



TIMOR-LESTE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE

Head of state: José Maria Vasconcelos (Taur Matan Ruak) (replaced José Manuel Ramos-Horta in May)

Head of government: Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão

Impunity persisted for crimes against humanity and gross human rights violations committed during the Indonesian occupation (1975-1999). Security forces were accused of human rights violations, including ill-treatment and excessive use of force. Women and girls faced high levels of domestic violence.

Background

Presidential and Parliamentary elections, held respectively in March-April and July, took place without incident. In December 2012, the UN Security Council ended the mandate of the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

Police and security forces

Security forces faced allegations of ill-treatment and excessive use of force, sometimes leading to death. Accountability mechanisms for the police and military were weak. The UN Police presence ended in December.

Women's rights

Levels of domestic violence against women remained high. Although some cases were prosecuted in the courts, many resulted in suspended sentences. There were concerns about the lack of adequate protection for victims and witnesses.

Timor-Leste's maternal mortality ratio was one of the highest in the Asia-Pacific region.

Impunity

Little progress was made in addressing crimes against humanity and other human rights violations committed by Indonesian security forces and their auxiliaries from 1975-1999. The mandate of the Serious Crimes Investigation Team ended in December, having failed to complete around 60 investigations into outstanding cases of serious human rights violations committed in 1999.

- In December, the Dili District Court imprisoned three former Besi Merah Putih militia members for crimes against humanity committed in the context of the 1999 independence referendum. Miguel Soares and Salvador de Jesus were sentenced to nine and 16 years respectively for murder, while Faustino de Carvalho was sentenced to six years for forcible transfer of a population and the illegal detention of women and children.

The Timorese authorities failed to implement recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and of the bilateral Indonesia-Timor-Leste Commission of Truth and Friendship. The recommendations included providing reparation to victims and their families, and taking effective measures to identify victims of enforced disappearance and children separated from their families.

- In February, Parliament began debating two draft laws establishing a national reparations programme and a “Public Memory Institute”. However, the debate was postponed for the third time since June 2010, and no date was set for its resumption.

Amnesty International visits/reports

Amnesty International delegates visited Timor-Leste in October and November.

Timor-Leste: Remembering the past – recommendations to effectively establish the “National Reparations Programme” and “Public Memory Institute” (ASA 57/001/2012)