Dinner @ JP II	Solidarity Night @ HAK/ Dinner @ JPII	Dinner at Beach	Reception with EU		