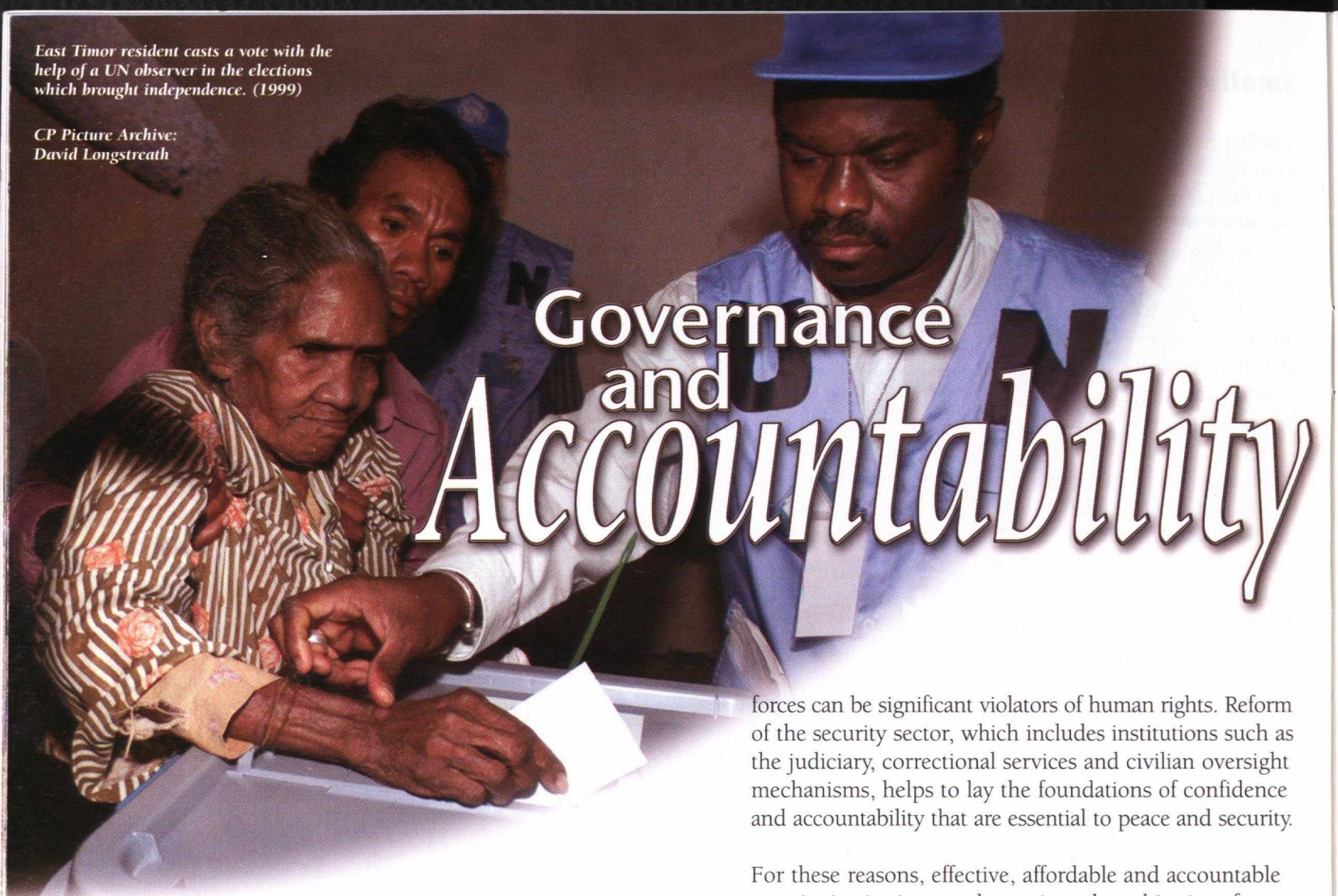


East Timor resident casts a vote with the help of a UN observer in the elections which brought independence. (1999)

CP Picture Archive:
David Longstreath



Governance and Accountability

International Criminal Court

The most serious violations of international humanitarian law are often committed against civilians. In addition to the human cost of such atrocities, the legitimacy and effectiveness of the international system is undermined by the failure to prosecute perpetrators. The establishment of an International Criminal Court (ICC) will help to replace an international culture of impunity with a culture of individual accountability.

Along with non-governmental organization (NGO) partners and like-minded governments, Canada has actively promoted efforts to create an ICC. At home, Canada ratified the Statute on July 7, 2000. Internationally, Canada is committed to working toward universal ratification of the Statute in order to give the ICC the widest jurisdiction possible. This strategy will include collaboration with others in the international community to provide the technical assistance that enables additional governments to implement the Statute.

Security Sector Reform

In many countries, security institutions intended to protect the public are in fact a major threat to human security. Authoritarian, undisciplined or corrupt military and police

forces can be significant violators of human rights. Reform of the security sector, which includes institutions such as the judiciary, correctional services and civilian oversight mechanisms, helps to lay the foundations of confidence and accountability that are essential to peace and security.

For these reasons, effective, affordable and accountable security institutions are becoming a key objective of peace support operations, providing an important link between immediate post-crisis interventions and longer-term peace-building and development. Security sector reform activities range from training in human rights and community relations to deploying experts as part of peace support operations. Canada recognizes the need for an integrated approach that addresses common challenges faced by security institutions, in order to contribute to the safety of people and the accountability of government.

Corruption and Transparency

Corruption is a threat to human security because it weakens the ability of the state to deliver on its primary function of providing security for its citizens. In advanced cases, corruption itself can be a trigger for conflict. Having both economic and political consequences, it essentially involves abuse of public institutions for private gain.

Essential to efforts to combat corruption is a commitment to transparency and accountability by governments. International efforts to counter corruption have focussed on the creation, ratification and implementation of key conventions. At the UN, Canada co-sponsored the Declaration Against Corruption and Bribery in International Commercial Transactions in 1996. Within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD),