

As has been well documented by several international organizations, none of these developments or trends has any real bearing on the fundamental structural problems that are at the heart of the human rights situation in Indonesia. The military maintains an oppressive presence in East Timor and elsewhere and generally behaves with little regard for human rights and with impunity in dealing with perceived threats to national security. The legal system remains subject to political interference and the political system has no true democratic accountability. The slow, gradual improvement in the human rights situation is attributable to the considerable domestic and international pressure in this matter. This pressure will likely increase both domestically as a result of improved economic prospects and higher education levels, and internationally as Indonesia seeks to play a more important role commensurate with its economic and political weight.

CANADIAN POSITION

Human rights concerns have been at the forefront of the bilateral relationship since Canada's suspension of three planned development projects following the November 1991 Dili incident. The Canadian government has repeatedly raised our concerns at every opportunity, most recently when Prime Minister Chrétien met President Soeharto at the APEC meeting in Jakarta. One of the first items raised by Prime Minister Chrétien, the situation in East Timor was discussed at length. The Prime Minister offered Canadian cooperation in support of Indonesia's own efforts in strengthening respect for human rights. It is in this context that the Canadian government is supporting the visit of Canada's Chief Commissioner for Human Rights and his efforts to engage the Indonesian Commission for Human Rights in constructive cooperation. While in Indonesia, Prime Minister Chrétien also announced a new \$2 million project with Care Canada aimed at strengthening community groups and NGOs in East Timor and helping the poor meet basic human needs.

The Canadian Embassy remains active in pursuing Canadian concerns in meetings with senior Indonesian officials and non-governmental organizations active in this area. The Canada Fund, administered by the Embassy, has been effectively used to support projects aimed at furthering Canadian human rights interests in Indonesia.

Canada has also been active on this issue in multilateral fora. At the Third Committee of UNGA, it has consistently addressed the issue of human rights in Indonesia and particularly in East Timor, urging the Indonesian government to improve access to East Timor by international observers and pursue real progress in the UN-sponsored talks between Portugal and Indonesia. At the CHR, Canada has worked with other delegations to ensure the most effective outcome possible on the issue of East Timor following the Dili shootings in November 1991.

An important element in furthering Canada's human rights objectives, the development assistance program in Indonesia addresses fundamental social, environmental and economic issues facing the Indonesian people. CIDA, through its bilateral and partnership channels, cooperates with organizations that promote human rights in areas such as women's rights,