At the conclusion of a two-day conference in Lisbon, Portugal, where donor nations reviewed progress in East Timor over the first six months of 2000, countries expressed support for an additional US$16 million sought by UNTAET to help the territory meet its budget commitments for the coming fiscal year.

The money is in addition to the US$522.45 million that was pledged at the previous donors meeting in Tokyo in mid-December, of which US$148.98 million was for humanitarian activities and US$373.47 million for civil administration, reconstruction and development.

Sergio Vieira de Mello, UN transitional administrator for East Timor, said that "the responses received from member states and international organizations constitute a vote of confidence and a clear indication that donors appreciated the responsible and realistic budget submission made by the East Timorese and UNTAET, particularly for the revised consolidated budget." Donors expressed support for the activities of the World Bank-administered Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET), and endorsed a work program for July to December 2000. The meeting resulted in additional donors joining the TFET.

"The donor community and the East Timorese have worked with an incredible speed in the first six months of reconstruction of East Timor," said Jemaluddin Kassum, World Bank Vice President for the East Asia and Pacific region. "Now we need to focus our attention on the quality of the development process. We see East Timorese participation and leadership in the coordination of development agencies as key to a sustainable development process. This is particularly important as we move into this new phase: the implementation of reconstruction plans."

Xanana Gusmão, President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), was quoted as calling the conference a “great success” in that it resulted in additional programme grants on education and agriculture at the 2000-2001 fiscal year, which starts July 1.

Meanwhile, UNTAET and the World Bank signed grant agreements on education and agriculture at the 2000-2001 fiscal year, which starts July 1.

"This process must include East Timorese people of all political persuasions, including those who are still living in West Timor," he said. Mr. Vieira de Mello said several countries had not been able to make a firm commitment at the latest meeting since their contributions would be subject to approval by their own parliaments. But he was confident the funds would be forthcoming.

The UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) sought the additional US$16 million to enable it to implement its US$43 million budget for the 2000-2001 fiscal year, which starts July 1.

Meanwhile, UNTAET and the World Bank signed grant agreements on education and agriculture at the Lisbon conference, bringing to seven the number of programmes under TFET.

The Emergency School Readiness Project (ESRP) is aimed at reopening schools in time for the academic year, which begins in October. US$88.7 million will be spent on rebuilding classrooms while another US$3.2 million is earmarked for buying teaching material.

According to World Bank officials, the ESRP’s main goal is to assure that all East Timorese children who seek access to primary and secondary education will be able to enroll in a school that meets basic operational standards in terms of physical infrastructure, furniture, school equipment, textbooks and other teaching materials.

The first step in the ESRP will be to rebuild school physical infrastructures and acquire and distribute learning-teaching materials. The second and third stages of the Project will involve developing social mobilization and communications campaigns, supporting policy development and providing management and implementation support.

The US$18.2 million Agricultural Rehabilitation and Employment Project will try to improve the food security of selected poor households, increase agricultural production in selected areas and promote rural growth.

Compiled from wire service reports.

So who are the street kids of Dili?

"Dollar, dollar, mister!” the scruffy pair of boys pleaded as they trailed Faith Mburu, a staff member with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), down a Dili street.

In a hurry to get dinner at the Olympia Hotel, Ms. Mburu took little notice of the advancing duo until they became outright menacing.

"It was dark by the time I left the office,” she says. "But the boys confronted me at the intersection near the Governor’s Building. One of them reached for my handbag but a male colleague who was walking a short distance behind me chased him away.

"It was somewhat terrifying," Ms. Mburu recalls, describing the moment as a wake-up call. "Now, I’m very cautious, especially in the evening."

Nearly a month after the incident in the capital’s Central Business District (CBD), a number of boys ranging in age from six to their late teens continue to roam the streets of Dili, begging for food and destruction forced hundreds of thousands of East Timorese from their homes, more than a third of those who were transported to West Timor continue to live in squalid refugee camps, in many cases too afraid to return to their hometowns.

While approximately 160,000 of the 300,000 people who were taken - often against their will - across the border have returned to East Timor, another 120,000 remain unable or unwilling to leave the crowded and dirty camps.

In recent weeks, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has retracted the initiative to finding a solution to the refugee problem, stepping up contacts with West Timor authorities.

Many refugees in West Timor still afraid to go home

"I saw a few of the children who hang out in front of the UNTAET Headquarters at the Governor’s House."

STRONG CONTENDERS

Marathoner Aguila Amorad (left) and boxer Victor Ramos in the ruins of the Dili Benfica Sport Complex, which was used for torture in the days after the popular consultation. They are among the 10 East Timorese athletes who were selected to train in Canberra, Australia prior to the Sydney Olympics, courtesy of the International Olympic Committee’s (IOC) Olympic Solidarity Fund.

Photo: UNTAET-OCPI

See page 7 for story and more photos.
there is much work to be done in East Timor! Houses must be rebuilt and crops planted. Children must return to school. Communities must organise themselves and work together to improve their lives. Leaders must prepare themselves to take on new roles and responsibilities. These important activities require peace, stability and cooperation.

Everyone must participate in rebuilding East Timor, including the refugees in West Timor who still want to return home. After all, they are our brothers and sisters and most of them want to return to help reconstruct their country. The sooner the refugees come back, the sooner reconciliation and reconstruction can take place and the more stable and peaceful East Timor will be.

Maintaining peace, stability and cooperation will require reconciliation with those whose political opinions may be different. It will require understanding and acceptance of those who fled or were forced to go to West Timor against their will. It is not a crime to have escaped to West Timor. Even refugees who were involved in crimes perpetrated by the militia have the right to return to their country. Those suspected of crimes will be judged in a court of law. Do not take the law into your own hands. If you have been a witness or have any information relating to crimes you should contact CivPol for investigation. This will facilitate the application of justice and prevent further violence.

The East Timorese people have suffered great losses. But those people who confront returnees with violence, threats or insults are making the wound last longer. This will create more difficulties for the community and for the country.

The East Timorese society will not reap the positive benefits of independence if there is no peace, stability and cooperation...
Independent courts are central to the rule of law and fair elections are central to democracy.

In determining the structure of your future government, it is crucial that you maintain a serious commitment to the goal of establishing democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Without such a commitment, democracy cannot survive. But if there are many individuals, groups and organizations willing to work and sacrifice for that goal, then it will happen.

But the country as a whole can also commit itself officially to these goals - and to any other goals and principles that it chooses - through a constitution. A constitution is not just a text on a piece of paper. It is an official commitment, democracy cannot survive. And if there are many individuals, groups and organizations willing to work and sacrifice for that goal, then it will happen.

A constitution is an official commitment, rule of law, and human rights are our inheritance from the experiences of previous generations. They were first put forward in a simpler form in Europe in the second half of the seventeenth century, although they have a more ancient history too. They were developed and have evolved since then. And finally, after World War II, the international community, through the United Nations, officially adopted these principles.

The end of the 17th century in Europe and the end of World War II were in some ways similar moments in history. In both, a period of horrific destruction and violence was ending. The 17th century was marked by massive wars all across Europe. People were shocked and horrified by violence on a scale not seen before. And 250 years later the world wars of the 20th century again ushered in a new scale of destruction and human suffering.

At the end of each period, the vivid memory of the past combined with hope for the future. Most people wanted to do everything possible to reverse the destruction they suffered in their immediate past, and to prevent

The Constitution and the Rebirth of East Timor

O
over the coming months, you, the people of East Timor, need to decide what will be the structure of your future government. You will deliberate about democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights - standards of government that must serve you well not just today or tomorrow, but long into the future. In this and subsequent issues of Tais Timor, I will write a column about these issues, and, perhaps, I can offer some useful observations.

In determining the structure of your future government, it is crucial that you maintain a serious commitment to the goal of establishing democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Without such a commitment, democracy cannot survive. But if there are many individuals, groups and organizations willing to work and sacrifice for that goal, then it will happen.

But the country as a whole can also commit itself officially to these goals - and to any other goals and principles that it chooses - through a constitution. A constitution is not just a text on a piece of paper. It is an official commitment to your ideals, and it establishes in detail the form of government that you will adopt to these goals - and to any other things democratically, for example) and try makes a long-term commitment to its future. Most people wanted to do everything possible to reverse the destruction they suffered in their immediate past, and to prevent
Street kids...continued from page 1

and money from foreigners, and occasionally using more forceful tactics.

The minors, who station themselves at strategic spots where internationals frequently pass by, are gaining notoriety for Oliver Twist-type tactics that are familiar in many developing countries.

“The other day I was insulted by one of the boys when I declined to offer him money,” says a journalist based in Dili. “He hurled an unprintable English expletive at me. It was first!” he adds. A Vietnamese national working with the United Nations, who has herself been victimized, says the trend is disturbing. “It’s kind of a shock to me, knowing the gentle nature of most Timorese, whether old or young,” she says. Carlos Ximenes, a former Timorese university student, agrees with these sentiments. Venturing an explanation, he says, “What we are witnessing in this country is a profound cultural shock - the foreigners, the flashy cars and other things. This may be misleading to some youth, especially the vulnerable ones without close family guardians.” He adds that he finds “outrageous” recently reported cases of elderly Timorese men begging for food on the streets of Dili.

While it is likely that the presence of the international community in East Timor may have precipitated a social change of sorts, experts also say that the impact of last year’s massive population movement created a destabilizing influence on the Timorese family.

Almost all families were divided either in order to protect women and children, or because militia and military forcibly separated them,” says a joint report prepared by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Christian Children’s Fund (CCF) published in March. “One result is a number of children who have been separated from their parents.”

These separated children are “especially vulnerable and may not be receiving the same care and support as other children in their temporary family,” the report says. Some of these separated youngsters have undoubtedly ended up on Dili’s streets.

But, a distinction must be made between honest, hardworking boys who are vendors and the young street idlers who spend their time begging, taunting, and sometimes stealing.

A familiar sight in Dili is young men hawking cigarettes, fruit, sweets and other foodstuff. It has been a way of life in East Timor’s capital city as long as anyone can remember. “Since the Indonesian period my friend and I have been selling fried bananas and peanuts prepared by our parents,” says 12 year old Arsino Costa Araujo, flanked by Marcelino do Rego. “It is our contribution to family income.” The third graders say their work is done strictly, “after school time.” Arsino estimates the number of other young Dili street peddlers to be in the hundreds.

“If children have opportunities for education and entertainment but are also doing some work that is not hazardous, I do not think it is a problem,” says Richard Koser, a UNICEF Information Officer based in Dili. He quickly adds, however, that UNICEF plans to soon establish child and youth centres in Dili and Oecussi for those children who, for whatever reasons, are not in school and living principally in the streets.

Joao da Costa, 12, is an orphan. The boy now lives with his grandmother. To make ends meet, “she asks me to sell things like bananas and cigarettes to support her in getting food, vegetables, clothes,” Joao says. “I cannot refuse because we need the money.”

Aware of the plight of children like Joao, the UNTAET administration is keen to intervene. “We realize the need to arrest the situation before it gets out of control,” says Faith Harding, Director of the Office of the Deputy SRSG. “Most of the children are mentally and physically wounded,” she adds, “and therefore, require some help.”

The plan, says Ms. Harding, is to focus on establishing community-based programmes linked with other groups like the Church and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). A committee comprising the top brass of the Department of Social Services has been formed to specifically address the problem and its members are expected to make public their findings.

Meanwhile, a ray of hope already shines for the street children. It’s the efforts of the Salesian sisters. The nuns, backed by 30 volunteers, opened a centre at the former Gedung Kejaksaan (legal office) on 26 May to provide support to displaced children. “Some of the street children have parents, others do not, while most do not go to school,” says Sister Aurea Freitas. “What we are doing at the moment is to provide a place for them to come, play and for us to counsel them.”

JUST WHO ARE THESE KIDS?

The street children are a by-product of a complex societal situation and therefore an individual approach to the problem simply cannot work on its own, says Alain Beaudoin, UNTAET’s staff counselor. “The whole (social) system has collapsed. It’s not out of choice that they are in the streets,” the UNTAET staff counselor remarked, describing the current situation as “a society in crisis.”

Beaudoin decrues what he calls the “cash handouts syndrome,” in which people help perpetuate the street existence of the kids by giving them money. “I would rather give them a loaf of bread,” said the counselor, echoing sentiments of most such professionals including many social workers who contend that giving out doles to the poor tends to foster a dependency.

The UNTAET staff counselor, who has spent considerable time in Haiti and Latin America, reiterates his belief that “the solution is political as well as social. It will not be solved on an individual basis.” It calls for a multi-disciplinary approach, he says. “The ideal would be a holistic system, involving the total welfare of people, including their health, and physical and social needs.”

Calling for a true understanding of the plight of Dili’s street kids, Beaudoin targets poverty as the main culprit. It has created a chain reaction of problems like rural-urban migration, clusters of dispossessed and displaced as well as prolonged family separation. “This is not living, it’s survival.” The problem is exacerbated by the breakdown of traditional social support structures like the extended family, which suffered a severe blow following the protracted war last year.

The international presence has also aggravated the problem. “You can see many people con-gregating near the boot (Olympia Hotel) because they see it as a sign of wealth,” Beaudoin observed. “Attracting the sight of relatively affluent-looking foreigners with their numerous possessions as a crucial attraction.”

“One thing to remember is that this isn’t Haiti or the streets of Rio,” concludes the staff counselor. “There’s no glue sniffing, or child prostitution or serious abuse of these kids. There is still time to help them.”

WHAT YOU CAN DO

When you come across such street kids, rather than giving them handouts, you might advise them to seek assistance through the Salesian congregation sisters who have a center at Balide-Crystal (in Gedung Kejaksaan, a former courthouse) which provides counseling and programs.

You might also refer the children to their church or youth group which can provide assistance. In addition, UNICEF is expected soon to open a Comoro child and youth center. The organization plans to establish other outlets in Balide and Bekora, in addition to district-based rehabilitation centers.

But above all, avoid stereotyping or stigmatizing victims of a situation wrought by circumstances that, to quote Beaudoin, “are beyond their control.”
Bodies of UNAMET staff exhumed: The bodies of two UNAMET personnel, killed in the violence last September, were exhumed in Ermera on 10 June. This is the first exhumation in connection with investigations into the deaths of UNAMET staff.

The decomposed bodies are being held at the morgue at UNTAET’s Human Rights Center in Dili. Forensic experts are examining the bodies and will issue death certificates shortly.

The bodies, both males, were found in graves, with one of them exhumed from a coffin in the village of Babolete, Atsabe sub-district.

Six Timorese working with the United Nations Mission in East Timor were killed during the violence. The six killed were João Lopes, Orlando Gomes, José Ernesto Mariano, Ruben Barros Soares, Domingos Pereira, and Leonardo da Silva da Oliveira. Álvaro Dias Lopes, also a UNAMET staff member, was seriously injured.

First foreigner arrested on drug charges: An Australian construction worker suspected of possessing and dealing drugs was arrested on 17 June in Dili. He is the first foreigner to be arrested in East Timor.

The arrest followed the detention of a Civilian Police officer from Egypt suspected of drug dealing. He was held and questioned on 16 June and subsequently repatriated to Egypt.

CivPol searched the Australian suspect’s premises and found a significant amount of organic matter, believed to be marijuana, as well as paraphernalia and money. The case of the Australian citizen, who is being held in Becora prison in Dili, has been turned over to the investigating judge.

A full report was sent from Dili to United Nations Headquarters in New York, where a decision will be made shortly about where the case of the CivPol will be tried.

Bulk fuel to be sold at lower prices: Following talks between officials from Pertamina and UNTAET, the Indonesian petroleum company announced that it would sell bulk petrol and diesel at the price of 3,000 rupiahs per litre.

The price will apply to purchases of at least five drums of fuel or 1,000 litres. Taxi drivers and others who use smaller quantities of fuel could form groups to buy the fuel in bulk.

Indonesian investigators to East Timor: A 15-member team from the Indonesian Attorney General’s office is scheduled to visit Dili in early July for 10 days of interviewing witnesses and collecting material evidence.

Legal and political representatives from UNTAET and their Indonesian counterparts agreed that UNTAET investigators alone would question witnesses in a number of selected cases. The results will be handed over to the Indonesian Attorney General’s office.

UNTAET seizes illegal ammunition: UNTAET Civilian Police (CivPol) and customs agents have seized a shipment of illegal ammunition in a cargo container in Dili. The ammunition, 200 rounds of soft-nose bullets, was concealed in a box with several packages of curtains. The investigation is ongoing.

On 1 June, UNTAET’s Border Control officers stopped two trucks at the Batugade crossing point. The importer initially presented customs officers with invoices for the shipment, which indicated a value of nine million rupiahs. During a routine inspection, however, a second manifest was found showing the goods valued at 39 million rupiahs. The trucks were escorted to Dili port, since they were too large to unload at Batugade.
District news round-up

Aileu: Three Protestant churches were burned in the villages of Name Lesso, Fahisoi and Berilau in the Lequidoe sub-district. The Protestant pastor in Berilau was physically assaulted and his motorbike burned. The incident was apparently sparked when Protestant youths jeered at a Catholic procession. In East Timor, the month of June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and nightly processions are a common occurrence.

District CivPol are investigating the incidents and have called on all parties to exercise religious tolerance. The Catholic priest in the area referred to the incident in a Sunday sermon and called for reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics.

Baucau: UNTAET delivered 1,200 tonnes of fish to approximately 600 people and provided 105 plastic sheets and 100 ration packs to about 150 families in the villages of Laisoro, Adu and Maluru which were affected by a recent mudslide.

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) brought in 6.2 tonnes of rice and corn while CARITAS, a non-governmental organization (NGO) gave 108 families a month’s supply of cooking oil and beans.

The mudslide was caused by heavy rains and erosion in a mountainous area that had severe deforestation. Besides destroying homes, the mud drenched rice paddies, coconut trees and cassava crops. There were no reports of casualties although 6,000 people across six villages were affected.

The biggest mudslide occurred between the villages of Bualale and Laisoro Lai, covering an area estimated to have been about one kilometer long and 100 meters wide.

Coral: 'The Rainforests of the Oceans'

East Timor has extensive coral reefs. The reefs are important fishery and nursery areas and provide protection to coastlines from erosion and even sand for beaches. One of the most diverse and fragile ecosystems, coral reefs are often referred to as the 'rainforests of the oceans'. In the future, coral reefs may also prove to be very important economically to East Timor as tourist attractions. However, the reefs in East Timor are showing increasing signs of stress, particularly along the northern coastline.

For the latest news and information about East Timor, tune in to Radio UNTAET.

- News in English at 6 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- News in Tetun at 7 a.m., noon and 6 p.m.
- News in Portuguese at 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- News in Bahasa Indonesia at 8:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Sports News

Tennis: Mary Pierce won the French Open tournament after defeating Spanish rival Conchita Martinez while on the men’s side, Gustavo Kuarten of Brazil won his second French tennis title after beating Swede Magnus Norman in a five-set final.

Basketball: The Los Angeles Lakers won their 12th championship, beating the Indiana Pacers 4-2 in the best-of-seven series. Center Shaquille O'Neal scored 41 points in the title-clinching game and was named “Most Valuable Player” of the series.

Euro 2000: The tournament kicked off on 10 June, when Belgium won their first game in Group B action against Sweden, 2:1, while Italy beat Turkey, 2:1. In other games, Germany tied Romania, 1:1, while Portugal beat England, 3:2, in Group A. Group C matches saw Norway down Spain, 1:0 and Slovenia play to a 3:3 draw with Yugoslavia. Meanwhile, France shutout Denmark, 3:0 and the Netherlands whitewashed the Czech Republic, 1:0.

France and Holland qualified for second round with identical 3:0 victories over the Czech Republic and Denmark, respectively. Group A qualifiers include Portugal, which beat Romania, 1:0, on a final minute goal. England kept its hopes alive by putting down Germany with the lone goal scored by Shearer.

Transfer market: Raul Gonzalez and Roberto Carlos signed new contracts with Real Madrid to play another five years. Currently Raul is reportedly the highest paid player, receiving 4 million pounds a year. Madrid is also reportedly in negotiations with Roberto Pirez offering him a move after he was previously linked with Arsenal. Fiorentina is reported to be interested in Slovenian international skipper Zlatko Zahovic, after signing Faith Terim from Galatasaray. Hakan Sukur is in the process of negotiating his move to Inter Milan, while Lazio is reported to have a strong link with Barcelona’s Portuguese midfielder, Luis Figo, and is ready to pay 30 million pounds for his move. After signing Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, Middlesborough also paid a 3 million pound transfer fee for signing Clarence Seedorf away from Real Madrid. The squad also spent 6 million pounds to bring on Chris Sutton from Chelsea.

Meanwhile, Aston Villa is reported to have a strong link with Barcelona’s Portuguese midfielder, Luis Figo, and is ready to pay 30 million pounds for his move. After signing Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, Middlesborough also paid a 3 million pound transfer fee for signing Clarence Seedorf away from Real Madrid. The squad also spent 6 million pounds to bring on Chris Sutton from Chelsea. Meanwhile, Aston Villa is reported to have a strong link with Barcelona’s Portuguese midfielder, Luis Figo, and is ready to pay 30 million pounds for his move. After signing Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, Middlesborough also paid a 3 million pound transfer fee for signing Clarence Seedorf away from Real Madrid. The squad also spent 6 million pounds to bring on Chris Sutton from Chelsea.
Dear readers: Last September when the violence broke out following the 30 August vote more than half of the Timorese who were forced to flee ended up in West Timor, many against their will. Many of the refugees have returned to East Timor. But thousands remain in refugee camps on the other side of the border. Their continuing plight bothers many of my young friends, and we discussed it recently. Listen in:

Friends: Hello Katuas, diak ka la’e?
Tiu: Good thanks, but what’s up with you this time?
Joao: Well Tiu, I guess you know that if we’re here, it means we’d like to talk. Have you the time?
Tiu: Of course, I’ll make it for all of you.
Gracia: Tiu, to be more specific, we would like to know something about what’s happening with the refugees in West Timor.
Aluci: Yeah, how many people went over to West Timor and how many are still there?
Tiu: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and international agencies say anywhere from 150,000 to 280,000 people went to West Timor. Those same organizations say that about 90,000 people are still there. The Indonesian Government, however, cites a figure of about 126,000.
Joao: How are living conditions in West Timor, especially regarding food, health, and shelter?
Tiu: Well my friend, refugees in West Timor are living in very difficult conditions, but they vary from site to site. Some refugees are renting houses, even running small businesses, but others are living with families in only bamboo huts. The situation for many got worse during the heavy flooding in May. Many had their huts and their possessions washed away. More than 20 refugees drowned.
Aluci: What do they eat Tiu?
Tiu: A small rice ration is issued to each family, but there are difficulties, and sometimes not everyone gets it regularly.

Refugees also receive free care at health posts and hospitals, but in places like Betun, which was badly hit by the floods, a lot of the clinics were destroyed so now the Church and doctors are treating patients in makeshift housing.
Gracia: Wow, it sounds terrible. But Tiu, why don’t they just come back to Timor Lorosa’e and resume life back home.
Tiu: Well Gracia, you know as well as I do that it’s not as simple as that. For starters, some of the refugees are militia members and others former civil servants. They remain somewhat hesitant to return.

Adding to all this is an outright intimidation and misinformation campaign in the refugee camps. It leaves some with the sense that East Timor is in chaos and a frightening place to be.
Gracia: But Tiu that’s not accurate!
Tiu: Of course not, Gracia. Our friends and families need reliable and honest information about conditions here in Timor Lorosa’e and they need assurances that they would be safe if they chose to return, and that they would be able to earn a living, give their kids an education and have adequate health care.

Many of them are also waiting for local leaders who went with them to West Timor to give them reassurances that the time is right for them to return home.

We can all help those that want to come back by telling them what exactly is happening here. For example, guys, send letters and photos to them through organizations such as UNHCR, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Show them conditions have improved.

Liza: But Tiu, a lot of us have already done such things. So why do so many refugees continue to stay there?
Tiu: Well, as I said before, there is still a lot of intimidation and misinformation occurring. We just have to be patient and trust that in time, all those who want to return will become better informed and will return. That process is happening, if only slowly.

Liza: Now Tiu, what about those refugees who had migrated to other Indonesian provinces? How many of them have been repatriated?
Tiu: I’m sorry, I can’t really say that I know. But overall, the total number of people who’ve been repatriated to East Timor stands at more than 160,000.
Aluci: Tiu, have any militia members been repatriated to East Timor? And how was the reintegration process?
Tiu: Well sure, many of them have come back. Some of them were easily reintegrated into the community when it was found that they had not committed any crimes. But for those who were suspected of taking part in some of the violence and killings, they’ve been taken by the UN Civilian Police (CivPol) and are being held in detention centers.
Joao: Then Tiu, how are those people going to be reintegrated into society?
Tiu: Joao, the best way to support the reconciliation process in Timor Lorosa’e is for communities to be informed ahead of time about the possible difficulties returnees might have with reintegrating into society.

Communities are encouraged to talk about whether the returnees committed any crimes and involve CivPol, human rights groups, the church, NGOs and UNTAET officials as well.

Nevertheless, there have been some who were rejected by the community or were attacked and harassed by others. That’s not good, as you kids know two wrongs don’t make a right.
Gracia: Tiu do you have any information regarding the living conditions of refugees once they return from West Timor?
Tiu: Virtually all of them get some help with the transition. Most returnees come with few possessions, but they receive food, shelter and other assistance on their arrival. Vulnerable individuals receive special assistance.

Anyway my friends, I have to run, but we should talk again sometime soon. It’s always a pleasure.
Friends: Obrigado barak, Tiu. We always enjoy talking to you as well. Bye!