

## **SUMMARY REPORT**

<p><b>The 10<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEOPLES' DIPLOMACY TRAINING</b></p>
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**January 24-February 11, 2000  
Faculty of Law, Northern Territory University  
Darwin, Australia**

**Diplomacy Training Program  
March 2000**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy Training Program was recently completed. It was held at the Faculty of Law, Northern Territory University, from January 24<sup>th</sup> to February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2000. Thirty-five participants came to Darwin from 16 countries and constituencies, almost all from the Asia-Pacific region and one from Central Asia (Mongolia) and Africa (Ethiopia). The feedback given throughout the three weeks, in the anonymous evaluations and since we have returned was positive and included useful suggestions and recommendations for improving the program. The participants rated the training at a high level, with the lowest session rating 70% (Print media and practices) and the highest 89% (Human Rights Commission major Roleplay) with an average session rating of 82% and a rating for general course organisation at 88.5%. *Please see evaluation results.*

For the January 2000 DTP training we received over 100 queries from around the world. We received full applications from approximately 65 individuals and had a good pool to choose from relating to our pre-determined selection criteria of active human rights defenders from credible organisations, a geographical and gender balance, two positive recommendations, etc.

The participants were an extraordinary group of individuals who have already contributed much to the promotion and protection of human rights. They represented a good geographical range. The goal to meet the Board's request to have a higher number of Indonesian and East Timorese participants was also met. We had participants from: Indonesia (8), East Timor (7), Philippines (3), Indigenous Australian (4), and one participant each from Pakistan, Mongolia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Burma, Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, Kiribati, India, Nepal, Malaysia (UK citizen) and Australia (El Salvadorean/French). There were 19 female and 16 male participants. We had seven East Timorese participants, five men and two women (a third woman cancelled at the last minute) four from East Timor and three from the diaspora in NT, NSW and Victoria. While it would have been ideal to have more women as well as more skilled participants working in international human rights work for East Timor, it was positive to see the networking and friendships building amongst those from East Timor and those who struggled for it from Australia after leaving East Timor in 1975.

The eight Indonesian participants, four women, four men, were a generally a skilled and very active group of human rights defenders working in Jakarta, Medan, West Timor, Aceh, Hong Kong and West Papua. An exceptional participant works with CAA in West Timor and is also a member of KOMNAS HAM who investigated the crimes of the Indonesian army in East Timor in 1999.

In Darwin the DTP had 16 trainers, including two DTP board members, Sarah Pritchard and Garth Nettheim. We also had valued DTP long-time supporters Jose Campino and Clarence Dias, DTP staff Joan Staples, Carol Devine and Vic Coakley (part-time), experienced trainer and Malaysia activist Debbie Stothard who came from Alternative Burma Network in Thailand, new notable DTP trainers Geoff Evans, Director of Mineral Policy Institute, Sydney, Philip Chung and Siobhan McCann from the Australian Legal Information Institute and Javier Barrera, International Affairs Officer, Australian Red Cross. We also had local Darwin human rights defenders lawyer Colin McDonald and East Timorese activist Marie Alice Gomes.

We followed the DTP curriculum offered in previous years including topics such as Public International Law, International human rights law, UN human rights agencies and procedures, UN role in security and peacekeeping, Regional human rights organizations, practical sessions on lobbying and media, and a Human Rights Commission Roleplay, etc.).

We developed three training streams following consultations with the board and analysis of past training outlines. They included; The Foundations of Human Rights, The World/The Region, and Tools for Advocacy. The final two days were entitled Final Exercise: Weaving the Themes

Together, culminating in the Human Rights Commission role-play. On the first day Sarah Pritchard introduced a case-study based on Bougainville, "The Ferdinand Islands" that proved very useful and was used again in the media and lobbying sessions and for the roleplay. The final schedule reflects session time and date changes that do not fit ideally into the streams.

The January 2000 session was updated to include a practical session on the Internet for law and advocacy and a day session on Globalisation. We responded to requests for discussions raised by participants that we felt we could address briefly. Some other suggestions made by participants we acknowledged we did not have the experience or time to address at this session. Short sessions were added on "An insider's guide" to the Human Rights Commission and ASEAN as a regional lobbying avenue run by trainer Debbie Stothard, National Human Rights Commissions (run by Vic Coakley and the participants), World Bank, IMF and structural adjustment (organized by the participants with knowledge in this area).

The participants had the opportunity to share information about their own work and their country in the early morning and evening sessions added to the program. The East Timorese who wanted to discuss criminal justice for East Timor initiated this. Sarah Pritchard offered to facilitate it and from the second day on, almost every morning and every evening had extra 45-minute sessions, almost all of them run by participants. The participants said they greatly valued these sessions.

Local educational opportunities included a visit to Parliament house to the Senate Inquiry on Mandatory Sentencing (and a briefing and follow up discussions by Joan). Extracurricular events included a guided trip to the Litchfield National Park, a soccer match between the DTP and East Timorese judges in Darwin, a "behind-the-scenes" tour of the Northern Territory Art Gallery and Museum, and an optional visit to Batchelor College, an Aboriginal college near Darwin. The participants evaluations' show they really enjoyed the field trips.

Finally, the evaluations indicate that overall, the participants were equally pleased with the Background of Rights (International Human Rights Law and UN sessions, etc) as they were with the Tools for Advocacy sessions) giving each stream a rating of approximately 82%. The Human Rights Commission Roleplay was given the highest rating, 89%, and the course ended on a high.

The general success of the training is largely due to the fantastic participants who shared their experiences and skills generously, who created a safe environment for discussions and participated fully and enthusiastically from beginning to end. A large effort was put into accepting a wide range of applications, checking references and selection. The other important elements contributing to its success included: a specialist group of trainers including those with vast DTP experience (Sarah Pritchard, Garth Nettheim, and Clarence Dias), the tried and tested DTP curriculum and methodology, and the creativity and flexibility of trainers and participants to give dynamic, educational and practical sessions. Last but not least, an excellent venue and unequivocal support from the Faculty of Law, Northern Territory University, great extra-curricular activities, and good accommodation and food played a part.

A testimony to the value of the training and the participants' enthusiasm to do joint activism (e.g. on Mandatory Sentencing in Australia), and to continue to network. They initiated an e-mailing list to keep in touch. A web-page is being created for "Oromia 2000", the name of this group formed at the DTP for further networking and advocacy purposes (as the group could not call themselves DTP 2000 as the DTP is not an advocacy organization). This name they chose also represents the solidarity of this group, Oromia is the homeland in Ethiopia of one of the participants who left as a refugee because of severe human rights violations and repression.

We also wish to thank the trainers who generously share their expertise and time and come, many year after year, and new trainers, to the DTP training sessions.

## **TRAINERS**

The 16 trainers for the DTP January course were:

- Mr. Jose Campino, Political Affairs, United Nations, New York
- Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim, DTP Board Member, UNSW Faculty of Law
- Dr. Sarah Pritchard, DTP Board Member, UNSW Faculty of Law
- Ms. Debbie Stothard, Director of Altsean-Burma Network, Forum-Asia, Thailand
- Mr. Arnold Zeitlin, Asian Center, Director, The Freedom Forum, Hong Kong (former journalist)
- Mr. Phillip Chung and Siobhan McCann, AustLII, Australia
- Mr. Geoff Evans, Director, Mineral Policy Institute, Sydney
- Ms. Olga Havnen, Fred Hollows Foundation, Darwin
- Dr. Clarence Dias, Director, International Center for Law in Development, New York
- Ms. Maria Alice Gomes, East Timor Association Lafaek, Darwin
- Mr. Javier Barerra, International Affairs Officer, Australian Red Cross, Brisbane
- Mr. Colin McDonald, President of the NT Bar Association, Darwin
- Mr. Sonny Inbaraj, Editor of the Australasian newspaper, Darwin
- Ms. Joan Staples, DTP
- Ms. Carol Devine, DTP
- Ms. Vic Coakley, DTP

Unfortunately Hon. Janelle Saffin had to cancel at the last minute due to a bad ear infection stopping her from flying. Debbie Stothard generously and effectively helped to create relevant new sessions to fill the gap.

## **PARTICIPANT ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM ANONYMOUS SURVEYS**

*The DTP was better than I had expected. The lecturers and DTP staff were wonderful. The group itself was the best group I think I have been involved with. I have gained tremendous experience. The network we have now (which I feel is very valuable) will be very useful. There have been many good friendships established which will become permanent.*

*Dr. Claence Dias was excellent in giving his presentation. He was more in-tune with the activities performed by NGOs. The staff running the DTP was excellent. What more can I say.*

*On the whole I extend on behalf of my country, PNG, a sincere gratitude and appreciation for having the privilege of attending this DTP 2000, as knowledge, skills and experience learnt in this training will further enhance my campaign and activities in communities I work with. The role-plays have been very excellent.*

*I would have like to know more about humanitarian law and National Human Rights institutions. I would have also liked for some participants to contribute more for every country has a different situation. It may be an idea to ask some direct questions relating to specific countries.*

*The role play and media and human rights monitoring need more time. Everyone needed to have a chance to do different things and usually those who were more articulate were chosen to do things. I would like DTP to stay in touch with the participants so that in time of need or questions, there is a base to refer to. And most of all thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in this great program.*

*I learned much more than what expected to learn from DTP course. It brought me a lot of geo-political information of the Asia-Pacific region. Awareness about the local, cultural and regional issues not only help me gain extra-skill and experience for my professional life but also at a personal level, I think it had made a difference to me. Human Rights cannot be promoted and respected unless you do not tolerate other person's beliefs, values and his very existence. To*

*gain this tolerance and respect, it will only come after you know and eventually compare other cultures.*

*One suggestion I feel should be made is the fact that pre-course readings could be a possibility for future programs. It does not need to be a large volume of documents but maybe broad UN documentation. That might contribute to stimulate discussions. I strongly believe that although the course is not aimed at lawyers, greater emphasis on International Law is required. I want to conclude by restating that I thank you immensely for all you have done to make the last three weeks an unforgettable experience.*

*The group work and role-plays were the most commendable and significant component of the course. Only after these practical sessions that I was able to understand the real issues and problems and could gain SKILLS. The first week brought a lot of insight in UN system and a lot of questions were raised in our minds. We felt helpless and frustrated as NGOs. But now at the end of the course we know exactly where we stand and we also have some (if not all) skills to lobby and campaign in our own individual struggles. Thank you DTP for this most amazing, education and wonderful opportunity!*

*I would like to congratulate DTP staff and volunteers for what has been a most education and entertaining course. It is certainly extremely difficult to pitch an entire course of highly difficult concepts at a level which every participant will be completely able to participate. Having said that, you made this course as close to that objective as possible.*