

THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY & EAST TIMOR

SUGGESTIONS FOR A NEW POLICY

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1 East Timor's right to self-determination and independence

POLICY:

THE A.L.P. RECOGNISES THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF THE EAST TIMORESE TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE AND CONDEMNS THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S RECOGNITION OF THE INDONESIAN ANNEXATION OF EAST TIMOR.

ACTION:

An A.L.P. Government will immediately reverse the Fraser Government's recognition of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor

Such a decision will be made bearing in mind:-

- that the people of East Timor bitterly reject and continue to resist integration into Indonesia;
- the declaration of independence of East Timor on November 28, 1975 and the establishment of the Democratic Republic of East Timor;
- United Nations and A.L.P. support for the right of all peoples to self-determination.

BACKGROUND:

In 1960, the United Nations General Assembly declared that

1. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.

2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

(Resolution 1514 (XV), 14 December 1960)

The A.L.P. supports these sentiments. The platform of the Victorian Branch of the A.L.P. supports "the right of all nations to self-determination and independence" and states that international conflicts should be resolved through the United Nations/

East Timor was colonised by Portugal over 400 years ago. It was only in 1974 with the overthrow of the Salazar regime in Lisbon that the veil of colonial domination was partially lifted. Political organisations quickly formed with Fretilin and UDT, both favouring eventual independence, commanded the overwhelming majority of support from the population. Parties favouring non-independence options such as integration into Indonesia and Australia had little support.

A UDT-Fretilin coalition dissolved in mid-1975 and a UDT coup attempt in August 1975 led to a short civil war which saw the departure of the Portuguese administration from the mainland and the creation by Fretilin of a *de facto* administration.

The civil war had all but ended by mid-September 1975. It was about this time that Indonesian troops began infiltrations across the border into East Timor. On October 16, five Australian journalists were killed at Balibo by Indonesian forces. By late November, Indonesian troops had advanced some distance into East Timor, so Fretilin, in an attempt to seek international support, declared independence with the formation of the Democratic Republic of East Timor on 28 November 1975.

Nine days later, on 7 December, Indonesian troops launched a full-scale invasion. Until late in 1978, most of East Timor was still outside direct Indonesian control but many East Timorese had lost their lives. By the end of 1976, it was thought that up to 100,000 lives had been lost. By 1980, it was believed that killings, starvation and disease, the latter two enhanced by the Indonesian military strategy of forced relocation of the bulk of the population, may have caused the loss of more than 200,000 lives.

Military resistance to the occupation does continue, though at a reduced level. It occurs in many parts of the territory though reports most frequently mention the eastern region and areas south of Dili. Estimates from Jakarta put the number of Indonesian troops in East Timor at around 30,000. Security and 'pacification' are reported to be their priority. Curfews, security searches and limitations on the movement of goods and people are a feature of life in Timor.

Guerilla activity is not the only form of resistance. The population is reluctant to learn Indonesian language or to participate in Indonesian development programs. People in resettlement areas are described as 'confused and alienated' and many wish to leave East Timor. The Bishop of Dili is opposed to integration of the Timorese Church into the Indonesian Church and openly appeals for self-determination for East Timor..

Australian journalist David Jenkins who visited East Timor in 1980 described the attitudes of East Timorese as 'silent and sullen' and deeply cynical of Indonesia's claims that they have been voluntarily and democratically integrated. A recent letter from East Timor says - "... if 90% opposed integration before 1975, the figure is now 99%."

As far as the Indonesian Government is concerned, integration dates formally from 1976. On May 31, 1976 the Indonesian administration organised a 28-member 'Popular Assembly of East Timor' which unanimously approved a petition calling for integration. Following this petition President Suharto signed a bill "that declared East Timor as the 27th Province of Indonesia" on July 17, 1976.

After the signing of the bill, the Australian Government expressed doubts about the validity of the petition and bill saying "... the Australian Government cannot regard the broad requirements for a satisfactory process of decolonisation as having been met".

Despite this, on Jan 20 1978, the Australian Government extended de facto recognition to the annexation, and twelve months later the opening of Australia-Indonesia negotiations on the seabed boundary between Australia and East Timor signified de jure recognition that East Timor was part of Indonesia.

However, the UN and successive Portuguese Governments have not accepted integration.

The UN continues to recognise Portugal as the administering power over East Timor. For its part, Portugal is bound by its Constitution to promote and safeguard the right to self-determination and independence of East Timor.

The Portuguese Government informed the UN in September 1980 that it intends to consult with governments and other bodies with a view to finding a solution to the East Timor problem. In response to this initiative, Mr Street replied: "The Australian Government does not feel it can play any role in that process". No further clear details are available on the progress and nature of the consultations with other parties.

Providing it genuinely serves the interests of the people in East Timor, the Portuguese initiative should be strongly supported.

2 Australian military aid to Indonesia

POLICY: THE A.L.P. OPPOSES ALL MILITARY AID TO INDONESIA UNTIL THERE IS A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF INDONESIAN FORCES FROM EAST TIMOR.

ACTION: As a party, the A.L.P. will

- (1) take all steps possible to stop the Australian government's continued military aid to Indonesia including blocking budget allocations for this purpose;
- (2) urge political parties and governments in other countries supplying arms to Indonesia to press for a boycott on arms sales and military aid to Indonesia.
- (3) seek to have the United Nations impose an arms embargo on Indonesia

An A.L.P. Government will stop all military aid to Indonesia, In particular:-

- (1) no more military hardware will be supplied;
- (2) no more Indonesian military personnel will be trained either in Australia or Indonesia.
- (3) no more joint naval and military exercises will take place;
- (4) no more exchange visits by high-ranking officers will occur;
- (5) consultations with Indonesia on defense matters will cease.
- (6) assistance with surveying and mapping will cease.
- (7) civil aid from Australia with military applications will cease

BACKGROUND:

Since 1975, the Indonesian armed forces have been waging a war of aggression in East Timor. They have been illegally occupying a foreign country. Despite this, the Australian government has continued to supply military aid to the Indonesian armed forces.

Details of Australian military aid to Indonesia for the years 1972-79 are -

1972-73	\$3.763 million	1976-77	\$6.596 million
1973-74	\$5.108 million	1977-78	\$7.209 million
1974-75	\$5.565 million	1978-79	\$7.183 million
1975-76	\$6.259 million	1979-80	\$9.589 million

During 1980-81, the Australian government plans to provide \$11.9 million in military aid. That is an increase of 25% on the previous year's allocation and will bring Australia's military aid to Indonesia since the invasion of East Timor to over \$42 million. Included in this year's allocation are 250 military land-rovers which were delivered in late 1980 at a cost of \$2.5 million.

There are no guarantees from the Indonesian Government that this equipment will not be used in East Timor, nor does the Australian government seek such guarantees.

3 Aid to East Timor

POLICY: AID TO EAST TIMOR SHOULD BENEFIT THE EAST TIMORESE BUT SHOULD NOT SUPPORT INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT INTEGRATION PROCESSES OR MILITARY STRATEGY.

ACTION: As a Party, the A.L.P. will

- (1) press the Australian government to support a continued International Red Cross presence in East Timor as long as emergency conditions prevail but seek to extend I.C.R.C.'s role into the area of human rights and to link I.C.R.C. programs with the right of the East Timorese to return to their lands;
- (2) with the exception of (1) above, press the Australian government to suspend all relief and development aid to East Timor until a thorough, independent survey has been conducted in all parts of the territory and direct consultations have been held with the East Timorese at all levels;
- (3) press the Australian government to refuse aid to the 'resettlement villages' ;
- (4) press the government to seek direct access for Australian Aid Agencies and a Parliamentary aid survey team;
- (5) explore options for an international and independent aid survey team to visit East Timor.

An A.L.P. Government will

- (1) implement principles in points (1) to (5) above;
- (2) after consultation with East Timorese, direct aid primarily to the reconstruction of a self-reliant East Timorese economy;
- (3) include Australian Aid Agencies in such programs and press for their admission to East Timor;
- (4) link negotiations on civilian aid to Indonesia with the genuine relief and development needs of East Timor.

BACKGROUND:

The economy of East Timor, already underdeveloped, has been devastated since the Indonesian invasion. Vast acreages of fertile land suitable for the production of food and livestock lie abandoned. The bulk of the population depend for their survival on aid agency handouts. Small, mediocre harvets provide only passing relief. The livestock population has been decimated. The resettlement sites, promoted by Indonesia as development measures, primarily serve military and control purposes, and are part of the problem, not the solution. A basic prerequisite for development is the return of the people to their familiar life-styles, with development building on that basis. The Jakarta-style development which is beginning will enrich the few and marginalise and impoverish the mass of the people.

4 Refugees and family reunions

POLICY: THE A.L.P. SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE MIGRATION FROM EAST TIMOR AND BELIEVES AUSTRALIA HAS AN OBLIGATION AND ABILITY TO ASSIST EAST TIMORESE TO COME TO AUSTRALIA.

ACTION: As a Party, the A.L.P. will

- (1) press the Australian government to widen its existing programs to include
 - the parents and families of isolated children in Australia
 - the rest of the 2,668 extended family members nominated by Timorese in Australia in 1977
 - all other East Timorese who wish to come here;
- (2) press the Australian government to send an Immigration team to East Timor to bring to Australia the rest of the 600 people on the agreed list and those embraced by categories in (1) above;
- (3) seek direct talks with the Indonesian government on the matter;
- (4) draw attention to the lack of free migration from East Timor in all appropriate international forums;
- (5) meet with the Timorese community in Australia to enquire into the special problems affecting them.

An A.L.P. Government will

- (1) bring to Australia all Timorese included in (1) and (2) above;
- (2) refuse visas to all Indonesian military and government officials until the rest of the 600 on the agreed list have been admitted to Australia;
- (3) send an Immigration team to East Timor to bring direct to Australia all East Timorese specified above.

BACKGROUND: The 1975 civil war and the Indonesian invasion later that year displaced and divided many Timorese families. In 1977, at the invitation of the Australian Government, those in Australia nominated 2668 relatives in Timor for reunion here. Only 600 of these were included in the reunion program finally agreed to by Indonesia and Australia in 1978. Over a third of these 600 are still awaiting reunion. With a handful of exceptions, those who have been reunited have all been Chinese and all have had to pay heavy bribes to Indonesian officials. Ethnic Timorese are discriminated against. Indonesia has permitted only one visit by Australian Immigration officials to East Timor. The Australian Government policy of putting politics before people has cost the Timorese dearly in terms of continued separation, marital breakdown, financial indebtedness, and prolonged anguish.

The Australian Government has excluded extended families and the parents and families of lone children in Australia from this program. Nor has any provision been made for the many others in East Timor who wish to leave

The Special Humanitarian Program established in October 1980 for Timorese outside Timor by September 30, 1980, is inadequate. Timorese without relatives in Australia have been excluded. They have been condemned to permanent separation from the Australian Timorese community - now the largest outside Timor, and to the insecurities of a life in Portugal and Jakarta they do not want.

5 Information

POLICY: THE A.L.P. WILL SEEK OUT AND MAKE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE EAST TIMOR ISSUE.

ACTION: As a Party, the A.L.P. will

- (1) conduct an education campaign within the A.L.P.;
- (2) circulate information on East Timor to governments and political parties overseas;
- (3) campaign for the Australian government to release more information;
- (4) press for free access to East Timor for the Australian news media;
- (5) demand that FRETILIN representatives be allowed into Australia;
- (6) press for an Australian parliamentary delegation to visit East Timor on a fact-finding mission, ensuring that adequate support is available from interpreters and that unhindered access is available to all parts of the country and population;
- (7) press for a Parliamentary enquiry into all aspects of the East Timor question.

An A.L.P. government will implement the above policy.

BACKGROUND:

The Indonesian Government has done its best to prevent information flowing directly in and out of East Timor. It has continued a propaganda campaign and only specially selected people have been granted a brief guided tour of the country. Such people are rarely able to get all the facts.

Meanwhile the Fraser Government has actively supported the Indonesian Government by such actions as closing the Fretilin-Darwin radio link; frustrating the attempts of the U.N. Special Representative to visit FRETILIN-held areas of East Timor; and denying entry visas to Australia for FRETILIN Representatives since late 1976.

6 Sea-bed boundary

POLICY: THE A.L.P. REJECTS THE LEGITIMACY OF AUSTRALIAN-INDONESIAN NEGOTIATIONS ON THE AUSTRALIA-EAST TIMOR SEA BED BOUNDARY.

ACTION: An A.L.P. Government will

- (1) revoke any tacit or formal agreement establishing a sea-bed boundary between East Timor and Australia;
- (2) withdraw from any negotiations on this issue until such time as legitimate representatives of the East Timorese are party to such negotiations;
- (3) refuse to issue exploration leases to companies seeking access to the disputed sea-bed areas;
- (4) suspend any such leases already issued.

BACKGROUND: The following is a chronology of events concerning the sea-bed negotiations:-

October 1972 The Australian and Indonesian governments agreed on a sea-bed boundary in areas of the Timor Sea. Despite an initial Indonesian claim for the boundary to follow the 'line of equidistance', the line was set closer to Indonesian territory than to Australia.

Portugal was not a party to the Agreement so a boundary south of East Timor was not determined and the area defined by lines of equidistance and a hypothetical line linking the agreed Australia-Indonesia sea-bed boundary became a disputed area (see map).

December 1974 The Portuguese government granted exploration rights to Oceanic Petroleum Co. (USA) for the disputed area. However, the Whitlam government had already leased a large part of the area to a consortium comprising ARCO Australia Ltd, Australian Aquitaine Petroleum Pty Ltd and Esso Exploration and Production Aust. Inc. The Portuguese government ignored Australian government protests.

October 1976 Ten months after the FRETILIN declaration of Independence for East Timor and the subsequent Indonesian invasion, Australian and Indonesian officials began informal negotiations to establish a sea-bed boundary between Australia and East Timor. FRETILIN lodged protests against the negotiations.

January 1978 The Australian government granted *de facto* recognition of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor. It was suggested at the time that Indonesia may have been prepared to negotiate a sea-bed boundary favourable to Australia in exchange for such recognition (note that in August 1975, the Australian ambassador to Jakarta, Richard Woolcott, advised the Dept of Foreign Affairs in Canberra that it might be easier to negotiate a boundary with Indonesia rather than Portugal and that this should be a consideration in determining Australian policy on Indonesian plans to incorporate East Timor into Indonesia).

February 1979 Australian and Indonesian government officials met in Canberra on 14-16 February to begin formal negotiations on the boundary.

January 1981 Media reports indicate that negotiations had stalled with no clear resolution in sight.

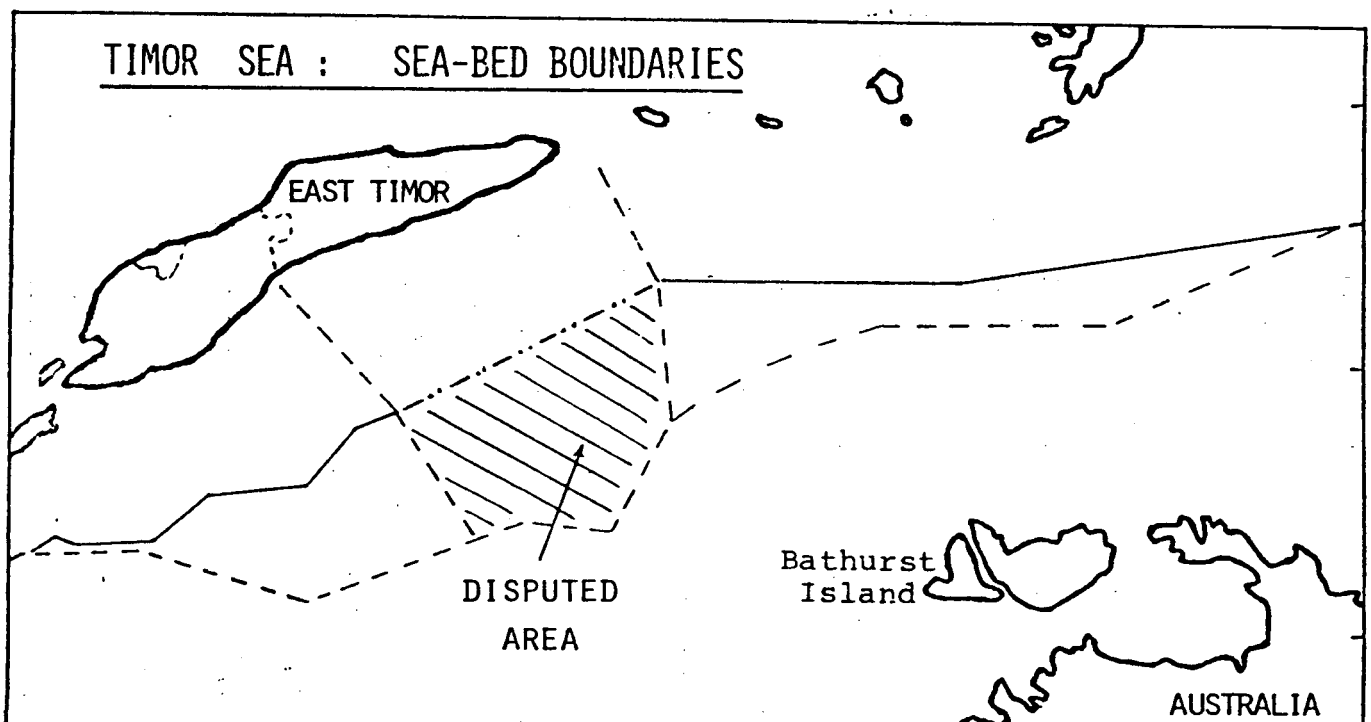
(NB: sea-bed map next page)

7 Australian Companies and East Timor

POLICY: THE A.L.P. OPPOSES THE OPERATION OF AUSTRALIAN COMPANIES IN EAST TIMOR UNTIL SELF-DETERMINATION HAS BEEN ACHIEVED.

ACTION: An A.L.P. Government will

- (1) not recognise any agreements between Australian companies and the Indonesian government which relate to economic activity in East Timor;
- (2) withdraw all forms of direct and indirect government assistance to companies which operate in East Timor.



KEY:

- "Lines of Equidistance."
- Australia-Indonesia sea-bed boundary. Agreed October 1972.
- Line claimed by Australia for Australia-East Timor boundary.
- //// Denotes area claimed by both Australia and Portugal in 1974. (This area now claimed by D.R.E.T. as East Timorese waters.)

(Map derived from "The Political Geography of Oceans", J.R.V. Prescott. 1975.)

8 United Nations

POLICY: THE A.L.P. SUPPORTS U.N. RESOLUTIONS WHICH PROMOTE THE RIGHTS OF THE EAST TIMORESE.

ACTION: As a Party, the A.L.P. will

- (1) seek representation at the U.N. from 1981 to campaign for A.L.P. policy objectives on East Timor.

As a Government, the A.L.P. will initiate and vote for U.N. motions which

- (1) support the inalienable rights of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence;
- (2) demand the complete withdrawal of Indonesian forces from East Timor;
- (3) call for a U.N. arms embargo on Indonesia;
- (4) deplore the continued suffering of the East Timorese due to the continued military occupation and attempted annexation of their country;
- (5) request U.N. agencies to render all possible assistance to the people of East Timor;
- (6) demand that a U.N. fact-finding mission be allowed into East Timor by the Indonesian government;
- (7) request the implementation of the U.N. resolutions on East Timor.

BACKGROUND: There have been U.N. resolutions supporting East Timorese self-determination and independence each year since 1975.

The Fraser Government voted FOR the 1975 resolution; ABSTAINED in 1976 and 1977; and has voted AGAINST the resolution in 1978, 1979, and 1980.

Many U.N. delegates hoped that Australia would play a leading role there on this matter because of the geographical proximity of, and historical ties between, Australia and East Timor. The Fraser Government position at the U.N. has become low-key support for the Indonesian Government's position and recognition of the annexation.

APPENDIX ONE

1963 Federal ALP Policy on East Timor

"Labor urges effective decolonisation of the territories of North Borneo, Sarawak, Brunei and Eastern Timor but believes that Australian influence should be used to seek that such decolonisation should be in accordance with the principles of personal liberty, self-determination and democracy set forth in this declaration."

APPENDIX TWO

1977 Federal ALP Policy on East Timor

"Conference condemns the Indonesian invasion of East Timor which was in direct violation of the assurances given to the Labor Government that force would not be used; and

- a) calls on Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor immediately in conformity with United Nations resolutions;
- b) notes the establishment of the Democratic Republic of East Timor on 28th November, 1975;
- c) calls for an international endeavour to resume humanitarian aid to all parts of East Timor through the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- d) calls for free and unimpeded communications with the national independence forces of East Timor.

A future Labor Government will -

- 1) suspend Australian military aid to Indonesia until all troops are withdrawn from East Timor;
- ii) recognise a Government of East Timor if independence is shown to be the choice of the East Timorese people after a genuine act of self-determination; and
- iii) re-establish radio transmitter to communicate with the National Independence Forces of East Timor."

APPENDIX THREE

1979 Federal ALP Policy on East Timor

"The ALP condemns, in the strongest terms, the Australian Government's recognition of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor and undertakes, on becoming the Government of Australia, to reverse the decision. Government action will entail -

- a. setting the example for a UN embargo on military aid to Indonesia; and
- b. actively press for the entry into East Timor of a UN fact-finding mission whose function shall include the monitoring of contraventions of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights."

APPENDIX FOUR

1980 UN Resolution on East Timor (Nov. 11, 1980; Vote: 58-35-46)

The General Assembly.

Recognizing the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960,

Considering that the international community is celebrating in 1980 the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration,

Bearing in mind that the Fifth 30/ and Sixth 31/ Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo and Havana in 1976 and 1979, respectively, reaffirmed the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence,

Having examined the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Territory, 32/ and other relevant documents, 33/

Taking into consideration the recent communiqué of the Council of Ministers of Portugal, issued on 12 September 1980, 34/ in which the administering Power reaffirmed the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination,

Taking also into consideration the diplomatic initiative taken by the Government of Portugal with a view to finding a comprehensive solution to the problem of East Timor,

Deeply concerned at the continued suffering of the people of East Timor as a result of the hostilities still prevailing in the Territory,

Having heard the statements of the representatives of Portugal, 35/ as the administering Power, and Indonesia, 36/

Having also heard the statements of various East Timorese petitioners and representatives of non-governmental organizations, 37/ as well as the representative of the Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente, 38/

1. Reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;
2. Declares that the people of East Timor must be enabled freely to determine their own future within the framework of the United Nations;
3. Welcomes the diplomatic initiative taken by the Government of Portugal as a first step towards the free exercise by the people of East Timor of their right to self-determination and independence, and urges all parties directly concerned to co-operate fully with a view to creating the conditions necessary for the speedy implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV);
4. Expresses its deepest concern at the continued suffering of the people of East Timor as a result of the situation still prevailing in the Territory;
5. Requests the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to render, within their respective fields of competence, all possible assistance to the people of East Timor, particularly the children;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to follow the implementation of the present resolution and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session on all aspects of the situation in East Timor, in particular the political developments concerning the situations referred to in paragraphs 1 to 4 above;
7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-sixth session the item entitled "Question of East Timor".

RECORDED VOTE ON RESOLUTION 35/27:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Byelorussia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Iceland, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Portugal, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, USSR, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Democratic Kampuchea, Egypt, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United States, Uruguay, Yemen.

Abstaining: Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bhutan, Burma, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, Romania, Samoa, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Cameroon, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Absent: Bulgaria, Comoros, Djibouti, Dominica, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Mexico,* Paraguay, Saint Vincent, Solomon Islands.

* Later advised the Secretariat it had intended to vote in favour.