

Massacres

National Public Hearing, 19-21 November 2003



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FINAL REPORT OF THE CAVR, Executive Summary

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Foreword Public Hearings of the CAVR

Public Hearings were a key part of the CAVR programme designed to fulfil our mandate pursuant to Regulation 10/2001. Establishing the truth about past human rights violations, assisting with the reintegration of those who have harmed their communities through community reconciliation hearings, and helping victims of violations to restore their dignity were all objectives of these various hearings.

When the CAVR was formed, the seven National Commissioners developed a clear principle that the Commission would attempt to be as open and participatory as possible. As a result, the CAVR designed a programme that involved teams working at the village level across the country, always seeking to engage the community in culturally appropriate ways. Providing for communities to come together and discuss the past in a peaceful and reconciliatory way was a key part of this work. At the national level, public hearings broadcast by television and radio across the country, promoted a wide sense of participation in a national dialogue about past violations and building a future based on respect for human rights.

This series of seven booklets covers the national thematic public hearings of the CAVR. These hearings were all held at the former Balide Prison, rehabilitated to become the headquarters of the CAVR, and were on the themes of Political Imprisonment (February 2003), Women and the Conflict (April 2003), Famine and Forced Displacement (July 2003), Massacres (November 2003), The Internal Conflict of 1974-76 (December 2003), Self-Determination and the International Community (March 2004), and Children and the Conflict (March 2004).

Prior to these hearings, the CAVR held a national Victims' Hearing in November 2002, at the former UNAMET and CNRT compound in Balide.

CAVR district teams also organised and facilitated a wide range of public hearings. District teams divided their work into three-month time periods for each sub-district. At the end of this period of taking statements about past violations, organising community reconciliation processes and conducting community workshops about past violence, the team conducted a sub-district Victims' Hearing. Community members who had given statements to the Commission told their story to the Commission and the gathered community. Sixty-five sub-district Victims' Hearings were conducted by the CAVR.

Community reconciliation hearings were a major part of the CAVR programme. Pursuant to the CAVR mandate, the objective of these hearings were to assist in the reintegration of former offenders into their communities. Typically, but not always, these related to the 1999 militia violence. Hearings were held in villages in all districts in Timor-Leste. Facilitated by the CAVR, this process combined traditional dispute resolution methods with the formal legal process in an innovative way. The CAVR conducted hearings for 1404 former perpetrators, in a total of 217 hearings, and we estimate that over 40,000 community members participated in these hearings.

The response to the public hearings of the CAVR was overwhelming. We hope that through this series of booklets more people can share the experience of these national thematic hearings.

Preface Massacres

The National Public Hearing on Massacres focussed on a terrible phenomena too prevalent in the 25-year period of the CAVR mandate: the massacre of defenceless civilians.

Massacres occurred in Timor-Leste from the time of the internal armed conflict between the East Timorese political parties UDT and Fretilin, during the full-scale invasion by the Indonesian armed forces and throughout the ensuing years of occupation. They peaked again in the last weeks of occupation during September-October 1999. International law does not provide a definition of “massacre,” so the CAVR developed a working definition for the purposes of research and investigation—the killing of five or more civilians in one place at one time.

The CAVR heard from 17 victims, from eight districts. This also included New Zealander Helen Todd, mother of Kamal Bamardhaj killed at Santa Cruz in 1991. The three-day public hearing could not possibly represent all massacres. Criteria for selecting the cases was based on the aim of providing a representative spread from periods throughout the mandate, indicating the range of perpetrators and the geographical spread of massacres. Those asked to testify were selected on the basis that they wished to testify publicly and felt that this experience would be beneficial to them.

Those who testified at the hearing told of massacres by both UDT and Fretilin political parties during the internal armed conflict and shortly after the full-scale invasion by Indonesian armed forces, killings which have poisoned relations in Timor-Leste for many years. They also told of mass killings against civilians in Dili on the day of full-scale invasion, 7 December 1975. Survivors told of Fretilin massacres of its own members in 1977, during the divisions within the party. And survivors from communities across the country told of massacres of civilians by the Indonesian armed forces throughout the 24-year occupation, in villages, during peaceful demonstrations and in churches. Professor Geoffrey Robinson gave expert testimony, in which he analysed the patterns and factors leading to this repeated phenomena of massacres in Timor-Leste, and emphasised the need for those responsible to be held accountable.

The hearing did not cover all massacres which occurred in Timor-Leste throughout the mandate period, including some well-known massacres. The CAVR research team has investigated many more massacres which will be included in our Final Report. The hearing was one step in this longer process of research and investigation, as CAVR district teams took statements and conducted workshops in villages to record the experiences of people in all parts of Timor-Leste. The national office also formed a research team to focus specifically on massacres. Members of the CAVR research team on this theme were Helio Freitas da Silva, Ana Paula Maia, Douglas Kamman, Maemi Calado, Akihisa Matsumo, Jacqueline Baker and Juliao da Costa C Caetano. The Final Report will present the findings of this research.

During the hearing, survivors recounted their traumatic experiences, indicating the profound effect these events continue to have on their lives. The CAVR acknowledges the courage and resilience of those who testified, and also reflects upon the ongoing need to help individuals, families and communities in the long-term process of recovery. We hope this hearing was a step in this process, and that this book serves as a reminder to all of the work still to be done.

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Human Rights and International Law



Human rights are rights that everyone has, regardless of race, age, religion or sex, from the moment of birth until death. These rights cannot be given away, sold or taken away by force. Everybody has the same human rights, just because they are human.

The idea that every person has some kind of basic rights is very old and can be found in societies all around the world. However, the human rights doctrine as it is known today was only developed after the Second World War. Remembering the terrible atrocities that were committed during that war, the governments of the world through the United Nations decided that no person should suffer that way again. On 10 December 1948, they agreed to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which sets out all of the basic rights of human beings. Since this time, these rights have been expanded upon and refined in thousands of international documents and there are now strict legal rules setting out how governments are to treat people.

Sadly, the history of Timor-Leste between 1974 and 1999 is filled with violations of human rights by all sides to the conflicts. We heard accounts of many people who were killed sometimes on their own, sometimes in large groups, sometimes targeted, and sometimes by indiscriminate bombings or shootings.

What is a massacre?

“Massacre” is not a legal word and is not defined in the world’s human rights documents. However it is a word that is commonly understood to mean the deaths of many people at once. The Commission decided, for the purposes of this hearing, to count massacres as the killing of five or more civilians (people who are not taking part in the fighting) at the same time and place. This broad definition includes both indiscriminate mass killings, for example through a bombing raid or shooting into a crowd, and mass executions of targeted individuals.

During a conflict, there are also laws of war to protect people’s lives. Some people must never be targeted and killed as part of the war. They are: civilians, prisoners of war, and soldiers who are sick and wounded.

The Right to Life

Taking a person’s life is a very serious thing. If an ordinary person intentionally kills somebody, it is called murder. Under human rights law, everybody has a right to life. This means that their life cannot be taken away from them by another person, unless it is clearly within the law, for example in self-defence or because the person has committed a serious crime and is sentenced to death. Governments must make laws to protect people’s lives and punish people who kill others. The police and the military must be trained to value human life and only kill if it is absolutely necessary.

Opening Address

Aniceto Guterres Lopes, Chairperson of the CAVR

Good Morning. In the name of my friends the National Commissioners, the Regional Commissioners and all the staff of CAVR, I would like to welcome all those present here today.

We are very happy that you have come to participate, as witnesses or as members of the audience, in the CAVR's fifth national public hearing and we appreciate the sacrifice of your time, your work, and your daily activities this may entail.

This public hearing about massacres will begin today and continue for three days. In the course of these three days we will hear testimonies from survivors of massacres, and from those who witnessed these atrocities with their own eyes. We will also hear from expert witnesses.

Those who testify will speak of events in our history that remain shrouded in darkness and which we call massacres. We have defined a massacre as an occurrence wherein five or more people are killed in one place at one time. The CAVR's mandate includes seeking information and statistics about the occurrences of the 25-year period from 1974-1999. Some of this information has been gathered by recording the accounts of the survivors of these events.

Although the research is as yet incomplete, the CAVR has already gathered information about approximately 100 massacres that occurred throughout Timor-Leste. In this public hearing it is not possible to hear from all the survivors from all parts of the country. And so we have selected a few events from each of the following periods.

The first period begins with the internal conflict of 1975 when the coup d'état and counter coup occurred. In the second period there were two situations. There were massacres that took place amongst the people who fled to the forests and who were in Fretilin-controlled areas, and there were those that affected the city dwellers under the control of the Indonesian military.

The third period involves testimonies about massacres committed by the Indonesian military when people surrendered to them (in the late 1970s and early 1980s). From the fourth period we will hear about the 1983 Kraras massacre. From the fifth period we will hear about the Santa Cruz massacre which we commemorated just last week on 12 November. The sixth period began with the political reforms in Indonesia and ended with the popular consultation in 1999 and the subsequent massacres in the Liquiça Church, in the Suai Church and in Los Palos among others.

The events that the CAVR has chosen to focus on for this hearing are events that had a big impact not only within Timor but also on the international community, in the course of the struggle for independence. We may ask: why we should remember these dark and terrible events? Why don't we just leave alone the old wounds that we have forgotten? Sometimes we ask: is it better to forget about the suffering of the past or to recall our wounds? It is an important and difficult question which always arises in any

country which has passed through a period of tears and bloodshed. Some feel it is simpler and easier to leave the past behind us and move on. We need not do anything, just forget about our wounds from the past and they will heal themselves. Some feel that this is the best approach.

But this is not a black and white issue. It is a difficult and complex question. How to deal with what has taken place in the past? If we address the past will it provide a chance to learn from what took place or will it just perpetuate the hatred and division? How can we avoid the possibility of these atrocities recurring in the future?

These are very difficult questions. The people of many nations of the world have had to find answers to such questions, as they have come out from under the rule of a military dictatorship and begun to address the violations of human rights that occurred in their land.

Many nations have come to the consensus that in order to leave the evils of the past behind and move forward and in order to heal the wounds inflicted in the past, it is necessary to open those wounds and cleanse them. Only then will the wounds heal naturally and only in this way can we avoid the dangers of stinking, festering wounds hidden under a cloth of fear. I believe that Timor-Leste should also make this choice.

Perhaps it seems better to pretend that there are no difficulties and to protect ourselves with lies. Perhaps we believe that we can forget. But we all know that wrongdoings are hard to forget because there are constant reminders of them in our lives. And so we continue to live as before, in pain and anger. We need to take a good look at the past, and find out what really happened. The fact is that wounds don't heal themselves. On the contrary, they begin to smell and they can become like poison to the future of our nation.

When we hear from the victims it is an opportunity for them to tell their story, to speak of their suffering. In this way we will learn from them. And this process must be done within a spirit of mutual respect, acceptance and reconciliation in order that peace and stability may visit our land.

We should use these histories as a base from which to move forward. We must not let our elders provoke divisions among the next generation by spreading rumours, false accusations and lies, saying this family is our friend and that one our enemy, this person is good and that person is bad. We need to shed light on our dark past and find out what really happened.

We must ignore such words and learn from the lives of our elders which are full of darkness and suffering. May they teach their children that although our nation passed through a period of division, and a long war against invaders, we have maintained our dignity and we acknowledge that we also made mistakes. We should also say to our elders that we must have the courage to see what happened and then to leave it behind us in order that we may go forward.

Opening Address Aniceto Guterres Lopes, Chairperson CAVR

If we genuinely want to leave these wrongdoings behind us, we must choose the most painful road. We must have the courage to walk this road and to walk it with discipline and peace in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation in order to strengthen the stability that we have recently achieved. These are the thoughts of our political and religious leaders. This is the road to prosperity for our new nation.

In these three days we will learn many things. Let us use this time for reflection. We will hear from our fighters. We will hear of their bravery and of their wrongdoings. We will hear of how they used their power for good and of how they used their power for evil.

Sometimes we feel the need to cry out so that victims can receive justice. The mandate of the CAVR does not include carrying out justice. The CAVR's work is limited to investigation, gathering statistics and information, which includes information that will be obtained through the victims' testimonies in the course of these three days. Based on the information that the CAVR uncovers it will make recommendations on future actions to the State of Timor-Leste.

We must tell those representing us in Government how we feel about these issues so that they can act on the desires of the community, and on what the community identifies as important.

And finally, in the name of the CAVR, I would like to express our appreciation to all of you who have come today as well as to those who are following the hearing at home. I would particularly like to thank and encourage those witnesses who have come to share their experiences of suffering. I would also like to thank the CAVR research team, and Professor Geoffrey Robinson who has joined us from the United States in order to share his knowledge with us. And lastly I would like to thank the donor countries.

As we now begin to listen to the witnesses I remind us all that in the days ahead we will hear stories that will upset us. For this reason I ask all of us to show the utmost respect to the victims. They surely deserve the respect of us all.

Thank you.



Young East Timorese victims of Indonesian military campaigns. This photograph was smuggled out of Timor-Leste in early 1983.

Introduction

These testimonies are presented in the order in which the witnesses testified. During the two days of hearing, these testimonies were interspersed with expert witness testimonies, which are presented separately in this book.

Most witnesses gave their testimony in Tetum, one of Timor-Leste's official languages. The English and Indonesian versions of this book aim to represent their testimonies as accurately as possible. The paragraphs in italics introducing each testimony provide a brief overview to contextualise the testimony. The text which follows is an edited version of the testimony, based on the original statements of the women and their words at the hearing—it is not a summary as such, but rather a selection from the words of each witnesses' testimony, making allowances for translation of course.

Note on the suppression of names of perpetrators

At the time of preparation for publication of this book, National Commissioners were still debating the CAVR policy of naming names of alleged perpetrators in the CAVR Final Report. At the hearing itself, witnesses were advised that it was their right to name names if they wished, but that they should be aware that this could have legal consequences. In general, witnesses did not name alleged perpetrators in the CAVR national hearings.

The method for reproducing this book has been to remove the name of an alleged perpetrator and to list 'A'. If more than one alleged perpetrator is named in a testimony, they are listed in alphabetical order, hence 'B', 'C' and so on.

Survivor Testimonies

Ilidio Maria de Jesus

Alas, Manufafe District, August 1975

In the first months after Portugal left Timor-Leste Mr Ilidio Maria de Jesus and his family supported Fretilin. Mr de Jesus told how UDT took Fretilin prisoners and fled with them to Natabora and Besusu on the southern coast when Fretilin began to take power in late August 1975. He said that 11 prisoners were taken by truck, including his father. He told of how his mother and siblings hid in the hills above the Meti-Oan beach area and heard the gunfire that was the massacre of the prisoners. Four days later, Falintil soldiers informed them that his father was killed.

Mr de Jesus told of how his brother wanted vengeance when he heard about this, but that they had decided not to respond violently. He said he knows who did the killings, and that until this day his family had not had further problems with them.



On 10 August 1975 I carried the Fretilin flag to the mass in Alas to have it blessed by the priest and after the mass the flag was raised. But the day after that, the UDT *coup d'état* occurred and UDT started arresting people. Among those taken prisoner was my father, José Maria. He was held in Alas from 11-16 August and then taken to Same until 24 August.

When Falintil was heading to Same from Aileu, UDT members fled to Natarbora in Manatuto, taking 11 Fretilin prisoners with them. Their original plan was to kill the prisoners in Natarbora but the people of the area refused to allow it.

On the morning of 27 August a Unimog truck was driven past our house with the 11 prisoners in the back. The prisoners were surrounded by armed guards but apparently they were not tied up. My father raised his arm and made a fist as they drove past. We heard that they were being taken to Besusu.

Members of UDT had told us that they were going to continue the war in Besusu, so when I heard that my father was being taken there I was really scared.

UDT warned us that if we did not want to be killed we should flee to the forests, so my mother, younger brothers and sisters and I fled to a nearby hilltop. While we were there we heard gunfire coming from Meti-Oan beach, Wedauberek. Four days later, on 31 August, Falintil from Same found the bodies on the beach in Meti-Oan.

On the day they found the bodies, Falintil came to the village of Besusu and met with some of the people who had not fled. They told the villagers about the killing of the 11 Fretilin members, and said that they had seen the body of José Maria, my father. As soon as the villagers in Besusu heard this they came and found us in the forest.

The other prisoners who had been killed with my father were Regional Secretary, Nurse Ponciano; Vice Secretary, Sabino Soares Pereira from Pikuario who was a cattle farmer; Second Vice Secretary, Bernardino Hornai; Sub-delegate, António Guterres; Domingos Lobato, Chair of the student organisation Unetim; Quiquito Kaduak, Francisco, Domingos Ribeiro and Alexandre da Costa, all members of Unetim; and Tonito Ribeiro, another member of Unetim who was just 17 years old. Tonito and Domingos were the sons of Nurse Ponciano.

That same day we went to the site of the massacre at Meti-Oan beach and found ten bodies, including my father's. My father had been shot in his stomach. His hands were covered by his own intestines which had come out of the hole in his stomach. Domingos Ribeiro's hand had been severed from his body.

When we found out what had happened to our father we felt very sad and angry. My brother wanted to go and beat up the people who had killed our father. I asked him to reconsider. I told him that God will deal with them. I said, "If we take this into our own hands, there will be more violence, and they will come and kill more of our people."

It was a big group who captured the Fretilin prisoners. I knew three of them: A (name suppressed), B (name suppressed) and C (name suppressed). C (name suppressed) is now a refugee in Indonesia. The individuals who captured my father were D (name suppressed), E (name suppressed), and F (name suppressed). Up until now we have had no further problems with those men.

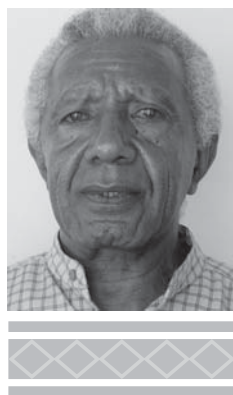
*...we went to the
site of the massacre*

*...and found ten
bodies, including
my father's.*

Florentino de Jesus Martins

Aifu Village, Ermera District, August–September 1975

Mr Florentino de Jesus Martins was a Fretilin supporter who was captured by UDT after they took control on 11 August. He told of how UDT moved prisoners to Ermera when Fretilin took control in Dili and Aileu. He said over 75 people were imprisoned by UDT in Ermera, and that they began summarily executing them in groups of four. Mr de Jesus Martins said Fretilin took control on 5 September, when there were only about 30 prisoners left alive. He said Fretilin began killing UDT members in retaliation for these executions.



As soon as the Fretilin party had been formed, the Fretilin Central Committee trained its members to talk with people in the villages. Our job was to find out what the people wanted: independence, integration with Indonesia or continuation as a part of Portugal.

After being trained we went to the villages to talk to the people. Some of them wanted integration with Indonesia, while others wanted independence. Some wanted to join UDT, but the majority of people chose Fretilin.

In Ermera some political tension started to develop, and some of the Fretilin supporters started shifting to UDT and Apodeti. So we went to Dili to inform the Central Committee. But the Central Committee said that the people should be free to be members of whichever party they chose, be it UDT, Apodeti or Fretilin.

On the morning of 11 August, Saturnino de Jesus Soares heard the sound of a Mauser rifle. He came looking for me at the church, where I was working. A (name suppressed), under orders from B (name suppressed), took me to the Hotel Ermera where UDT had prepared a room for me. In the afternoon, I was taken to the Municipal Offices. Over the next three days several of my friends, including Sertorio Baros and Gastão Pereira, were also brought there.

We had been captured by UDT because they believed Fretilin was communist. They said, “Fretilin can’t even produce a needle, cannot make a match and have nothing so why do they want independence?”

I joined Fretilin because I wanted independence. We had to get out of the darkness.

On 20 August, when Fretilin took control of Aileu and Dili, UDT moved us to the prison in Ermera. There were 75 of us cramped into the prison. It was difficult to breathe and there was not enough room even to stretch our legs. When C (name suppressed) and D (name suppressed) took over as head of the prison they gave us a barrel, which we all had to use as a toilet.

In the afternoon of 31 August, UDT came to take us to Aifu. We said to them that if we were taken in the afternoon we would die. We said it would be better to leave the next morning instead. Eventually UDT agreed to wait, but that evening they guarded the prison tightly. They also spent the evening cutting bamboo into two-metre rods. All we could do was pray and wait.

Around six in the morning they took Lorenzo, Manuel Duarte, Armando Baros and me from the prison and drove us toward Aifu. When they arrived at the road that enters the Aifu plantation, close to Dare Hitu Mate, they tied us in pairs.

As we approached the bridge at Aifu, Claetremán, we met friends who had been taken there earlier. Lorenzo said in Portuguese, “We will go to heaven. There’s no need to be afraid.” The UDT people took some of the prisoners to a place near Aifu, to kill them. Lorenzo and Manuel Duarte managed to escape but Manuel’s upper jaw was seriously injured.

We were taken to Aifu. When we got to B’s (name suppressed) house we were told to rest. Then we were ordered in groups of four to go out and cut the grass in front of that house. Soon after that they took us away in groups of four.

My friend, Virgilio Esposto, was taken to a storeroom to be shot. He said to them: “Shoot me in the chest or head so that I don’t suffer.” They did as he asked and then they fired seven more shots into his body. Then they brought four more people to be killed and then four more and on and on until there were only 30 of us left. Then E (name suppressed) gave an order to stop the killing. Perhaps he stopped the killing because Father Pedro Lemos told him to. Father Pedro Lemos told E (name suppressed) that Fretilin had surrounded Aifu and that Fretilin troops were coming from Hatolia and Loerema.

E (name suppressed) told us that we were free to escape if we wanted to but we chose not to. We had not had anything to drink all day and we were very thirsty. We were given water from the bathroom mixed with soap. That evening they took some of our friends to the store room. The village head of Fatubesi, Celestino Alves, and another man escaped from the store room in the middle of the night.

Early on 2 September, E (name suppressed) gave us each a UDT membership card and told all the prisoners to go home.

I went to Ermera and two of my friends went to Fatubesi. We met the District Administrator Barela, who was from India. He embarrassed me by crying. He said, “F (name suppressed) stabbed my wife in the heart. He stabbed her because our child is a member of Fretilin.” There was a nurse tending to his wife’s wounds. We went together to look after his wife. When she saw me, she hugged me and cried.

District Administrator Barela did not identify with either side of the political party conflict. His son joined and died for Fretilin. The District Administrator himself was killed by the Indonesian military in Aifu on 7 September 1975.

In the afternoon of 5 September Fretilin arrived in Ermera town from Aileu. I met with Commander G (name suppressed) who asked me: “Were you imprisoned with the people who were killed in Aifu?” I told him that I was. When Fretilin heard about the killings they retaliated by capturing and killing members of UDT.

*...they brought
four more people to
be killed and then four
more and on and on
until there were only
30 of us left.*

Mateus Soares

Turiscai, Manufahi District, August–September 1975

In 1975 Mateus Soares was a member of Fretilin in the mountainous Turiscai area. He said that during the political party conflict UDT made attacks in Laclubar, Soibada and Turiscai. He told of how he was part of an 11-person Fretilin mission sent by the leader Francisco Xavier do Amaral to seek rapprochement with UDT at their Poholau headquarters, and of how this delegation was captured and massacred by spears and rocks by UDT members, with only three escaping.



When the political party conflict broke out in August 1975, I was in Turiscai. During that time UDT organised attacks in various areas including Laclubar, Soibada and Turiscai. I don't know why the attacks were made or how many people died. After they had finished they went back to Poholau, Turiscai. This is a village that borders the sub-district of Laclubar and the village of Fatumakerek and was where UDT made their headquarters.

Francisco Xavier do Amaral initiated a mission involving 11 Fretilin fighters, led by Geraldo Barbosa. The goal of the mission was to go to Poholau to talk with UDT about the possibility of UDT and Fretilin working together. We walked to Poholau to begin the talks but as soon as we arrived UDT militants attacked and captured us. They gave us no chance to explain why we had come. They just tied our hands and began to torture us.

Later we were taken to Laoda, Fatumakerek, Laclubar where the torture continued. While we were being tortured, we were not given any food or drink.

In the area of Laoda there was a traditional house. Outside this house UDT militants were sharpening their weapons on a whetstone. They proudly displayed their machetes, spears, swords and arrows. Then someone inside the house started a traditional ritual. He came out and started running, jumping and shouting according to the ritual. We were still tied up and we were very afraid. When the ritual ended they pulled us onto a mound near the house and then toward the edge of a gorge. I thought we were about to be killed.

They stabbed my friends with spears and pushed them toward the gorge. I was tied to a friend and when the militants threw a machete in our direction it missed and cut the rope that tied us together. I threw myself into the gorge even though my hands were still tied behind my back. They threw rocks and spears into the gorge. One of them hit and killed our leader, Geraldo Barbosa, who was still alive when he fell into the gorge.

Only three of my friends survived this massacre. José Morena, Gaspar and one other. Gaspar was later killed by the Hansip in Turiscai, and the other friend died from an illness during the Indonesian occupation.

We escaped separately. I hid in the river and later surrendered to some Portuguese military who were on duty close to Laclubar. The Portuguese soldiers gave me food. I was still tied up at that point. In fact the rope had become implanted in my skin. After I had eaten, I soaked it in water to get the rope out of my skin. When the Portuguese got the rope off it left a deep wound and I bled heavily. It was very painful.

After they had fed me and helped remove the rope, the Portuguese soldiers started asking questions about what had happened to me. Later they handed me over to the Laclubar village head where I stayed for several weeks. One day the village head sent me to Manatuto to get some things. On the way I ran away to Turiscai and met with Francisco Xavier do Amaral. He told me to get medical treatment for my wounds.

They stabbed my friends with spears and pushed them toward the gorge...

I threw myself into the gorge even though my hands were still tied behind my back. They threw rocks and spears into the gorge.



Alexander da Costa Araújo

Saboria Village, Aileu District, 1975

Alexander da Costa Araújo was a member of UDT in August 1975 when UDT took power. When Fretilin responded he was captured, interrogated and imprisoned without trial in Aissimou, Aileu. One night after his release from prison, he was taken from his home by the head of the prison to witness the execution of ten people in Saboria, Aileu. Not long after this, Mr Araújo secretly witnessed the massacre of between 90 and 160 prisoners of Fretilin in Aissimou-Manufunihun, Aileu District.



My brother Afonso Araújo and I were members of UDT. At the time of the *coup d'état* I was living in Saboria village and didn't know anything about it. When the Fretilin counter *coup* occurred I was captured and taken to Aissimou, Aileu where A (name suppressed), the Fretilin leader for Aissimou, interrogated me.

I was imprisoned in Aissimou where, along with hundreds of other prisoners from various areas, I was forced to work in the Fretilin communal garden.

After some time I was officially freed from the prison. But for several weeks after that I still had to bring firewood to Aissimou every afternoon and I was still not allowed to sleep in my own home in Saboria. After several weeks of doing this I was given permission to sleep at home.

At 11 o'clock one night, when I was sleeping in my house, I heard the sound of a car followed by someone knocking on my door. I felt anxious and afraid. I opened the door and found the head of the prison standing there. I invited him in but he just told me to come with him. I realised then that he was drunk, but I had to do what he said.

He took me to a place where a truck was parked with people in the back. He ordered his men to get the people down from the truck. Then he stood the prisoners in a line, gave them time to pray, and fired a shot. As soon as he fired the shot his men fired their G3 weapons at the prisoners. The prisoners were only ten meters away and died instantly. B (name suppressed) then commanded me to call the people of the area to come and bury the bodies.

B (name suppressed) and I returned to my house. When we arrived I told my family to prepare food for our visitor. My family slaughtered an animal and went to Aileu to buy drinks. Out of fear I felt forced to offer hospitality. After eating, B (name suppressed) slept in my house. The next day he was picked up by his people.

I have just described the massacre in Saboria. Now I will describe the massacre in Aissimou-Manufunihun, Aileu, that I secretly witnessed.

One night, the people of Saboria village heard that more than 100 prisoners were being taken from the prison in Aileu to Aissimou-Manufunihun. Among the prisoners was my brother-in-law, Felisberto dos Santos who had been captured by Fretilin in Soibada. When the people of Saboria heard about the transfer of the prisoners we were very distressed. Several of us went secretly to Aissimou. Assimou is upstream from Saboria so we quietly waded up the river to where the prisoners were being kept.

We stopped at a place where we could see the prisoners and several parked cars but we were still some distance from them. Suddenly we heard gunfire and screaming. The gunfire lasted for about 15 minutes. We did not see exactly what happened after that because as soon as the screaming stopped we went back to Saboria. To this day no-one knows exactly how many people died in that massacre. Some say 90, others say as many as 160 people were killed.

During the Indonesian occupation, B (name suppressed) stayed at my house for several months. The Indonesian military kept calling B (name suppressed) to interrogate him but I told them that he was a key witness to the Fretilin massacre in Aileu.

*The gunfire lasted
for about 15 minutes...*

*Some say...
as many as 160 people
were killed.*

António Amado J.R. Guterres

Dili District, August–December 1975; Manatuto District, 1977

Mr Antonio Amado Guterres gave testimony about the UDT-Fretilin 1975 conflict. At this time he was tricked by UDT members into declaring himself a Fretilin supporter, and subsequently summarily imprisoned. He told of the chaos in Dili in those times, where it was very easy for ordinary citizens to get caught up in the violence. After being required to take a UDT party card, he was later captured and imprisoned by Fretilin when they took power. In September 1975 he went to Lacló, Manatuto, where he was arrested and beaten unconscious by Fretilin. He was held for months, until the Indonesian military entered the area in late December 1975.

Mr Guterres told of how after fleeing to the forests with Fretilin he became a member of the Education Unit. He told of the Fretilin announcement of Francisco Xavier do Amaral being a traitor, and of the execution of seven Fretilin members by Fretilin in the mountains. Mr Guterres was required to record the testimonies of prisoner under interrogation, and so he told of the Fretilin methods of torture and interrogation.



On 10 August 1975 I left Lacló to study in Dili. In Dili I stayed with relatives in Balide. On the day after I arrived Lucia Sarmento, Joséfa Sarmento and I were walking to the place where the course was being held when we were ordered to go back because it was dangerous. We returned to Balide.

That afternoon we were smoking with friends in front of the old market when a vehicle full of people shouting came by. They made the Fretilin sign to us. We responded with the same sign. They immediately stopped the car, captured me and put me in the car. Then I found out that they were UDT members from Maubisse. They took me to Palapaso and put me in prison. The person in charge of the prison was A (name suppressed) from Bidau. The next day, 12 August 1975, I was released.

Five days later I returned to Palapaso to get a UDT card. The same day that I went to get my card I saw members of Apodeti demonstrating in front of the Indonesian consulate in Lecidere.

On 19 August 1975, shooting started in Taibessi, heading in the direction of Palapaso. Because the situation was getting serious, we planned to escape to Lahane the next day. But in Balide Lucia Sarmanto and I saw Fretilin capture GL and L right in front of us. They were just pulled into a car and taken away. After that we realised that we would need to be very careful just to survive.

When we arrived in Lahane we stayed at the priest's house. On 23 August 1975 we left his house. Four days later I was picked up by B (name suppressed) and taken to Bidau.

On 9 September 1975 Augusto Metan, from Bidau, was shot dead by Fretilin in front of the Bidau primary school. On 20 September 1975 I returned to Lacló. At that time the Fretilin commander at Lacló was Xanana Gusmão, the current President of Timor-Leste. I hid in Victor da Costa Oliveira's house. In the evening three Fretilin soldiers came to Victor's house to capture me. They were armed with a G3 and two Mausers. They beat me unconscious.

On 21 September 1975 I was taken to Manatuto and held there together with JLC, JBB, JPS, VDS, AS and FS. The seven of us were held separately but in another room there were 400 people together.

On 24 September 1975 I was interrogated by C (name suppressed) about the UDT coup d'état in Dili. Then we were moved to a house in Carlilo, Aidila Laran where I was more free and not so tightly guarded. One day D (name suppressed), a Fretilin militia, asked us whether we knew why we were being held in that place. He said that we would soon be killed and he encouraged us to flee. So that evening we fled and hid in the house of people who lived close to Carlilo. From there we were called by E (name suppressed) from Lacló to return to Lacló. We returned to Lacló and stayed at the Fretilin Base. When F (name suppressed) came from Remexio, G (name suppressed) moved us out of the Fretilin base because he was afraid of him. After F (name suppressed) had returned to Lacló we were called back to live at the Fretilin Base again.

ABRI came to Manatuto on 31 December 1975 but it wasn't until 20 February 1976 that they arrived in Lacló. We fled to the forests toward Blani Kadauk. Soon after that we moved again. Around that time I became a member of the Education Unit. Because of this I attended all the important meetings. I attended the meetings that were held in May 1976 in Soibada, May 1977 in Lailini, and July 1977 in Herluli, Remexio, Aileu.

I clearly remember one particular issue that was addressed at one of those meetings: it was exactly midnight, on 19 August 1977, at a meeting of Fretilin leaders. Nicolao Lobato made a public announcement that Francisco Xavier do Amaral was a traitor. At that time Francisco Xavier do Amaral had not been captured by Fretilin. In the evening of 19 August 1977 Nicolao Lobato suspended Francisco Xavier do Amaral. At exactly 12 noon on Falintil's birthday, 20 August 1977, in Herluli, Fretilin killed seven people whom they had been holding prisoner. During the flag-raising ceremony an order was given to prepare a hole. After the ceremony was over the seven of them were put in the hole and everyone was invited to come and watch the killing. When all seven of them were in the hole, H (name suppressed) said: "Your time is up. Prepare to die."

*After the
[Fretilin flag-raising]
ceremony was over the
seven of them were put
in the hole and everyone
was invited to come and
watch the killing.*

*...victims were
forced to admit to
things which they
knew nothing about,
and to mention names
of other people who
had nothing to do
with that case.*

Of the seven executed that day I only knew Paulino Soares. We were both teachers during the Portuguese period. Before he was killed, Paulino Soares said: “Comrades, I am ready to die. My only possessions are the clothes I am wearing. They are for my mother who will continue to struggle with you for independence.” When he had finished speaking he took off his clothes. The seven of them were immediately shot with a hail of bullets. I saw that everyone had died except for one person. He said: “I will soon die, but you will not win.” After this I (name suppressed) took his bayonet and sliced open the body of this victim, spilling a lot of blood. When I saw all that blood I fainted. I do not remember how long I was unconscious and I do not know how those seven people were buried.

When I regained consciousness, ALA and I left for Hatokona because I had to attend a meeting. At that meeting we discussed our war strategy, ways to survive and ways of attacking the enemy. We did not come to any agreement and we all went back to our places. We met again in October 1977 in Ailaran, which is around 10km from Metinaro. In Ailaran, on 23 October 1977, J (name suppressed) beat Alexander Lemos to death. Alexander Lemos and J (name suppressed) were the technicians for Radio Maubere. Perhaps J (name suppressed) killed him because he caught Alexander Lemos having radio contact with ABRI. I don’t know for sure.

I witnessed this killing and, because I was in prison, I also saw people tortured and ill-treated. While I was in prison they asked me to record the interrogations of the victims. Because of this, I know exactly how they ran the interrogations—victims were forced to admit to things which they knew nothing about, and to mention names of other people who had nothing to do with that case.



António Amado J R
Guterres during his
testimonial.



*CAVR National Commissioners
Rev Agostinho Vasconcelos, Deputy
Chairperson Fr Jovito Araujo,
Chairperson Aniceto Guterres Lopes,
Olandina Caeiro.*



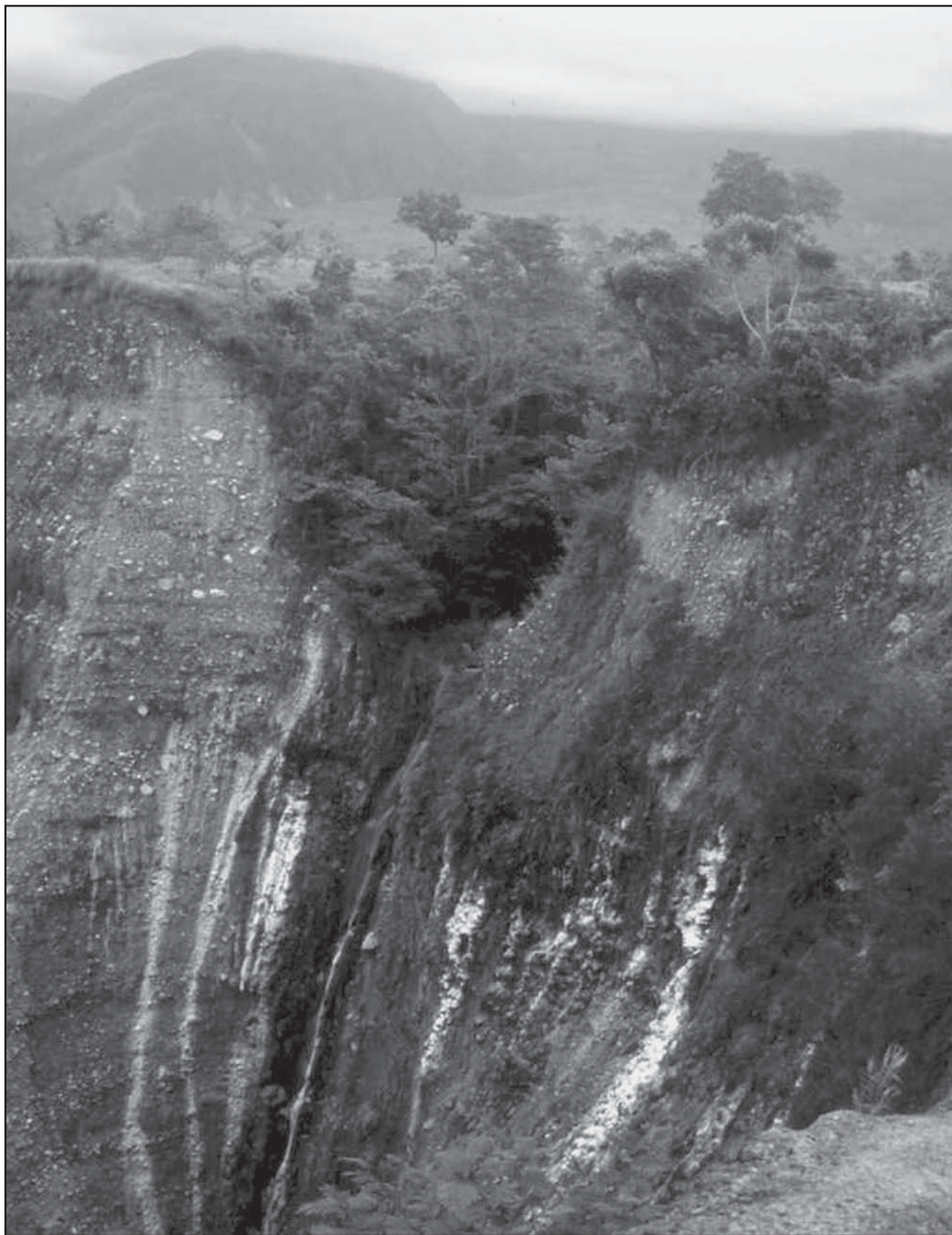
*Emotional audience members
are attended by CAVR staff.*



ABOVE: Arnaldo Araujo (centre), President of Apodeti and Governor of the Indonesian Provisional Government of East Timor, identifies bodies at one of the mass graves of UDT and Apodeti members executed by Fretilin members in Aileu, December 1975 (January 1976).



LEFT: Graves of the 11 Fretilin supporters executed by UDT members on the Meti-Oan beach in Manufahi on 28 August 1975.



"Jakarta II": The cliffs of Hatabuilico, Ainaro District, where the Indonesian military threw countless people to their deaths throughout the years of conflict.

Felismina dos Santos Conceição

Vila Verde, Dili District, December 1975

Felismina dos Santos Conceição told of how her home was burnt during the conflict between Timorese political parties in 1975. A child at the time of the full-scale invasion of Dili by Indonesian forces on 7 December 1975, Felismina told of the terror of ordinary people as Indonesian forces parachuted into Dili. She told of how the civilians taking shelter at the Social Services office in Caicoli were ordered by Indonesian soldiers to gather in a field with many other people. She said men and women and children were separated, the men being taken to the side of a nearby building. She told of the gunfire, and of later sneaking to find out what had happened. She found the victims of the massacre of male civilians, including her father and brother, who died in her arms.

Felismina told of the following months of struggling to survive the early days of the occupation, of moving around seeking safe places, and of the terror of women as the ABRI forces sought them out for rape.



On 15 August 1975 many houses in Vila Verde, including ours, were burnt down as part of the inter-party conflict. For the next four months we lived as refugees in the Social Affairs office in Caicoli, Dili. This office is now part of the Unatil university campus.

At around six o'clock in the morning on Sunday, 7 December 1975, we heard the sounds of airplanes. We went out and saw planes flying over the city of Dili and the surrounding area and parachutists dropping from them. Next we heard gunfire between ABRI and Fretilin. When the shooting started we were afraid and hid inside our homes. From our hiding place I heard Fretilin soldiers killing two members of ABRI who had come to lower the Fretilin flag. They killed them in what is now the Sylvia photocopy shop, but it used to be the ambulance office.

Soon after that ABRI took control of the area surrounding the Social Affairs office where we were staying. There were about three families in one room of the office. ABRI ordered us to leave immediately. They told us to go to a nearby field. I was carrying my two-year-old brother and while we walked to the field they beat us and kicked us. They beat women as well as men.

Many other people had already gathered in the field. When we arrived they separated the men from the women. They took the men to the side of the building which was covered in tall grass. It was hard for us to see because the women were ordered to stay lying down in the field.

Soon after that we heard shooting and the sound of a grenade. The shooting went on for a very long time. When it stopped a woman called Isabel pretended to take water to ABRI who were resting so that she could see what had happened. By the time she got there ABRI was moving away and she didn't give them the water. But she did see what had happened.

Isabel told us that the men who had been taken to the side of the building had all been killed. We found my father and he was covered in blood. My father explained that the

blood was from my wounded brother who needed water. I went straight to my brother. I lifted his head and placed it on my lap and then I gave him the water. But I noticed that as he drank my clothes were getting wet. Then I realised that the water was coming out of a wound in his neck.

While I was giving water to my brother, I saw the bodies of many other victims. I saw a human head and there were pieces of flesh stuck to barbed wire and trees near where the massacre occurred. In the end we could not rescue my brother. When other victims' family members came looking for their loved ones ABRI noticed us and started shooting in our direction. We ran away. Later I saw a person who had died lying in a drain. The bayonet that had stabbed him was still sticking out of his body. I also saw other victims who had died. We were like strangers to one another. Each of us was just trying to save ourselves.

I found my family, and we moved to Guarda Colmera. But ABRI continued to follow us. Then ABRI took a woman away in a car and later they took another five men. After that they stopped terrorising us. When the men returned they told us that they had been forced to bury the bodies of people who had been killed in the river Maloa. They didn't know exactly how many had died there but they said there were a lot of bodies.

Two days later ABRI returned the woman they had taken away. She was in a bad condition and later gave birth to a child as a result of what ABRI did to her.

ABRI advised us to surrender. We fled to Sota in Bidau Lecidere. We were in Sota Bidau Lecidere for only a short period. While we were there I saw ABRI take six men to the beach at Lecidere. Soon after that Bishop José came and told us to move from there, so we moved to the museum where we stayed for about three months.

While we were staying in the museum we were terrorised every night, mostly by ABRI who came looking for women. My female friends and I had to hide in the bathroom.

When things returned to normal we went back to Vila Verde.

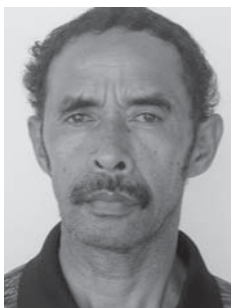
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Then I realised that the water was coming out a wound in his neck.

Angelo Araújo Fernandes

Souro Village, Lautem District 1976

Angelo Araújo Fernandes told of his survival of a forced march and execution of prisoners by Fretilin in 1976, in Pasikenu, Lautem District. His father, brothers and five friends were executed. He escaped, but told of how the Fretilin soldiers returned to his village of Kooleu, Lore I, and massacred 37 people, including his entire extended family. To save himself, he surrendered to the Indonesian military.



One day in 1976 several Fretilin members came to Iramiri, Souro and captured my father, Motohula, and two of my brothers. They were taken about 5km away, to Acalaulau. On the way there one of my brothers managed to escape. The next day, two more Fretilin members came and captured him again. I ran away and hid. In the afternoon of the same day, two more armed Fretilin members, A (name suppressed) and B (name suppressed), came to our house with a letter from Fretilin commanders, C (name suppressed) and D (name suppressed). The letter was written in Portuguese and signed by my father. It said: "Angelo and Filipe, it is better you move to Laihira. If you stay where you are, there will be no one to protect you." After reading the letter, I went with the two Fretilin men to Acalaulau. My father and brother met us there that evening.

We heard that ABRI had come close to Laihira so my family and the Fretilin soldiers moved to Kooleu, Lore I, where we stayed for two days. On the second day at about five in the morning A (name suppressed) led the Fretilin soldiers, with spears, and my father, my two brothers, five friends and myself, to Pasikenu, Souro where we met the Fretilin leaders. Along the way they tied our hands to our backs with rope, which is called tanu in the Fataluku language.

When we arrived in Pasikenu, A (name suppressed) ordered us to stop. He went to check whether the Fretilin leaders were in their places or not. Soon he came back and told us that the Fretilin leaders were not there. A (name suppressed) commanded one of his people to take us under a tree and to tie two of us together with rope, which in Fataluku is called kawaha-waha. I was tied to my brother. At about ten o'clock in the morning they started to shoot us. A bullet hit my brother and we were thrown into the air. We fell into a gorge, which broke the rope between us. My hands were still tied behind my back but I started to run. My father, brothers and friends died there but I managed to escape.

I took off the sarong I was wearing, and continued running in my underpants. Then I hid in the river. They couldn't find me but they went back to Kooleu, Lore I and shot 37 people. In that massacre my entire extended family was killed, including the children and pregnant women. I did not see them being shot. I just heard the gunfire from the direction of Kooleu.

At about ten o'clock in the evening I came out of the river but because it was full moon they saw me come out of the river and continued to shoot at me. I was able to get away but the next day I surrendered to the Indonesian military in Los Palos. They cut the rope tying my hands and they gave me a sarong.

Even after 24 years, I have not been able to reclaim my family. I want to know who gave the order to kill my family? Why did they do it?

My child asks me, "Daddy, why was our family killed? Who killed my grandparents?" and I do not have any answers for him.

*Even after 24 years,
I have not been able to
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*I want to know
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answers for him.*

Berta Caetano

Rasa Village, Lautem District, 1976

Mrs Berta Caetano told of the disappearance of her father and brother after they were taken from their village of Old Rasa by the Indonesian military in 1976. Her father and brother had earlier reported gunfire to the ABRI Commander, and sought their protection. Mrs Caetano told of how she was threatened by ABRI when she sought information about their whereabouts, and of how she only found confirmation two years later that they had been killed and their remains burned in a house. She was able to retrieve a belt buckle and a cross that belonged to her father and brother in the remains of the fire which confirmed for her their fate.



On Saturday 13 March 1976, my father Joaquim Caetano went to Old Rasa to work in the rice paddy. He was working with my brother, Victor Caetano and three friends, Baltazar, Filomeno and Armando Pereira, when they heard gunfire. The gunfire was coming from the top of Mount Rasa which was close to the rice paddy. The shots were being fired at Battalion 502 on the main road leading to Los Palos City but no-one knew who was firing. My father, brother and friends were afraid and hid in the muddy field.

When the shooting stopped my father and the others left their hiding place and went into the city. They wanted to report what they had heard and to ask for protection from ABRI. When they reported what they had heard to Battalion 502 at the Trisula military post, the Commander of the Battalion took their names and addresses. Then they returned to Rasa.

They got home around five o'clock in the afternoon. But they didn't even have time to change their dirty clothes before a truck came to pick them up. There were members of Battalion 502 and of the Trisula military post in the truck. The military had a list of names of those who had made the report of the shooting. My brother's name was on the list but my father's name was not. My father didn't want his son to go without him so he went too. ABRI said they wanted more information about the shooting because a member of Battalion 502 had been wounded.

After they left Rasa for Trisula on that truck I never saw my father and brother again. No-one gave us any information about where they had gone. The next day I borrowed a neighbour's horse to go to see the Indonesian military in Trisula.

When I asked about my father and brother the guard on duty said that his Battalion, Battalion 312, had just been transferred to Trisula and he had no idea about where my relatives might be.

I went back to Trisula later that day but when I asked for more information about my missing relatives members of ABRI threatened that if I pursued this I would be killed too. I had no choice but to go back home. I felt very sad. I knew we would never see my father and brother again. They had been killed still wearing clothes that were muddy from the rice paddy.

Commander Sarak took me back to Rasa. I asked him to show us where my father and brother had been killed so that we could bury them. Sarak just said that they had “gone to assist ABRI.” And whenever he came to our house and found us crying he said that we shouldn’t be sad because my father and brother were “assisting ABRI.”

One of our relatives, Francisco, lived in the forest and his responsibilities included spying on the ABRI post and reporting their activities. One day, he came and told us that the five who were taken from Rasa had been killed. He said their bodies had been burnt in a house.

It was not until two years later, in 1978, that the families of those five could go and bury their bones. The bones had been badly burned and individual bodies could not be identified, but some of their things had survived the fire. I found a belt buckle and a cross that belonged to my father and brother. We buried the bones.

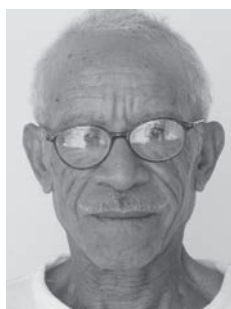
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Domingos Maria Alves

Aileu District, 1977

When the Indonesian military invaded Dili on 7 December 1975 Mr Domingos Maria Alves fled from Dili to the hills of Aileu. He told of how he was in Lequidoe with Fretilin leader Francisco Xavier do Amaral, and of their efforts to hide him.

Mr Alves' testimony focused on the Fretilin violations following the accusation against Francisco Xavier do Amaral of being a traitor. He told of how he was imprisoned, beaten constantly and interrogated. He told of how he witnessed many Fretilin members being executed at this time, and was himself constantly threatened.



At four o'clock in the morning on 7 December 1975, ABRI began attacking Dili. A few hours later I went to Aileu and then on to Lequidoe. The *Maubere* leaders also began to move to Balibar and Aileu.

At seven o'clock in the morning of the following day I left Lequidoe for Aileu. Francisco Xavier do Amaral fled with me and we both pretended to be civilians. We managed to hide Francisco Xavier do Amaral in Lequidoe for over a month. One day he came out to witness the bombing by the Indonesian military and was seen by the local people. After that everyone knew that he was in Lequidoe.

Later Nicolau Lobato ordered A (name suppressed) to call nine of us to his office. A (name suppressed) called Gaspar, Domingos, Domingos Sai, Barlequi, Matias, Lequibere, Jubelu, João Bosco, one other person and myself. When I arrived in the office B (name suppressed) met us and introduced us to C (name suppressed). Then I was tied up but the others were left alone. Then people from Laclubar beat me while everyone else had to watch. I was being beaten because it had just been announced that Francisco Xavier do Amaral was a traitor.

Later that afternoon D (name suppressed) and five others arrived. They were all armed. C (name suppressed) ordered them to bring me to him. Then he began to interrogate me, saying: "Are you Francisco Xavier do Amaral's right hand man, who ordered the people to surrender?" I told him I was.

It was very cold so the leaders all sat around a big fire while C (name suppressed) interrogated me. Later C (name suppressed) and D (name suppressed) took turns to beat me. D (name suppressed) beat me with a wooden stick until it broke. He broke another three sticks by beating me and then he burnt me.

After this C (name suppressed) ordered B (name suppressed) to undo the rope that held me. C (name suppressed) ordered me to go to the barracks and told me to eat a few sweet potatoes. The next day, they ordered six militia to dig a hole. The hole was to bury the prisoners that were going to be killed. At noon, they lined up 20 people and chose ten who would be killed. Those ten were taken to the edge of the river next to the office. Among those ten were Albarina from Bidau and Marcelino from Remexio. Then everyone else was told to go outside and witness the executions.

C (name suppressed) ordered the people to pray. Then they ordered the first person to close his eyes. D (name suppressed) shot him dead. Then the next person was brought and B (name suppressed) told him to close his eyes. D (name suppressed) shot him dead. This went on, one after another until ten people had been killed. One of those killed was a woman called Albertina. She had to be dragged to the site of the execution and as she was dragged she cursed the leaders who were there. She said, "What you are doing is not right. We left our families and property to support the political party you founded. We lived together and ate and drank together. And now you kill us like animals. You accuse innocent people of being traitors. How did we betray the party? We negotiated with the enemy as ordered and now you accuse us of being traitors?"

C (name suppressed) and his friends told Albertina that they had saved the best spot for her and told her to stand on top of the bodies of her dead friends. She refused. They threw her onto the corpses, but she climbed back down and continued to curse and swear at the leaders. Then they ordered her to close her eyes. She refused. They told her to pray. She refused. D (name suppressed) shot her three times but Albertina still didn't die. She stood and swore at them until they buried her alive.

After it was over, C (name suppressed) called me and said: "Ambulan, see for yourself, this is what happens to traitors. These executions are like water to clean the eyes of the leaders and the traitors."

The next day they put more prisoners into a hole. There were more than 100 people. Some of them, such as Zeca from Dili who was Francisco Xavier do Amaral's bodyguard, Rafael from Turiscai, Ananias who was the Commander of the Remexio zone, had been beaten almost to death. João Bosco and I stayed outside but our hands were still tied. E (name suppressed) from Alas, Same guarded the hole.

I was ordered to be a guard. Each week my name appeared on the list of people who would be killed, but once at the place where we were to be killed, my name would disappear, and someone else would be called instead. Perhaps this was the grace of God. Some people were then taken to Sare, Ermera, but I stayed where I was.

*Each week my
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be killed, but once at
the place where we were
to be killed, my name
would disappear, and
someone else would be
called instead.*

*Perhaps this was the
grace of God.*

Domingos Maria Alves

*To this day
I do not understand
what they meant by the
word 'traitor' or why
we were accused of
betraying Fretilin.*

*My heart and
my mind are Fretilin
and I continue to respect
the Fretilin flag but the
stories of what has been
done in the name of
Fretilin should be
passed on to future
generations.*

One day, I was called and ordered to meet Francisco Xavier do Amaral who, in response to an order by Nicolau Lobato, had been captured in Tutuluru with his bodyguard and his family. That evening, Lobato and C (name suppressed) interrogated Francisco Xavier do Amaral. Then C (name suppressed) ordered someone to call me to the hole where the prisoners were being held. At the hole, there were several leaders and C (name suppressed) was beating Francisco Xavier do Amaral.

C (name suppressed) asked him, "Do you know Ambulan?" Then C (name suppressed) asked me: "Do you know Francisco Xavier do Amaral?" I said that he was my uncle.

C (name suppressed) interrogated the two of us. C (name suppressed) told me to beat Francisco Xavier do Amaral and ordered Francisco Xavier do Amaral to beat me. But Francisco Xavier do Amaral said: "I am a politician and a party leader. I made a mistake. The people beat me and made me step down. But I will not beat the people. The people can beat me." C (name suppressed) kept beating him.

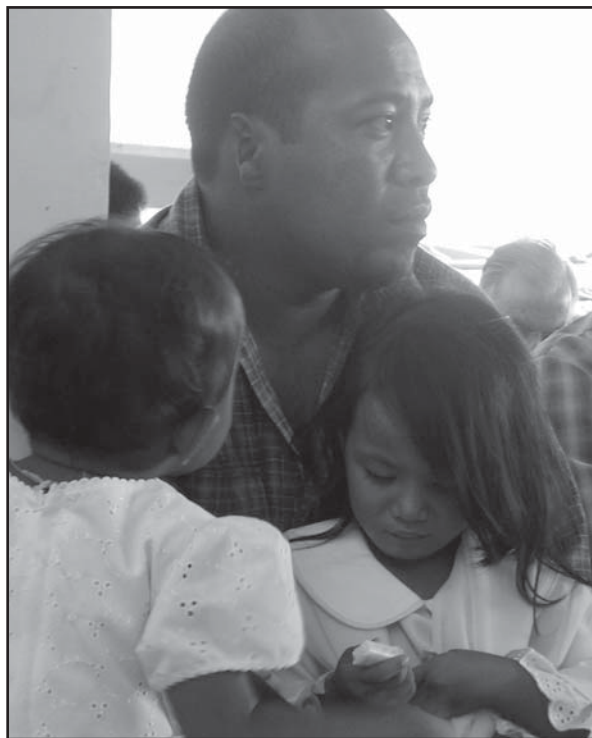
Francisco Xavier do Amaral and his wife and I were held together. The three of us never spoke with one another. Even when we went to fetch water we did not speak. We walked alone. Me in front, Francisco Xavier do Amaral in the middle and his wife at the back. A week later they moved Francisco Xavier do Amaral to Barique.

Ten of us, including Luís, Mário Bonifácio, Hermenegildo, José Sabere, Diogo, Tomás, Domingos, Umkoli, Nuno and myself, were moved first to Sare and then to Fatubesi, Ermera. In the beginning we were taken to Abat, then to Kakehe Mota Laran. In Kakehe Mota Laran, five people were killed. Then we began to be surrounded by ABRI. After we were released some of us joined the military but I became a civilian.

To this day I do not understand what they meant by the word "traitor" or why we were accused of betraying Fretilin. My heart and my mind are Fretilin and I continue to respect the Fretilin flag but the stories of what has been done in the name of Fretilin should be passed on to future generations.



CAVR National Commissioner
Jacinto Alves speaks.



ABOVE: Audience listens to the testimonies.

LEFT: Witness Simplicio Celestino de Deus listens from the audience.

Lucio Meneses Lopes

Mt Matebian, Uatu-Lari, Viqueque District, 1976–1979

Lucio Meneses Lopes was a member of the Portuguese military stationed in Baucau when the Indonesian military invaded in December 1975. He fought with the Resistance for three years. He told how the Baucau population fled to the mountains, and of the terror of the Indonesian military aerial bombings, which he said killed between 10-20 people each day. In 1978 he surrendered to ABRI in Uatu-Lari. He told of how the Indonesian military worked with Timorese people to conduct interrogations, and how it was the Timorese who beat prisoners.

After several months in prison he was taken to Olsu ostensibly to “look for Fretilin members in the forest.” Together with six others he was taken to a hillside where ABRI opened fire on them. Mr Lopes managed to escape by hiding in a cave.



From January 1975, I taught at a Portuguese military school in Makadikin Edemunu, Uatu-Lari. After the *coup d'état* in August 1975, UDT captured me in Uatu-Lari. At the time of the *counter-coup* I was still there.

After the *counter-coup* I joined the Portuguese military [sic] and served under the command of the Quartel General (QG). From that time until the Indonesian invasion on 7 December 1975 I was stationed in Baucau. When the Indonesian military planes began to bomb the airport in Baucau we were the only platoon to defend it.

That night, Indonesian warships entered the harbours of Baucau, Seiçal and Laga. The Indonesians were armed with sophisticated weapons such as artillery mortar. All we had to defend ourselves were Mauser and G3 weapons. On the morning of 7 December we retreated to the headquarters in Baucau. An Indonesian warplane flew back and forth over Baucau dropping propaganda pamphlets.

The plane made us very anxious so that afternoon we fled to the forest. We fled with First Commander, José Cirilio Nunes, Maubrani, the Fretilin Regional Secretary of Baucau, Eduardo Ximenes and several others. The people of Baucau also fled to the surrounding forests.

On 8-9 December 1975, we attacked the Indonesian military who were setting up a military post close to the Baucau airport. We placed a land mine on the main road in Ostico and destroyed an Indonesian military vehicle. As a result many members of the Indonesian military were killed.

In January 1976 a meeting was held in Ponte Leste and I took advantage of this opportunity to visit my family in Uatu-Lari. From Uatu-Lari, I could not return to Centro Sul because the situation was getting worse, so we retreated to Mount Matebean. We stayed there for more than two months and every day 10-20 people were killed on Mount Matebean by bombs dropped from the Indonesian warplanes.

On 22 November 1978, the leaders of the resistance ordered the civilians to surrender, because the enemy attacks were intensifying. Soon after that my friend Francisco and I were separated from our group and lost communication with them. Francisco convinced me to surrender, so in Uatu-Lari on 24 November 1978 we gave ourselves up to the Indonesian Military.

We surrendered to Gaspar Mascarenhas, the Apodeti leader in Uatu-Lari. He called Hansip and we were taken to face the special forces command, *Nanggala*. Late at night *Nanggala* took us to a house belonging to a Chinese man that had been turned into a prison. There were many prisoners there. In that house *Nanggala* interrogated us.

While I was imprisoned there I was never beaten but I saw other people being violently beaten. It was not the Indonesian military that beat the prisoners. It was Timorese beating their own people black and blue.

From 24 November 1978 to 30 March 1979, every day at noon they commanded us to line up while two Hansip members read names of prisoners from a list prepared by the Indonesian military. At first my name was not on the list but later two Hansip members added my name to the bottom of the list. When they called our names they told us that we were going to look for Fretilin in the forests.

There were fourteen in my group. We were led by Armindo Meneses, who now lives in Kupang, and Mateus Sarmento, who has since died there. We walked for two hours to get to Olsu. On the way the Hansip members didn't hurt us. Sometimes they walked ahead of us and sometimes they followed us from behind. When we arrived in Olsu, they handed us over to Battalion 721. ABRI divided us into two groups. Half were taken to the Zone 17 August and the other seven were taken down the hill.

ABRI took us to a hill and told us to sit down. I was suspicious so I just squatted, ready to move if I needed to. Suddenly ABRI opened fire on us. A bullet scratched my head. I leaped down the hill and hid in a cave. ABRI came looking for me, but they couldn't find me. When they had gone I came out of the cave.

I didn't know where to go so I went to the forest to hide. While hiding I met an old man and through him I passed a message to my wife. Later I was seen by another man who reported me to ABRI so I had to move again. My wife helped me get a false travel document and using this I made my way to Baucau where I stayed with my cousin. Soon people in Baucau became suspicious of me so I fled to Dili.

In 1982 I went to Maubisse, Ainaro and got a job as a government employee in the office of the sub-district administration.

*We stayed there
for more than two
months and every day
10-20 people were killed
on Mount Matebian by
bombs dropped from
the Indonesian
warplanes.*

Felismina Soares

Sabailolo, Turiscai, Manufahi District, 1980

Mrs Felismina Soares was a witness to a massacre of civilians around 1980 by Timorese Hansip members of the Indonesian military. She was taking refuge in the forests of Turiscai in the wet season of 1980 when she and eleven others, all men, were captured by the Hansip. She told of how nine of the men were lined up beside the river in Sabailolo and shot dead. Later, two of the other men were also shot summarily. Mrs Soares said she did not know why the prisoners were killed. She said she thought it may have been to do with past political differences, as the head of the Hansip was a member of the UDT political party, whilst all the killed prisoners had been members of Fretilin.

Mrs Soares said that the perpetrators of this massacre are alive, and that she would be willing to testify against them before a court of law.



*I was standing
very close to the nine
people who were shot.*

*After they were
killed I felt as if I was
dead as well.*

Sometime during the rainy season around 1980 I was with the people of Sabailolo, Poholau village in Turiscai, in the forest when we were captured by Hansip from Turiscai. The Hansip unit that captured us was lead by A (name suppressed). After they captured us, they searched all the people, especially the men, and all our belongings. There were 12 of us, 11 men and me.

When the inspection was over they commanded nine of the men to stand in a line by the river in Sabailolo. They were told to form a line with their backs towards us. Then A (name suppressed) commanded his people to shoot them. The men died instantly.

I was standing very close to the nine people who were shot. After they were killed I felt as if I was dead as well. I could not speak. I did not feel sad or cry. I just felt very afraid. I was thinking that I was about to be killed by Hansip just like the others. I was deaf and mute with shock and fear. I did not hear what A (name suppressed) said to his men or what he ordered them to do with the three of us who had not been killed.

After the massacre the Hansip, the other two prisoners and I slept at a place near where it had occurred. We were closely guarded by the Hansip. The next day we left for Turiscai. In the middle of the road A (name suppressed) gave orders to his men to kill the two men who were with me. One of them was Sebastiao, who used to be the village chief of Sucu Liurai, Turiscai. After the two men were shot dead their belongings were taken by A (name suppressed) and his team.

I don't know for sure why these people were killed so ruthlessly. I suppose it was linked with the past, political issues, and political parties. A (name suppressed) is a member of UDT and all of the victims were members of Fretilin.

I am ready to stand before any legal institution, in the presence of the perpetrators of this massacre to give testimony about what I saw with my own eyes. I am the only witness still alive. Some of the perpetrators of those killings still live in Turiscai. Others have not returned from West Timor.



*TOP: Ilidio Maria de Jesus testifies.
ABOVE: Simplicio Celestino de Deus demonstrates where he was wounded by Indonesian soldiers during the Santa Cruz massacre.*



Santa Cruz Cemetery 12 November 1991. The CAVR was told that Indonesian soldiers opened fire on young men and women gathered in a peaceful demonstration outside the Santa Cruz Cemetery, and that many of the wounded were stabbed to death or taken away in trucks with the dead. Filmed by international cameraman Max Stahl, this footage changed the way the world saw the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste. (Pictures © Yorkshire Television.)



Suai Church 1999. Thousands of displaced people took refuge in the Suai Church in the lead-up to the Popular Consultation on 30 August 1999. The CAVR took many statements about the massacre that was perpetrated in Suai against civilians after the independence ballot.

Mariana Marques

Muapitine Village, Lautem District, 1983

In November 1983 Mariana Marques' husband was imprisoned by the Indonesian military. Though he was denied a trial he was sentenced to death by public execution. Despite having his throat slashed and being stabbed nine times Angelo da Costa survived his execution and, hours later, was buried in the presence of his wife. At the time of his murder four others were also brutally murdered, all in the presence of and with the forced participation of the Muapitine villagers.



On 25 November 1983, three ABRI members came and captured my husband, Angelo da Costa because he was the principal representative of the resistance in Muapitine village. Two of his friends were taken at the same time: Lino Xavier, who was the deputy representative of Muapitine Village, and Alvaro Pereira, who was a member of Ratih and supplied Fretilin with bullets. Soon after that, ABRI also arrested Gilberto, Leonel Oliveira, Alarico, and José Vicente.

On 6 December 1983, ABRI released Gilberto, Alarico and José Vicente. The next day, the Muapitine Village head announced that the next morning all citizens of Muapitine Village should gather at the village office to greet the ABRI colonel.

At around six o'clock in the morning, the people of Muapitine gathered at the village office to welcome the colonel with *tebe-tebe* dances. At seven o'clock he arrived with Battalion 1629, the District Administrator of Lautem, A (name suppressed), my husband, and my husband's four friends: Lino Xavier, Alvaro Pereira, Alberto and Leonel Oliveira.

When they arrived the ABRI Colonel and the District Administrator of Lautem placed three bottles of palm wine on the table and poured it into five glasses. Then they called my husband and the four others to drink it. When they had finished the wine the District Administrator stood up and said that my husband and his four friends had committed crimes and were going to be killed.

Then they called my husband and ordered the Muapitine village head, B (name suppressed), to kill my husband. B (name suppressed) stepped forward and said to my husband: "Angelo, lift your head because I am going to cut your throat." My husband lifted his head and B (name suppressed) slashed his neck with a bayonet. My husband fell to the ground, still breathing. After that they called Lino Xavier and ordered C (name suppressed) to kill him. C (name suppressed) stabbed Lino's chest with his machete, but Lino did not die. C (name suppressed) ordered the people who were present to cut Lino into pieces. Out of fear the people did what they were told.

Next they brought Leonel Oliveira and D (name suppressed) stabbed Leonel's chest with a bayonet until he died. Then E (name suppressed) stabbed Alberto to death. The last person to be called was Alvaro. Alvaro started crying, saying: "What crime have I committed to deserve public execution?" But they ignored him and B (name suppressed) killed Alvaro.

The Lautem District Administrator ordered us to take the bodies to their hometowns. Because my husband was still alive, they commanded a member of Hansip from *Kodim*, E (name suppressed) to stab my husband. E (name suppressed) stabbed my husband's body nine times with a bayonet but he still did not die. We took my husband to the hamlet of Puakelu. The bodies of the other men were taken to their respective hamlets to be buried.

When we got to Puakelu my husband was still breathing. He said, "How can you bury me when I'm still alive?"

I did everything I could to avoid having my husband buried but in the end the Colonel passed a message through the Lautem District Administrator that my husband had to be buried even if he was still alive.

Later that afternoon two members of Battalion 614 supervised his burial. After they had placed him in a hole about half a meter deep, he lifted his hand out and said to me, "Kiss my hand and go and look after our two children. I want to have descendants." I went up to him and kissed his hand.

After that a member of Battalion 614 took me home.

*I did everything
I could to avoid having
my husband buried but
in the end...*

*my husband had to
be buried even [though]
he was still alive.*

José Gomes

Bibileo Village, Viqueque District, 1982–1984

The killings at the village of Kraras, Viqueque in 1983 are one of the most notorious crimes of the Indonesian military period. José Gomes testified to five separate massacres that occurred in and around Kraras between 1982 and 1984, which left at least 180 people dead. Mr Gomes explained the background and factors leading to those killings. He told how in the heavily militarised district of Viqueque the civilian population of Lalerek Mutin was controlled with force and intimidation. In addition to the massacre of civilians, Mr Gomes told about military campaigns to destroy food sources near the forest, and of the deaths of large numbers of people due to starvation and related illnesses. Lalerek Mutin, he said, was cut off from the rest of Timor until 1986, with the people living in terror.



In 1983 we came down from the mountains and were put into a concentration camp in Viqueque by the Indonesian military. Because the conditions were so bad, we decided to return to our village, Bibileo. We weren't allowed to go to our own part of Bibileo but had to live in Kraras which is in a different part. We were guarded by a territorial battalion: *Zipur* 4.

When ABRI and Falintil made a peace agreement in 1982 the Indonesian military allowed members of Falintil to meet with their families in the village. This meant that ABRI could find out who was having contact and collaborating with Falintil.

Sometime around September or October 1982 some ex-Falintil who had come down from the mountains and were collaborating with ABRI, went into the forests to encourage Falintil members to surrender and to come and live with their families in the towns. For some reason ABRI killed two of these ex-Falintil: Jaime Verdial and Loi Rubik. At the same time, ABRI also killed five civilians who just happened to be coming home from the fields at the time. The civilians killed were: Fono Siku, Agustinho Bau Fahik, Abel Gomes, Dau Nahak, and Sesu Fahik. These seven people were not killed by Battalion *Zipur* 4, but by members of another platoon who were on duty there.

Battalion *Zipur* 4 also behaved badly. They sexually harassed women whose husbands were Hansip members and women whose husbands had been killed, when these women were on their way to the fields. This behaviour upset and angered the Hansip members.

The murder of ex-Falintil members and the sexual harassment of the women from the village were both factors leading to the uprising which occurred on 8 August 1983. Falintil, Hansip, the youth and other villagers attacked Battalion *Zipur* 4, killing 14 men. At the same time we seized equipment from the military barracks and took it to the forest. The civilians also fled to the forests or to surrounding towns.

Two members of the Battalion survived. One was a captain who hid in a tree and the other was an ABRI member who was taken by Falintil but managed to escape. The person who escaped later reported the uprising to the *Kodim* in Viqueque.

The next day the Indonesian military returned to Kraras. ABRI found the villages empty so they went into the forests and ordered the civilians to go back to their villages. Anyone who tried to escape was shot on the spot. Of those who returned every single one of them, including children and pregnant women, was killed as they walked along the road to Kasese. No one escaped. In total more than 50 people died. I don't know which battalion was responsible for this massacre.

In September 1983 more than 100 men were taken by ABRI from the village of Buikarim. They were told that they were being taken to get food from Kraras for the other villagers. In reality they were being taken to be massacred. They were all murdered by Battalion 501.

In October of the same year ABRI massacred another 17 men somewhere near Tahuben, which is close to Wetukukidun.

After the uprising I fled to the forests for seven months and joined Falintil but on 23 February 1984 I surrendered to ABRI. I was put in Group 7 under Commander Chandrasah in Buikarim. After that I was sent to Lalerek Mutin until May. Then I was imprisoned again in the *Kodim* in Viqueque. At that time the *Nanggal* commanders were Captain Henry Pisang and Lieutenant Colonel Supriyadi, who were in the village of Buikarim.

In May or June 1984 the military commander of the Viqueque *Kodim* called a group of men, including me, to the *Kodim*. Mariano was the first to be killed. Then seven others: António Viegas, Eduardo, Afonso Gregorio, Kaitotik, Andre, Hiabosik and Rubi Fono. These people came from a variety of villages and were massacred by one of the many battalions in Viqueque at the time. Those who weren't killed were held at *Kasi I* prison at the *Kodim*. In October 1984 we were given a temporary letter of release and brought back to Lalerek Mutin village.

The people of Lalerek Mutin suffered a lot both psychologically and physically. They were constantly intimidated and the military confiscated all their tools and weapons, from machetes down to even the smallest piece of metal. Many didn't have houses to live in and no-one had enough to eat. The people did whatever they could just to stay alive.

ABRI developed a system called *Curlog*, meaning "destroy logistics in the forest," which they implemented until 1985. This system involved community members going into the forests, accompanied by soldiers, to destroy fruit and vegetables growing there so that Falintil would have nothing to eat. In the process of doing this the people themselves sometimes had access to the food they found and so because of *Curlog* many survived who would otherwise have died of starvation. But there were still many people who died of hunger and illness. Many people were killed by ABRI during the uprising but perhaps even more died of starvation during that time.

Throughout this period communication with the outside world was totally cut off and it was not until the end of 1985 that things started to improve. At the end of 1985 the military group that had implemented *Curlog* returned to Java. After they left the people were freer to plant and harvest their crops.

*...every single one
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No one escaped.
In total more than
50 people died.*

Olinda Pinto Martins

Kraras Village, Viqueque District, 1983

Olinda Pinto Martins was near Kraras at the time of the 1983 uprising against the Indonesian military. She told of how she fled into the forests with her two young children in fear of the Indonesian military's response. After five months in the forests she was taken to the Dilor Koramil while her husband stayed in hiding. She told of how she was moved from place to place, and of how the women, children and elderly had to work hard in the fields in Lalerek Mutin to survive. All the men had been driven away in a truck by the Indonesian military and they never returned. Eventually she moved back to Dilor with her husband and her children where she stayed until 1999.



At eight o'clock in the evening of 8 August 1983, gunfire started. The gunfire went on and on and seemed like it would never end. With my five-month-old baby and others I fled to a river near Kraras and hid there. I heard from my friends that Falintil together with Ratih had killed Battalion *Zipur* 4, which was on duty in Kraras. That evening we were very frightened.

The next day a helicopter came to take the bodies of the Indonesian soldiers away. We stayed in our hiding places. Two days later A (name suppressed) came to Kraras to call the people back to the village. When we heard him calling us back we were frightened and confused and didn't know what to do. My husband, Antonio Xavier and some others went and talked to A (name suppressed) but I don't know what was said.

After that many members of ABRI and Hansip came to Kraras. We stayed in hiding and fled deeper into the forest. In Bibileo, Viqueque, we met Ramero who had a wound on his neck that he was treating with traditional medicine. He said: "Last night, the Viqueque Hansip pulled me out of my hiding place and tried to kill me but I managed to escape."

That evening we also met up with Toni Rubik whose body and clothes were stained with blood from the victims of the massacre in Tauben. Toni told us about his escape from the massacre. He said that a group of them were taken to Tauben by ABRI and Hansip: "When we arrived the military started counting: one, two, three and then they started shooting us. Before they shot me, I fell to the ground and so I escaped death," he said. "Later on," Toni continued, "when it was safe, I crawled out of the pile of dead bodies and ran to the forest."

Hearing Toni's story made us even more afraid. We could not decide whether to return to the city or to remain in hiding in the forests. It was very difficult for me to decide because I was with two of my children, who were only one-and-a-half years, and five months old. My husband and I decided to stay in hiding in the forests.

During the day we hid, but at night we looked for shelter and food. We were forced to steal food from the gardens of the people who lived close to our hiding place. While we were in the forests, we saw Falintil only once. They just told us to be careful and then disappeared.

For about five months we hid in the forest. One day we met a relative of my husband from Dilor. He contacted the Dilor Koramil who sent B (name suppressed), who was a member of Hansip, and a civilian to pick us up and take us to Dilor. When we arrived we were sent to the Koramil. The Dilor Koramil ordered us to take a shower. While we were showering, the people there cursed and taunted us saying that we were looking for Xanana in the forest.

We stayed there for about two days. While we were there they interrogated me about the events in Kraras. I told them that Fretilin had killed a member of ABRI. Of course I did not say that Falintil and Ratih had killed members of the Indonesian military. I said that because of Fretilin's actions we became afraid of ABRI and fled to the forest. They asked about my husband. I lied, saying that my husband had returned to Kraras to look for food and that after my husband left I heard the sound of gunfire. I told them that I had not seen him since. In reality my husband was still in the forest.

The Dilor Koramil asked me if I had family in Dilor. I said that I did and was given permission to stay with my husband's family provided I report each day to the military. When I wanted to leave for my husband's family's house, the Koramil of Dilor said, "It will be better if you stay with me." I decided to leave. When I got to my family's house I told them what the Koramil had said. My family protected me and I never left the house.

We stayed in Dilor for some time and then some friends and I were moved to Buikarin. Two days later we were moved to Kaiju Laran. In Kaiju Laran we planted maize but before we were able to harvest our crops we had to move again, this time to Lalerek Mutin.

While in Lalerek Mutin we had to work hard. The women, children and elderly had to do all the work because there were no men. They had all been taken away on a big truck. We did not know where they were being taken and none of them ever returned.

Six months after that my husband came to Lalerek Mutin. We then took the children and moved back to Dilor where my husband surrendered. We stayed in Dilor with my husband's family until 1999.

The women, children and elderly had to do all the work because there were no men.

They had all been taken away on a big truck. We didn't know where they were being taken and none of them ever returned.

Simplisio Celestino de Deus

Dili District, 1991

Simplisio Celestino de Deus was involved with the urban clandestine resistance movement from a young age, as it developed in the late 1980s. He told of his involvement in the well-known demonstration when the US Ambassador John Monjo visited Dili in 1991. He gave graphic testimony of the lead-up the Santa Cruz massacre of 12 November 1991. He recounted the terrible scenes at the Dili hospital after the massacre, and the months of imprisonment, interrogation and beatings that followed.



The first thing I want to say is that I do not see myself as a victim. I see myself as a combatant who struggled and who, fired by patriotism, succeeded in liberating our land.

My first involvement with the resistance was with the clandestine movement. Later I was also involved in preparing a demonstration at the Hotel Turismo in Lecidere, held during the visit of the US Ambassador to Indonesia, John Monjo.

When we heard that the Portuguese Parliament were planning to visit Timor-Leste in October or November 1991, people in the clandestine movement planned a peaceful demonstration to welcome them. But the Indonesian intelligence was very powerful and tried to intimidate the resistance into inaction. An example of this is the murder of Sebastião da Costa Gomes at Motael Church on 28 October 1991.

But intimidation and even the murder of Sebastião Gomes did not stop us. Our determination to continue the struggle was very strong. Fourteen days after the murder of Sebastião Gomes we decided to have a peaceful demonstration. On the 12 November 1991 we attended mass at Motael Church and from there a procession went to the Santa Cruz cemetery. My task was to take photos to record the demonstration.

We had agreed that it would be a peaceful demonstration so, before we left Motael Church for Santa Cruz, the participants lined up and I checked them for weapons and sharp objects. Then, saying the Rosary as we walked, we left for Santa Cruz.

When the crowd was passing in front of the Summa Bank, which later became the Hello Mister Supermarket, outsiders joined the procession and tried to stir up trouble. They stabbed a member of the military, Major Girham, and threw stones at the bank, smashing windows. Then again at the old market, tension grew between the police and the crowd. But the procession remained peaceful and there was no bloodshed. The crowd continued in the direction of Santa Cruz where a large crowd was gathering inside the cemetery and along the surrounding roads.

Because I was focused on photographing the demonstration I did not notice that ABRI troops had entered the Indonesian Martyrs' Cemetery which was across from Santa Cruz. When the crowd had gathered at the cemetery, groups of youth climbed the walls, unfurling banners and making speeches. Then the first shots were fired. Chico Binaraga fell to the ground.

The people in the cemetery panicked. The ground was soon littered with bodies. To get into the cemetery I had to step over countless people who had fallen at the entrance.

When I got into the cemetery the guns were still firing and it continued for about ten minutes. Inside the cemetery I looked for a place to hide. Then the military stormed in, beating victims with rifles and kicking them.

Many were killed in the cemetery but many more were killed outside the cemetery while they were running away, or were taken from their hiding places in homes and other places, and murdered.

The military found me, beat me and wounded my ear. Later a policeman came and severed it completely. As they beat me I heard a member of the military shout, "Don't kill him, the Commander still needs him."

They dragged me from the cemetery and into a car. As I was getting into the car, I saw a truck carrying many victims. My sight was not that clear any more, but my guess is that there was about 50 or 60 people in that truck. As I was being taken out from the cemetery more and more blood poured into my eye and down my body.

Because of all the blood they threw me into the back of an Indonesian military truck full of dead bodies. When the truck started moving I realised that one of people on the truck was still alive. He tried to get up and he asked the guards for water. Instead of giving him water, the soldier in charge sliced his throat with a bayonet. This happened right in front of me. Any time the guard saw any other bodies move, he hit them with his weapon or kicked them until they stopped moving.

When we arrived at the hospital it was already full of victims being treated and people who were already dead. I saw at least 300 victims there, just sprawled all over the floors. In some places the blood was about three centimetres deep. I was kept in hospital for nine days. Then I was imprisoned at Poliwil in Comoro for one month.

In February 1992 I was moved to Los Palos. At first I was a prisoner of Kostrad 511 and later of Battalion Linud. From Los Palos I was called to Bali to attend a court case. After the court case I was detained in Los Palos until I was released in 1993.

Many were killed in the cemetery but many more were killed outside the cemetery while they were running away, or were taken from their hiding places in homes and other places, and murdered.

Helen Todd, mother of Kamal Bamardhaj

Santa Cruz, Dili, 1991

Ms Helen Todd gave testimony as the mother of the young Malaysian student killed on the day of the Santa Cruz massacre, Kamal Bamardhaj. She gave details of how Kamal came to be in Timor in November 1991, of what happened to Kamal on 12 November and of the lies and cover-up that occurred following his killing. She said she had possession of a secret ABRI document naming those who killed her son.

Since 2001 Ms Todd, a citizen of New Zealand, has been working in Timor as the director of the micro-finance organisation Moris Rasik, providing financial assistance especially to poor women in rural communities. Ms Todd said that for her, it felt like it was time to share some of her feelings with the Timorese survivors and families of victims.



I want to start by clarifying some of the misconceptions that had surrounded my son Kamal and what he was doing in Timor in 1991. Many mistakenly believed Kamal was a journalist from New Zealand. Kamal was a student born and educated in Malaysia. He was a Muslim. At the time of the Santa Cruz massacre, Kamal was a second year university student in Australia. When he moved to Australia to study he had been shocked to learn of the situation in Timor. In neighbouring Malaysia he had never heard about Timor-Leste.

Kamal had first come to Timor in 1990, when he made friends in the student movement and with one family in Baucau. He was horrified by what he saw and heard in Timor in 1990. When he returned to Australia he joined an activist group called AKSI. This group worked for Timor and for the pro-democracy movement in Indonesia. He was also involved in the Timor Talks campaign, initiated by President Xanana. He met with José Ramos-Horta.

In 1991 there were high expectations for the visit of the Portuguese parliamentary delegation. A main aim was for them to be able to meet secretly with Xanana Gusmao. Kamal was already planning a return visit to Timor, and he agreed to come earlier when José Ramos-Horta asked him to bring documents for this meeting.

At the time of the massacre, Kamal was in Timor working as an interpreter for Bob Muntz of Oxfam Australia.

Kamal was not shot at Santa Cruz. After the shooting at the cemetery he was walking along the road of the old market. As you know an Intel agent had earlier been stabbed. The ABRI unit that had taken him to hospital was returning and saw Kamal walking alone. They shot him.

A member of the International Red Cross tried to take the bleeding Kamal to the civilian hospital, but was refused entry and obliged to go the military hospital, losing precious time. He died after admission from loss of blood.

I have a copy of a secret ABRI report about the killing of Kamal. I have the names of all the members of this unit and the commander. I do not want to give the names today, but I will give this report to the CAVR.

Kamal's death was one small part in the struggle of thousands and thousands. A small thing, but you will understand that it is important to me.

There were so many lies after Kamal's killing. Max Stahl was graphic about the lies told after the Santa Cruz massacre. I can testify that this is true. For three days the Indonesians denied that any internationals had been killed. Then the official Indonesian report was that Kamal was killed in the cross-fire. Then it was suggested that he was some sort of stupid tourist, killed because he should not have been there.

National Commissioners asked Ms Todd about the attitude of the New Zealand and Malaysian governments to the killing of her son Kamal:

New Zealand were initially very helpful in terms of the retrieval of the body, but once this was done it was back to the business as usual of anything to please Indonesia. Malaysia barely acknowledged the killing. The major English language newspaper wrote of the killing, editorialising generally that young people should not get mixed up in politics, that if they do they are somehow troublemakers.

The Red Cross in Dili were a great help. Kamal was first buried in an unmarked grave in Hera. It was only because of the efforts of the Red Cross representative Anton Manti that we had his body removed and were able to have him buried in Malaysia.

I want to close by remembering a small gesture a little while ago.

This year, on the anniversary, I walked to the place where Kamal was shot. People came out to tell me that the place was a little further along the road. Later that day, I came back to the place. Somebody had come and placed flowers and candles at this place. I thank you.

New Zealand were initially very helpful in terms of the retrieval of the body, but once this was done it was back to the business as usual of anything to please Indonesia.

Hermina Mendes

Liquiça Town, Liquiça District, April 1999

Hermina Mendes spoke of the Liquiça Church massacre of 6 April 1999. She told how she fled to the church to seek refuge from the Besi Merah militia who had crossed the border from Maubara Sub-district into Liquiça. She told how community members stayed in the church for two days, praying in fear and being constantly taunted by the militia members outside the church.

She said that the attack occurred on 6 April after the Indonesian police started shooting to give the signal for attack by the police, the Indonesian military and the Besi Merah militia combined forces. Mrs Mendes told of how she witnessed the murder of her brother and cousins by machete inside the church. Later taken to the house of the District Administrator, she said the killing continued there.



On the morning of 6 April 1999 I was walking from the Sospol office in Liquiça to my house when I met my friend Lukas, from Flores, Indonesia. He encouraged me to go home quickly, saying: "I've heard that the *Besi Merah* militia are at the border of Liquiça and Maubara."

I decided not to go home. I went instead to a meeting about the Easter commemoration for the youth in Manatuto. I met with my friends Sister Jacinta, Suzi, and Emelita. We were not sure whether it would be a good idea to participate in that commemoration so we went to ask Father Rafael's opinion. While we were meeting with Father Rafael, the village head, Jacinto da Costa, came and told us that a youth had been killed and others wounded in an attack by the militia and military.

We left Father Rafael's early in the afternoon. When I got home I went to see Aquilina to get some more information. Aquilina lives close to the "Welcome" sign in Liquiça. As soon as I got to her house I heard more shooting, coming from the direction of Pukalaran. I went straight home and found that my family had already fled to the church in Liquiça. I joined them there. There were many people hiding in the church including people from the villages of Dotasi, Guilu, Leopa, Upper and Lower Caimeo.

In the afternoon, the militia and the military looted and burnt down the houses of the Sub-district Administrator João Bosco and Agustinho.

We stayed in the church for two days, praying constantly. At night we couldn't sleep, and outside the church the militia were harassing us with threats and foul language.

At nine o'clock in the morning on 6 April Eurico Guterres and his men came to the church office in Liquiça to talk with Father Rafael and Father José. We heard that during that meeting Eurico Guterres said he was going to make a request of the District Administrator, Leoneto Martins. Eurico said that if Leoneto met the militia's demands the militia would let the citizens go home safely. But Eurico's meeting with Leoneto did not result in that guarantee.

Around one o'clock in the afternoon the Besi Merah militia along with the police and the military attacked the church. Then Brimob arrived, as if to rescue the people. In fact Brimob were the ones who started the shooting. They fired shots into the air to give the signal to the militia to enter the church, and then they started shooting the people. Wearing masks that covered their faces the militia and the military then attacked with axes, swords, knives, bombs and guns. The police shot my older brother, Felix, and the militia slashed up my cousins, Domingos, Emilio, and an 8-month-old baby.

Because Brimob and the military were slaughtering people who had been hiding in the priest's office, everyone started running out of the church trying to find places to hide and to save themselves. I left with Emilio's wife and we went to the Convent. As we left I saw Miguel was still alive, but Loidahar and someone else from Maubara was lying dead near the church bell.

The militia, police and military had prepared a truck to carry people to the District Administrator's house. When we arrived the militia continued their actions and continued to beat and stab civilians. Several people died at the District Administrator's house. Luckily there was a nurse there who attended to the wounded. After about three hours A (name suppressed) who was the head of a division of the militia in Maubara made an announcement to the people, saying: "Go home and raise the Indonesian flag. And tie it to your right hand to show that we are all people who are prepared to die for this flag."

One week after the massacre a military representative from the Eastern Sector, called Pedro, spoke about the military and militia's violence against us on that day. He said that the military from Kodim were also involved. I heard that the bodies of those who died were taken in a truck, but I don't know where they were taken.

Brimob arrived as if to rescue the people. In fact Brimob were the ones who started the shooting. They fired shots into the air to give the signal to the militia to enter the church, and then they started shooting the people.



ABOVE: Motael Clinic, Dili. Victims seek treatment after a militia attack, 1999.



LEFT: Anniversary of the 6 April 1999 massacre at the Liquiça Church.

Expert Testimonies

Max Stahl

Max Stahl is a renowned British cameraman and filmmaker working in conflict zones and in human rights crisis areas. Mr Stahl was the cameraman who filmed the images of the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991 that were screened throughout the world and were credited with shifting international opinion on Timor-Leste. He returned to Timor-Leste in 1993 to interview survivors of the massacre.

On the second day of the hearing, Mr Stahl gave detailed testimony, accompanied by segments of his films showing what he saw on 12 November, and on the results of extensive investigation and research he subsequently conducted over a period of years following the massacre. From these two sources of information, Mr Stahl also shared with the Commission his views as to some of the causes of the massacre, and also the pattern of the Indonesian and international response.



Mr Stahl began with the words, “The 12th of November is a day of Timorese youth. Timorese youth made a big sacrifice, the flower of this sacrifice, we can say, is Timorese independence.”

He spoke of the international indifference to the situation in Timor-Leste before the Santa Cruz massacre, and recognised both the presence of other internationals at Santa Cruz in 1991, and the efforts of others to shift the attitude of their governments on Timor-Leste for many years.

“When we came to film in Timor-Leste in 1991 for British television, Timor-Leste was not a story. Nobody in Britain was interested in Timor-Leste. I speak here as a foreign witness. There were other foreign witnesses at Santa Cruz. Russell Anderson who is here today, Helen Todd, her son was killed and there were several others on that day. Many foreigners had tried to tell their governments about Timor-Leste. Some are here today who campaigned for so many years.”

Mr Stahl showed two segments of video footage. The first was of the events of 12 November 1991. This footage included some of the images that came to be known throughout the world in the 1990s: young people nervously marching in the street calling out “Viva!”; a young boy of about ten years holding his fingers up in a “V” sign as he passes the camera; young people running in panic into the cemetery, jumping over the bodies of those fallen, as constant gunfire is heard; a young man dying in the arms of his friend leaning on a tombstone; Indonesian soldiers calmly giving and taking orders on the edge of the cemetery to circle the walls, one chillingly signalling to the cameraman to come over to him.

Responding to a question from CAVR Chairperson Mr Aniceto Guterres Lopes, Mr Stahl described the crowd of young people as the march left the Motael Church:

“Some people joined and went all the way from Motael, I think about 1,000-1,500... some people joined the march, some left it. Most people who talk about numbers estimate 3,000 people at the cemetery—inside the cemetery, on the road in front, still coming.

“Not all were killed in the cemetery. The killing went on for some hours, perhaps some days. My estimate as to how many were killed is not based just on what I saw. I use the

figures of the group Paze Possivel, who did the figures twice. For seven years Indonesia was presented with a list of the disappeared in the UN Human Rights Commission...as far as I know they never found one of them.

“When I talk about the figure of 500 people...it is an estimate of the total number killed...the killing went on for days...People were hunted like rabbit hunting. We talk of a massacre like it was shooting into a crowd. It was. But most people were killed after that. By soldiers who moved through the crowd, stabbing and killing. Children, 15, 16 years old. One young man next to me was stabbed five or six times—he wasn’t even wounded before that.”

Mr Stahl said the Indonesian military attack on the demonstration was a well organised, co-ordinated operation. After the initial shooting, he spoke of a calmly implemented strategy of violence, co-ordinated by officers. He countered what in 1991 was put forward as a reason for the Indonesian soldiers massacring the students, that they were furious when an intelligence operative accompanying the march was stabbed and reacted with violence.

“The troops were clearly not out of control. They were marching in step. They were not doing anything on their own initiative.

“If there was a response to the stabbing of the Major, it was not by the troops, it was by the officers. Clearly you could see the Indonesian soldiers were ordered to surround the cemetery. They surrounded the cemetery in a very organised way. You can even see in the film an Indonesian officer in civilian clothes...directing traffic, moving soldiers around the cemetery...it was clearly to go round and catch everyone in the cemetery and the people they were shooting were those trying to run.

“It took nearly 40 minutes for the soldiers to enter the cemetery. That’s why I had nearly 40 minutes to film. You have seen film from the two cassettes I buried in a grave. On a third cassette I filmed senior Indonesian officers, Colonels at least, coming into the cemetery and inspecting. They were calm, like they were inspecting the guard at Buckingham Palace. There was no panic. If there was a response it was not from the lower levels, but the officers.”

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*They told me that
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poisoned in hospital.*

Mr Stahl emphasised the point that so much of the killing occurred after the initial shooting, and was done in a very calculated way:

“When I was in Santa Cruz I saw young men with their thumbs tied behind their backs, their shirts off...one or two of these young men are alive today, most dead, but they were not wounded at the time. An Indonesian soldier, a Timorese TNI member, told Bishop Belo that he was involved in shooting young men who were tied in sacks and thrown in a ditch. These people were praying for mercy...it seems very likely that some of the people who disappeared who had their thumbs tied were some of those shot and thrown in the ditch...At least one survivor believes that this tying by the thumbs is a military sign that the person will be executed...”

Mr Stahl later noted that he saw about 50-60 people with their thumbs tied.

Mr Stahl showed footage of a documentary he made after a secret follow-up trip to Timor in 1993 to investigate allegations of the killings that followed the cemetery massacre, particularly in the Dili military hospital. The footage showed interviews with Timorese survivors of the massacre, talking in darkened rooms with their faces hidden, and an interview with a survivor who had escaped to Portugal and could speak more openly.

“In 1993, I...interviewed several people who were in my film (from 1991). They told me that not only had they been stabbed and burnt, but that they had been poisoned in hospital. According to my information, the poison I was given by João Dias, who was a worker at the hospital that day, and which I had analysed by a laboratory in Britain, this was a medicine that could not have been given by accident to a hospital worker. It was formaldehyde, used to kill insects and to disinfect. According to my information a doctor had to sign for this large quantity of formaldehyde to bring it from another building...(and later)...I believe the doctor in charge should have had to sign for the pills.”

In this second film, one young man recounted the scene at the hospital after the cemetery massacre:

“At the hospital I saw them dump bodies, people still alive, like animals. Then they drove trucks over them.”

Another survivor recounted:

“In the morgue some were still alive, moving. Two soldiers entered, one carried a big rock in his hand. The one with the rock in his hand checked the bodies. If they were still alive, he hit them over the head with the rock till they died. One person stood up and said ‘I am still alive, don’t hit me...’”

Mr Stahl spoke of the Indonesian and international reaction to the massacre. He castigated the Australian Government, and the then Foreign Minister Mr Gareth Evans, saying that it was their lies that formed the foundation of the wider international response to the massacre that allowed the Indonesian military to conduct its own internal inquiry.

He said the Indonesian General put in charge of the Indonesian inquiry was a military hardliner who ten years previously had been responsible for a number of massacres in the Los Palos area of eastern Timor-Leste.

“[P]oliticians lied to journalists. Mr Gareth Evans, then Foreign Minister of Australia, told us that this was just the action of a small number of Indonesian soldiers. This message was used by other governments and put out that the Indonesians would investigate and prosecute those responsible. This was a lie, there was no truth to it, none whatsoever. If Mr Gareth Evans didn’t know that he should have fired his entire intelligence network.

“What did happen is that the Indonesians brought General Theo Syafei, with others who had been here in Timor ten years earlier. People from Los Palos will know that Theo Syafei was responsible not for one but for a number of massacres. We have heard from... Los Palos that General Syafei’s soldiers killed, in front of him... And in Matebian, he saw his soldiers kill a man and woman and eat them. This was the man given the responsibility for bringing to justice the perpetrators of Santa Cruz.”

National Commissioner Isabel Guterres asked Mr Stahl his view as to whether the massacre was somehow an “aberration,” the word used by the then Australian Foreign Minister. In response, Mr Stahl made his central point:

“It is clear that this was not the action of a group of soldiers, but of the commanders, the police, the hospital staff—the whole Indonesian State...(and later)...When killings happen like what we heard from Simplisio, in hospitals, this takes more than two people—it takes a whole state system to do this.”

It is clear that this was not the action of a group of soldiers, but of the commanders, the police, the hospital staff—the whole Indonesian state...

this takes more than two people—it takes a whole state system to do this.



Professor Geoffrey Robinson

Professor Geoffrey Robinson currently teaches South-east Asian history at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), USA. From 1989-1995 he was Head Researcher for South-east Asia at Amnesty International in London, focusing on the human rights situation in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. In 1999 Professor Robinson was a member of the UNAMET Political Affairs team in Timor-Leste. He has published books and articles on political violence and human rights in Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Professor Robinson gave testimony on the patterns, causes and contributing factors of killings and massacres in Timor-Leste between 1975-1999. He emphasised four main points.

1. Mass killings as part of a broad policy of systematic terror and revenge



Professor Robinson's first point was that the dozens of massacres and multiple killings that took place in Timor-Leste from 1975 to 1999 were not random events, and they were not the actions of "rogue elements." He said that testimony, documentary evidence and recurring patterns over the 24 years make it clear that they were part of broader policies of systematic terror and revenge, implemented with the knowledge and acquiescence of the highest military and civilian leaders of Indonesia, and sometimes on their orders.

To illustrate this, he spoke of the type and manner of killings, the victims and perpetrators, and the variations over time and space.

1.1 Types and manner of killings

Professor Robinson said that there were four main types of killings: killing in custody, especially in the late 1970s and 1980s and then again in 1999; aerial and naval bombardment, in the 1970s and 1980s; starvation and disease due to forced relocation, in the 1970s; and death squad, Ninja-targeted killings, in the 1990s and especially in 1999.

He said that mass killings were perpetrated using automatic weapons, beatings and torture in custody, hacking to death and dismemberment as a terror tactic, and dropping people from helicopters into the sea. He noted that the role of the militia in 1999 saw the use of machetes and hacking people to death as common practice.

1.2 Victims and Perpetrators

Professor Robinson said that the consistent targeting of victims further indicates that the killings were not random. He said that the main targets were Fretilin members and their relatives; villagers allegedly in contact with Fretilin; and alleged "traitors" (eg UDT, Apodeti, Hansip); and in 1999 all pro-independence people and their relatives.

The main perpetrators of these killings were, he said, Indonesian security forces. He emphasised that although it is difficult to acknowledge, East Timorese worked with these forces and were involved in the killings. Within the Indonesian military he focused on Kopassandha/Kopassus/Nanggala; regular army units, in particular Battalion 744 and 745; and within the Indonesian paramilitary, he spoke of Hansip, Partisans and Militias. He also spoke of Fretilin and UDT as perpetrators of mass killings.

On the 1999 mass killings, he said that the direct perpetrators included *Kopassus* and regular army and police as well as 20 militia groups and in particular Battalions 744 and 745. He said that ultimate responsibility, individual and command, for the massacres rested clearly with military officers and some high-ranking civilian officers. He noted that at least 40 military officers above the rank of Lt Colonel, plus more than 30 civilian officials at or above the level of District Administrator, bear responsibility.

1999 arguably saw the worst concentration of massacres and mass killings since 1975.

1.3 The temporal aspect: when the massacres occurred

Professor Robinson said that massacres and mass killings did not happen consistently throughout the 24-year occupation, but that “they happened in waves.” Broadly speaking, he said, they clustered in the period 1975-84 and in 1999. Within the earlier period, he said that the main waves were in 1975, 1978-79, mid-1980, 1981 and 1983-84. While the number of massacres declined in the period 1985-1998, he noted that they still occurred, citing the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre in Dili.

Professor Robinson said that “1999 arguably saw the worst concentration of massacres and mass killings since 1975.” He argued that this violence happened in three waves, and that “the timing strongly indicates that they were not random or spontaneous.” The periods were pre-UNAMET, during UNAMET and after the UNAMET ballot. He said that the timing of mass killings in 1999 “varied according to Indonesian military and political interests,” and in relation “to the presence or absence of international scrutiny and action.”

1.4 Geographical variation

Professor Robinson said that, like the aspect of timing, the geographical spread of massacres was not random. He said that massacres were generally concentrated in areas with the greatest resistance to Indonesian rule. “At first,” he said, “that was Dili, Baucau and the border area. From 1977 to 1984 they were more often in the east, where Fretilin forces were concentrated.” He noted that in the 1990s, “the focus shifted back to the west, as the pattern of the resistance changed.” In 1999 the pattern was different, he said, as the focus before the ballot was in the west, then spread to the east and back to the west and Oecussi, “as part of the revenge against the Resistance.”

...the massacres, and massive violence generally, could not have happened without the direct and indirect support of key foreign governments especially the US and Australia.

2. The New Order Regime and the logic of massacres

Professor Robinson argued that the massacres were facilitated by a number of aspects of Indonesia's New Order regime and society. Among the most important factors were:

- the political dominance of the military;
- the regime's obsession with stability, order and anti-communism;
- the regime's extreme intolerance of dissent;
- the mobilisation of militias and paramilitary forces to fight internal enemies;
- the deliberate use of terror as a counter-insurgency strategy, as in 1975;
- the idea of collective punishment;
- the problem of impunity;
- the weakness of civil society, media and NGOs due to state oppression;
- the positions and actions of specific military commanders.

Professor Robinson emphasised that there are important lessons for independent Timor-Leste from these factors.

Professor Robinson noted that in 1999 there were some specific features to the mass killings related to the changes in the Indonesian regime and the politics. In 1999 the military was still very powerful and intolerant of dissent, and it still had Standard Operating Procedures in place. The stakes were higher than at any time since 1975, and the militias were mobilised, supported, supplied and co-ordinated by the TNI.

3. Specific Features of the situation in Timor-Leste

The third point was that the massacres were also facilitated by certain features of East Timorese society and politics. He highlighted the following factors:

- some East Timorese did work and fight on the Indonesian side;
- Fretilin and UDT did commit violations, including massacres, inviting revenge;
- Timor-Leste's own civil society, political system and media were extremely weak due to Portuguese and Indonesian rule;
- some East Timorese political parties apparently accepted the notion of collective punishment, and killing in custody.

4. International context

Finally, Professor Robinson argued that the massacres, and the massive violence generally, could not have happened without the direct and indirect support of key foreign governments, especially the US and Australia. By providing critical military and economic aid, and by systematically lying about and covering up the extent of the killing, these states, and many others were complicit in them and arguably share responsibility for them.

He noted also a contributing factor of the failure of the United Nations system in the context of the Cold War at the time of and following the invasion. He said the international media, Church and NGOs were initially weak, though they later strengthened their work on human rights and Timor-Leste. He pointed out that in the mid-1980s the Government of Indonesia began to react to international criticism of mass killings by changing tactics—to a process of disappearances, arrest and trial.

Professor Robinson said that in 1999, “the patterns of killings were also affected by the international context.” He said that “despite an unprecedented UN, media and NGO presence on the ground, the ambivalent posture of some key states allowed a flawed security arrangement” for the UNAMET ballot. Ultimately, he noted that pressure from international NGOs and the media following the terrible post-ballot violence contributed to key states shifting their posture and agreeing to deploy troops to bring an end to the massacres.

Professor Robinson’s testimony was closely followed by the large audience, and after National Commissioners asked questions of clarification the floor was open for questions.

Recommendations

Professor Robinson made recommendations in three categories.

To the Government and people of Timor-Leste, he emphasised that by learning the lessons of the years of Indonesian rule they have a chance to avoid creating a state that will give rise to suffering in the future. Specifically he recommended:

- *Prevent the military from becoming politically powerful;*
- *Avoid mobilising civilian guards in the interest of security;*
- *Reject the notion of collective justice;*
- *Uphold civil rights, even when it makes governing difficult;*
- *Ensure that even the powerful are brought to justice;*
- *Do not seek reconciliation at the expense of justice.*

To the United Nations, the international community and the Government of Timor-Leste, Professor Robinson recommended:

- *Do whatever is possible to support the work of the CAVR and the Serious Crimes Unit of the Office of the Attorney General in the pursuit of “establishing the truth and securing the justice that has so long been denied the people of Timor-Leste”; and*
- *Lend their full support to the establishment of an international criminal tribunal to investigate and try those responsible for the crimes against humanity committed in Timor-Leste since 1975.*

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Is [an international
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of independence?

Many people will tell
you it cannot happen.
Like independence,
it can happen.

In closing, Professor Robinson stressed the importance of countering the impunity problem—for Timor-Leste, for Indonesia and for the wider international community. He suggested that the CAVR not focus only on issues of trying to decide whether genocide occurred in Timor-Leste, or trying to determine the exact number of people that died over the 24-year period. He said:

“The violence in Timor-Leste was monstrous and there were crimes against humanity, and these can be prosecuted in an international tribunal.”

In countering impunity, he emphasised that it is important to investigate and try those responsible for the most serious crimes from 1975 to 1999, not only focusing on the 1999 violence. He spoke of the large amount of evidence from internal military and militia documents, and from testimonies and accounts to assist this work.

“Is [an international tribunal] a dream, just like the dream of independence? Many people will tell you it cannot happen. Like independence, it can happen. In the 1980s, diplomats used to say that independence couldn’t come and those who defend human rights just prolong the suffering of the Timorese people. In Washington the things that are said now about the international tribunal are just like what used to be said about independence.”

In Closing

Closing Reflection

Fr Jovito Rêgo de Jesus Araújo, Vice Chairperson of the CAVR

Dear Friends, this public hearing can and must end. But the history of the massacres will remain alive and strong in the future lives of the Timorese people.

We opened this great wound with good intentions. Not to play, to destroy, to divide, to separate, or to damage. But to heal, to learn to live, and to accept with dignity and respect, with generosity and courage, to teach and educate all the people of Timor-Leste the ways and means to prevent these atrocities recurring in the future.

In these three days 15 friends, with humility and courage, have given testimony about their history of suffering and their brush with and witness of murder.

These are nightmares that they have held in their minds and hearts, their souls and their bodies for many years. In order to go forward, these stories of suffering and death of individuals and of families must become recognised as the history of all, the history of the people of Timor-Leste.

Listening to these accounts each of us can learn an important lesson. The words “Life or Death, Independence” are sacred words. These words have been written with bodies and blood in each of our lives and in the life of our people as a whole, especially in the lives of those friends who have generously shared their experiences with us all over the past three days.

We must not forget the last words of the three friends who were killed with bayonets by the Indonesian troops: “Go ahead and kill me, but you will never be able to kill my independence!” These words should guide all of us who today enjoy the independence that was written with their blood and bought with their lives.

This uneven war demanded the participation and collaboration of all the people of Timor, the children, youth, adults and elderly. All the people of Timor suffered the consequences of the Indonesian military’s strategies of systematic isolation and starvation.

We also heard of Timorese killing each other due to differences in political opinion, regarding their own brothers and sisters as enemies and traitors. Likewise those battling in the clandestine resistance suffered threats, persecution, and torture to death. The massacres have passed, but the image of these atrocities is engraved on our hearts and remains a nightmare that brings fear to our souls to this day.

Dear Friends, in these three days we have witnessed the courage, the spirit of forgiveness and the commitment to reconciliation of those who have given testimony. We all heard the teacher, Mr Amado, sum up his hope for the people of Timor when he said, “As you go forward don’t forget to look behind. Don’t follow in our footsteps.”

The big question that we all must answer is: “How can we make sure these atrocities never happen again?” Some of the witnesses, including Mr Simplício and Professor Robinson, made the same recommendation to the Government: we must learn from the violence of the past so that we do not follow the example of the Indonesian military.

How can we stop the violence? Firstly we must not say that these things will not happen again. We must pay close attention so that the things of the past do not recur, because in many nations these things have happened again and again.

And so we must not allow our institutions, the Government, the Parliament, the armed forces, the police and the courts, to follow the path of the past. Because if they begin to walk that road things will become even worse than they were in the past and we will not be able to rid ourselves of it. We will lose our protection, security, and our life of unity and peace.

Over the past three days the witnesses have given us good advice. From the thoughts of them all can be gleaned five points for our Government:

- *The armed forces must be completely separate from political powers and must never be used against peaceful civil actions.*
- *We must never accept or tolerate the formation by the Government of civil security groups because these groups can easily be manipulated to serve political agendas.*
- *Human rights must be the watchword of the Government. The Government, the armed forces, and the police must follow the principles of human rights. They should respect people's civil rights even if it creates difficulties for the leaders.*
- *Justice and the law should apply equally to all people. There must not be a difference between the treatment of those with power and those without. Punishment should only be for those who have broken laws established by the Parliament. Punishment should never be administered to people simply because they have views that differ from the leaders. This is an important lesson from our past.*
- *Reconciliation should be accompanied by justice in order to be truly effective.*

With these lessons in mind we once again thank those who gave testimony and who shared their suffering and their knowledge. Let us always remember the blood that has been shed so that we may find the courage required to rise to the challenges of the future.

Thank you.

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Glossary

ABRI	Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia	Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (called TNI after restructure 1 April 1999)
Apodeti	Asociação Popular Democratica Timorese	Timor Popular Democratic Association
Babinsa	Bintara Pembina Desa	Non-commissioned Village Guidance Officer
Binpolda	Polisi Desa	Non-commissioned Village Police Officer
BKKBN	luarga Berencana Nasional	National Body for the Coordination of Family Planning
BMP	Besih Merah Putih	Red and White Iron (militia group)
Brimob	Brigade Mobil	Mobile Police Brigade
CNRT	Conselho Nacional de Resistência Timorese	National Council of Timorese Resistance
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah	Indonesian Regional People's Representative Council
Estafeta		Clandestine courier for the Resistance
Fretilin	Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independente	Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor
GPK	Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan	Security Disturber Movement (Indonesian term for Fretilin/Falintil)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	International Committee of the Red Cross
Interfet	International Force for East Timor	The force arrived 20 September 1999
Kasi I	Kepala Seksi Inteligen	Head of Intelligence Section
KB	Keluarga Berencana	Family Planning
Kodim	Komando Distrik Militer	District Military Command
Kopassus	Komando Pasukan Khusus	Special Forces Command (1986-present)
Nanggala		Codename for Kopassandha/Kopassus
OMT	Organização da Mulher Timor	Timor Women's Organisation
OPMT	Organização Popular de Mulher Timor	Popular Women's Organisation of Timor
Persit	Persatuan Isteri Tentara	Association of Military Wives
Pide		Portuguese-era secret police
PPKBD	Petugas Pembantu Keluarga Berencana Desa	Village Family Planning Assistant
RTI	Rumah Tangga	"Local neighbourhood" (Smallest administrative unit of a town)
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia	Indonesian National Military (new name after the restructuring of the Indonesian military from 1 April 1999)
UDT	União Democratica de Timorese	Timorese Democratic Union
Unatil	Universidade Nacional Timor-Leste	National University of East Timor

