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## LESSON 2: PEACEKEEPING IN TIMOR-LESTE

### SOURCE COLLECTION PAGE 1

Read and look carefully at the two sources below. Once you have decided whose contribution is being highlighted by your sources (The people of Timor-Leste, activists, INTERFET troops, or nations working together) you may begin the source analysis worksheet.

#### SOURCE A

“INTERFET had a very powerful mandate. [...] for young commanders and soldiers, it meant that in their back pocket was the obligation to apply lethal force if there was no alternative.

[...] There were some extraordinary challenges to the judgement, courage and forbearance of INTERFET soldiers – perfectly entitled to believe that an imminent threat existed and, therefore, perfectly entitled to use lethal force to defend themselves and their colleagues. Yet, they refrained from firing and managed the threat. Training takes you just so far. Ultimately, individual courage and sound judgement explains why and how bloodshed was avoided.”

*Sir Peter Cosgrove. 'The Commander's Perspective.' INTERFET: Lessons and legacies from East Timor 20 years on. (2020) Tom Frame. (ed.)*



#### SOURCE B

*A photograph of an Australian INTERFET troop shaking hands with a local child in East Timor, 1999.*

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#### SOURCE C

Throughout the entirety of UNAMET, internationally and locally engaged staff and the local East Timorese population were subject to hostile and violent activities by the pro-Indonesian militia groups.

[...] The Indonesian security forces used violence and terror, including torture, beatings, and property destruction in an attempt to force East Timorese voters to opt formally to 'integrate' with Indonesia.

[...] The ballot was delayed until 30 August 1999 due to militia activities, and there was a real risk that voting might be cancelled altogether. Despite extreme intimidation by pro-Indonesian militia groups, the ballot took place on 30 August 1999. On the day, 98.5% of courageous and determined registered voters actually expressed their political will. Unexpectedly, 78.5% voted against the Indonesian offer of autonomy, preferring the move towards independence.

**Martin Hess. 'UNAMET: A Police Perspective.' INTERFET: Lessons and legacies from East Timor 20 years on. (2020) Tom Frame. (ed.)**

*Note: Martin Hess participated in UNAMET as an Australian police officer.*



#### SOURCE D

*A photo of an East Timorese man casting his vote at a UNAMET polling place in the 1999 referendum. Photographer: Rob Mills. Source: The Australian War Memorial.*

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### SOURCE COLLECTION PAGE 3

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#### SOURCE E

The ballot results were announced the next morning. [...] The East Timorese wanted independence and had made their wishes clear. Activists in Australia and overseas were jubilant. But joy soon turned to fear, then despair, and finally rage as the Indonesian military began to implement a plan to reverse the result.

[...]The Australian public was outraged at what it saw and demanded an immediate deployment of troops. [...] The union movement swung into action, dramatically increasing pressure on the government. On the 8th of September [...] Approximately 4000 workers, mainly CFMEU members at building sites in the city, walked off the job and attended a rally. Garbage workers – with the full support of Randwick City Council – refused to pick up garbage from the Indonesian Consulate.

The major rally on Saturday 11 September was held at the Archibold Fountain at Hyde Park. It was attended by approximately 15,000 people. [...] The rally turned into a march through Sydney's central business district. This rally had an unusual feature – members of the public were coming out of the shops to join the procession. The 15,000 marchers were drawing more and more people carrying shopping bags. These newcomers joined in the chanting and began handing over their loose change to rally marshals.

[...] It is important to dispel illusions about how and why troops were sent in. They were not sent in because of the goodwill of the Australian government, but because of massive protests that increased rapidly in both size and fury.

*Professor Clinton Fernandes. Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia, and the Independence of East Timor (2004) Scribe Publications.*



#### SOURCE F

A photograph of a protest March held in Melbourne in September 1999.

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### SOURCE COLLECTION PAGE 4

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#### SOURCE G

Yesterday the first contingent of Australian forces was deployed in East Timor.

[...] We estimate that the cost of Australia's contribution will be in the order of \$500 million in the financial year 1999-2000. Under the terms of the Security Council resolution, costs will be borne by participating states or met from voluntary contributions to a special trust fund that has been established by the United Nations.

We have firm commitments to participate from more than 12 countries. These include Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand [...] and New Zealand, Britain and Canada are making valuable contributions. The United States will provide significant support, including airlift capability, communications, intelligence, engineering support and helicopters. There are many other contributions, including from Korea and China. Some countries that are not contributing troops will contribute financially to the UN trust fund, and I welcome Japan's offer of a substantial contribution.

I want to take the opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the leaders of all of the nations that are contributing troops or financial assistance. Australia is not alone in this venture. The region has responded readily and promptly in creating this force with us under the umbrella of the United Nations. The government has every confidence in the professionalism of the Australian Defence Force and its preparedness for this operation.

*Prime Minister John Howard addressing the Australian Parliament on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1999.*



#### SOURCE H

*INTERFET troops participate in a Remembrance Day service in Timor-Leste in 1999. Source: Defence Images*