

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 405

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commemorating the independence of East Timor
and commending the President for promptly es-
tablishing diplomatic relations with East Timor.

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Whereas on May 20, 2002, East Timor became the first new country of the millennium;

Whereas the perseverance and strength of the East Timorese people in the face of daunting challenges has inspired the people of the United States and around the world;

Whereas in 1974 Portugal acknowledged the right of its colonies, including East Timor, to self-determination, including independence;

Whereas East Timor has been under United Nations administration since October 1999 during which time international peacekeeping forces, supplemented by forces of the United States Group for East Timor (USGET), have worked to stabilize East Timor and provide for its national security;

Whereas the people of East Timor exercised their long-sought right of self-determination on August 30, 1999, when 98.6 percent of the eligible population voted, and 78.5 percent chose independence in a United Nations-administered popular consultation despite systematic terror and intimidation by the Indonesian military and its militia;

Whereas the East Timorese people again demonstrated their strong commitment to democracy when 91.3 percent of eligible voters peacefully participated in East Timor's first democratic, multiparty election for a Constituent Assembly on August 30, 2001, and when 86.3 percent of those eligible participated in the first presidential election on April 14, 2002;

Whereas East Timor adopted a constitution in March 2002;

Whereas East Timor is emerging from over 400 years of colonial domination and a 24-year period of occupation by the Indonesian military;

Whereas, as the people of East Timor move proudly toward independence, many still struggle to recover from the scars of the military occupation and the 1999 scorched-earth campaign that resulted in displacement which, according to the United Nations and other independent re-

ports, exceeded 500,000 in number and widespread death, rape, and other mistreatment of women, family separation, and large refugee populations and the destruction of 70 percent of the country's infrastructure;

Whereas efforts are ongoing by East Timorese officials and others to seek justice for the crimes against humanity and war crimes that have been perpetrated in recent years, efforts which include the work of the United Nations Serious Crimes Investigation Unit and the East Timorese Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation to document and assess responsibility for these crimes;

Whereas recommendations by the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Security Council to investigate and prosecute senior Indonesian military and civilian officials for their roles in promoting the 1999 anti-independence violence in East Timor have not yet been fully implemented;

Whereas, although the people of East Timor are working toward a plan for vigorous economic growth and development, the Government of East Timor faces a substantial shortfall in its recurrent and development budgets over the first 3 years of independence, and is seeking to fill the gap in full with grants from donor countries;

Whereas a large percentage of the population of East Timor lives below the poverty line with inadequate access to health care and education, the unemployment rate in East Timor is estimated at 80 percent, and the life expectancy in East Timor is only 57 years; and

Whereas Nobel Peace Laureate Carlos Ximenes Belo, Roman Catholic Bishop of Dili, East Timor, has appealed to the

international community and the United States for increased economic and development assistance for the fledgling nation: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) Congress—

4 (A) congratulates and honors the coura-
5 geous people of East Timor and their leaders;

6 (B) welcomes East Timor into the commu-
7 nity of nations as a sovereign state and looks
8 forward to working with East Timor as an
9 equal partner;

10 (C) supports United Nations and inter-
11 national efforts to support reconstruction and
12 development in East Timor, and United Na-
13 tions and international peacekeeping forces to
14 safeguard East Timor's security;

15 (D) remains committed to working toward
16 a debt-free start to East Timor and just, sus-
17 tainable, and secure development programs as
18 well as adequate resources for the judicial sys-
19 tem for East Timor for the foreseeable future
20 beyond independence;

21 (E) expresses continued concern over de-
22 plorable humanitarian conditions and an envi-

1 ronment of intimidation among the East Timor-
2 ese refugees living in West Timor;

3 (F) strongly supports prompt, safe, vol-
4 untary repatriation and reintegration of East
5 Timorese refugees, in particular those East
6 Timorese still held in militia-controlled refugee
7 camps in West Timor, especially reunification
8 of East Timorese children separated from their
9 parents through coercion or force;

10 (G) expresses a commitment to maintain-
11 ing appropriate restrictions and prohibitions in
12 law on military assistance, training relations,
13 and technical support to the Indonesian Armed
14 Forces;

15 (H) acknowledges that a United Nations
16 International Commission of Inquiry found in
17 January 2000 that justice is “fundamental for
18 the future social and political stability of East
19 Timor”, and remains deeply concerned about
20 the lack of justice in the region; and

21 (I) commends the President for imme-
22 diately extending to East Timor diplomatic re-
23 lations afforded to other sovereign nations, in-
24 cluding the establishment of an embassy in
25 East Timor; and

1 (2) it is the sense of Congress that the Presi-
2 dent and the Secretary of State should—

3 (A) maintain a level of United States as-
4 sistance for East Timor commensurate with the
5 challenges this new nation faces after independ-
6 ence;

7 (B) work to fund in a generous and re-
8 sponsible way East Timor's financing gap in its
9 recurrent and development budgets, and coordi-
10 nate with other donors to ensure the budget
11 gap is addressed;

12 (C) focus bilateral assistance for East
13 Timor on the areas of employment creation, job
14 training, rural reconstruction, microenterprise,
15 environmental protection, health care, edu-
16 cation, refugee resettlement, reconciliation and
17 conflict resolution, and strengthening the role of
18 women in society;

19 (D) strongly urge the Indonesian Govern-
20 ment to step up efforts to disarm and disband
21 all militia, hold them accountable to the rule of
22 law, ensure stability along the border, and
23 promptly reunite East Timorese children sepa-
24 rated from their parents through coercion or
25 force; and

1 (E) review thoroughly information from
2 the East Timorese Commission for Reception,
3 Truth, and Reconciliation and use all diplo-
4 matic resources at their disposal to ensure that
5 those officials responsible for crimes against hu-
6 manity and war crimes against the East Timor-
7 ese people are held accountable and that the In-
8 donesian Government fully cooperates with the
9 East Timorese judicial system.

Passed the House of Representatives May 21, 2002.

Attest:

Clerk.