

The 14th Annual Harold W. Andersen Lecture

**Up from the Ashes:  
Building Democracy and a Free Press in East Timor**

By Jose Ramos-Horta

A Lecture Series on Global Communications Issues

November 1, 2000

## Welcome by James H. Ottaway, Jr., Chairman of the World Press Freedom Committee

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**Mr. Ottaway:** Good afternoon. I welcome you to the 14th Annual Harold Andersen Lecture of the World Press Freedom Committee, and we'd like to introduce to you our head table.

Leonard Marks is a communications lawyer here in Washington, a partner in Cohn & Marks. He is a founder and still treasurer of the World Press Freedom Committee, former director of the U.S. Information Agency from 1965 to 1969, principal organizer of the International Media Fund, which for many years provided assistance to developing press organizations in Eastern Europe. A tireless promoter of worldwide recognition of the Charter for a Free Press, a statement of 10 principles essential to a free flow of news and information within and across international borders, something that we have been campaigning for over 13 years.

Next to him is Harold Andersen himself, the founder of this lecture. He's one of the leaders of the American journalism and one of the most active in international press freedom issues. A former chairman and chief executive officer of the Omaha (Nebraska) World-Herald. He served as chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers Association and president of the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers. And most important for us, he has been fighting for press freedom as chairman of the World Press Freedom Committee for 17 years, from 1979 to 1996, and his wife Marian with him all the way.

Marilyn Greene is executive director of the World Press Freedom Committee since 1996, upon the retirement of Dana Bullen, who still serves as our senior adviser and editor of most of our publications. Marilyn Greene worked as a reporter and editor for 25 years, the last 10 of these as an international affairs reporter for USA Today, well schooled in the problems of international press freedom.

We have some other special guests today. I'd like to welcome Danilo Arbilla, the new president of the Inter American Press Association. With him is Julio Munoz, IAPA executive director. They lead one of the nine international press freedom organizations that the World Press Freedom Committee works with in a Coordinating Committee to address issues of press freedom around the world. Also, a good friend of mine, I'd like to recognize Murray Hiebert, Washington bureau chief of the Far Eastern Economic Review. Murray was released about a year ago from four weeks of prison in Malaysia on charges of contempt of court. He was convicted over an article which the plaintiff, the wife of a Court of Appeals judge, claimed that his criticism of the judiciary was next to blasphemous. He was jailed on charges that would here be laughed out of court.

Del Brinkman, representative of John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in Miami. He's been director of its journalism program since 1993 and has been our main supporter, he and the foundation, for many years. He's moving on now to become dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Colorado in Boulder, back to his first love, which is journalism and education. He is former vice-chancellor for academic affairs, before that, dean of the William Allen Rice School of Journalism at the University of Kansas. I want to thank him for the support he's given the World Press Freedom Committee.

Now, a quick introduction for those of you who are not familiar with the World Press Freedom Committee and how we operate. Our headquarters are in Reston, Virginia nearby. We have 44 free-press organization affiliates on six continents we work with, and we coordinate the joint activities of the nine-group global Coordinating Committee of Press Freedom Organizations.

We monitor and report on national and international organizations that create legislation or regulations that often lead, even with the best intentions, to restrictions on the free flow of information or direct censorship of a free press.

We publish handbooks for independent journalists in new democracies in many languages, and studies of various threats to a free press around the world where, believe it or not, only 20 percent of the world's population lives in a country with a truly free press.

We conduct campaigns for our Charter For a Free Press. We already have better defined and limited laws against disclosure of classified information that aids a foreign government, exposes intelligence agents or harms national defense.

So we add our voice to the chorus of protest against this bad legislation, and from our point of view, would be a very bad example for the rest of the world.

There are dictators and authoritarian elected rulers around the world just looking for this kind of precedent.

I would now like to introduce Harold “Andy” Andersen. He’d like to say a few words about this lecture. Andy.

**Mr. Andersen:** Thank you. There are many reasons I’m glad to be here today. Not the least of which is the fact that I’m able to be here today. Morrie Rosenberg and I agreed on that just a few minutes ago, that that’s one of our principal pleasures in appearing here each year, and we made a date to be here again next year. Right, Morrie? I hope all of you are here, too.

I’ve said before that this lecture could have been named for a number of other people, George Beebe, managing editor of the Miami Herald, who really was the father of the World Press Freedom Committee; Leonard Marks, who has been with us since the very start, or Dana Bullen, who I think has been with us for so many years.

But as it turned out, the honor was directed to me, for which I am very grateful. We have had a distinguished list of speakers who have honored us with their presence and who have shared with us good information, usually connected in some way, as you might suspect, with freedom of the press.

We hope your remarks will touch on that, but I would not have predicted that this would last, how many years? Fourteen years, and I’m just glad to see that, moving to a luncheon format, we continue to have distinguished speakers but we have attracted larger crowds the last two or three years.

So I hope it and I and all of you go on for another 14 years, and I’m honored to be here and glad to see so many of you, including a number of old friends. Thank you.

**Mr. Ottaway:** Now, I’d like to ask Marilyn Greene, executive director of the World Press Freedom Committee, to give you a brief report on some of our recent activities.

**Ms. Greene:** It’s been an incredibly busy year for WPFC, and I believe we’ve accomplished a great deal in support of press freedom around the world.

In July, Jim Ottaway and our European representative, Ronald Koven, organized and led a delegation of representatives of six press freedom groups to Moscow.

They gave support and encouragement to Russian journalists starting to gather and report news objectively, and they met with Russian government officials to remind them of the critical importance of press freedom to the development of democracy and economic prosperity there.

WPFC published four books this year. Copies of these are on display in the reception area and are available upon request. One of these publications, “Insult Laws: An Insult to Press Freedom,” represents a major step in WPFC’s global campaign against laws that shield public officials from public scrutiny and news commentary.

That campaign continues in courts and legislatures around the world, thanks to a generous grant for this purpose from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Another thank you to Del Brinkman.

We have strengthened our Fund Against Censorship, a shared activity with eight other press freedom groups, thanks to the assistance of the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation. The fund provides legal assistance to journalists facing prosecution.

Today, I'm pleased to announce a program that will help journalists in our speaker's homeland.

The World Press Freedom Committee is providing a grant of \$10,000 to the Timor Lorosae Journalists Association, a brand new organization of journalists who want to support press freedom in East Timor.

Jose Ramos-Horta is one of this group's prime supporters, and we join him in encouraging these great journalists, many of whom have earned their freedom in blood.

**Mr. Ottaway:** Thank you, Marilyn, for your hard work, year long, 24 by 7 as they say in the technology world, working all the time. The purpose of this Harold Andersen Lecture is to focus attention on global press freedom issues by inviting speakers who have, themselves, worked and suffered for basic human rights of free speech and freedom of the press in their own countries or in international organizations.

Last year, James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, told us about the importance of a free press to freedom and democracy in the world and particularly to exposure of corruption in government and business, which he called one of the major deterrents to economic growth in less developed countries.

The year before, Kofi Annan, secretary general of the United Nations, spoke eloquently here about the need for a free press to guarantee a free flow of information, which he called essential to the development of both political democracy and free market economies.

This year, for the 14th Andersen Lecture, we are honored to hear Nobel Peace Prize winner Jose Ramos-Horta, one of the leaders of independence, democracy, and press freedom in East Timor.

A few words about his background. Mr. Ramos-Horta shared the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize with Bishop Carlos Belo, the outspoken Roman Catholic Bishop of East Timor. The Peace Prize Committee honored them for their work toward a just and peaceful solution to the conflict in East Timor.

He was called the leading international spokesman for East Timor's cause since 1975, when Indonesia took control of East Timor and he was forced into exile where he has worked for independence and basic human rights for his people for a long 25 years. Political exile is a family tradition for Jose Ramos-Horta. His grandfather was forced into exile from Portugal, finally to East Timor.

His father was also exiled to East Timor by the Salazar dictatorship in Portugal. He was born in 1949 in Dili, capital of East Timor to a Timorese mother and a Portuguese father. He had 11 brothers and sisters, four of whom were killed by the Indonesian army which invaded East Timor in December 1975.

After the Timorese independence parties appointed Mr. Ramos-Horta to represent them abroad, he addressed the U.N. Security Council in December 1975, pleading for international action against the Indonesian military attack which caused about 200,000 deaths from 1976 to 1981 in East Timor.

He became the permanent representative of the FRETILIN (Frente Revolucionaria Timor Lest Independente, which advocated East Timor's independence) at the United Nations from 1976 to 1989, himself in exile in the United States.

From 1991 to 1998 he was special representative of the umbrella organization of pro-independence movements inside and outside East Timor and was an elected vice-president of the National Council of Timorese Resistance Groups in April 1998.

He has acted as personal representative and spokesman for Xanana Gusmao, president of the CNRT, the National Council of Timorese Resistance, who was imprisoned in Jakarta from 1992 until just September a year ago.

In 1996, Mr. Ramos-Horta won the first UNPO prize given by the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization for his unswerving commitment to the rights and freedoms of threatened peoples.

In a wonderful irony of post-colonial history, Mr. Ramos-Horta was awarded the Order of Freedom in 1998, the highest honor given by the Portuguese government, the same colonial government, once upon a time, which had exiled his father and grandfather for loving that freedom and self-determination too much.

After the people of East Timor voted for independence on August 30, 1999, Indonesian military and rampaging militias in two weeks of Operation Clean Up destroyed 80,000 homes and buildings, killed over 1,000 people, scared about 85 percent of the population into the mountains or across the border into West Timor refugee camps.

This was just one year ago. In the year since, Jose Ramos-Horta has been a leading critic of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, which has spent 680 million U.S. dollars on peacekeeping, policing, and basic humanitarian relief, but only 60 million dollars for reconstruction.

But, in a twist of fate, under pressure from his friends in the pro-independence movement and from U.N. officials, Mr. Ramos-Horta agreed just last month to become foreign minister in the Timorese Cabinet set up by the U.N. Transitional Administration.

A former leading Timorese print journalist and radio and TV correspondent, Mr. Ramos-Horta had planned to help develop a new free press in East Timor. He still does, but it will be interesting to hear how he plans to balance his new public responsibility to help build a new government in East Timor with his deep-seated belief in the importance of a healthy, independent free press in his new nation. Mr. Jose Ramos-Horta, welcome.

**Mr. Ramos-Horta:** First, I would like to thank you so much for honoring me and inviting me to address you today, particularly following in the steps of two further, greater, more important individuals than me, my friends Kofi Annan and James Wolfensohn.

I thank you in particular, Marilyn, for about a year ago inviting me to come here. I am so glad to meet you in person, Mr. President Andersen, because whenever I was asked what I was going to do in Washington, your name Andersen, I associated only with hostage Anderson in Lebanon, and so I said, well, it was a journalist was held hostage in Lebanon. And then I thought you were dead, because usually you are, when you have a memorial lecture. I was taken aback – and I was glad that you were here alive.

**Mr. Andersen:** Me, too.

**Mr. Ramos-Horta:** I'm so glad you walked in alive, healthy, and very excited. And before I continue, today I made another diplomatic, almost diplomatic blunder, because I invited a very, very well known gentleman to come, thinking at the time when I invited him that he was not known to anyone.

But because he has done terrific work as a kid, I thought, well, come with me, I'll introduce you to the press. But when we checked more this morning, I heard that he's going to be at the Oprah Winfrey Show tomorrow.

This is my friend, Greg Smith. He's only 11 years old, but he's already in his second year in college, and he set up his own NGO when he was seven to promote peace and non-violence. He has been giving lectures from here to the National Press Club and President Clinton just wrote him a very nice letter.

He's going to visit me in East Timor because I have asked him to help me with the kids in Timor, with getting pencils, exercise books, and so on. Thank you, Greg.

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you.

**Mr. Ramos-Horta:** And I wish to introduce, also my colleague, Mr. Constancio Pinto, our de facto ambassador in Washington. He is not yet ambassador, but hopefully next year when we achieve formal independence, the newly elected foreign minister will agree with my choice that Constancio should be the first East Timor ambassador to Washington.

I will start my comments with something I read yesterday on the way here in Le Monde, the daily French paper, which really shocked me. It was a report coming out of Jordan, quoting some Jordanians or young Palestinians talking about the conflict in Israel. I never read anything with so much venom, so much hatred, in my whole life.

The words used by victims, no matter who they are, against Jews – they were referring to Jews, they're not referring only to Israel – for me was totally beyond understanding, because we too, are a torn country, East Timor. 200,000 people were slaughtered. I lost three brothers, a sister.

And yet, as I read that story in Le Monde, I remember that never once in 24 years of our struggle I heard from any of my colleagues any word of insult to the people of Indonesia, never once.

You would never hear a word disparaging about another nation, about another community, and that's why when President Gus Dur (Indonesian nickname for President Abdurrahman Wahid) of Indonesia invited us to go to Indonesia two months after the destruction in 1999, we went without hesitation.

It took the French and Algerians more than 20 years before they exchanged visits. After more than 10 years of Iran-Iraq war, there has been no normalization in relations between Iran and Iraq and Kuwait and Iraq.

We went while the city was still burning, with more than 100,000 of our own people still being held hostage. One of my own sisters, the oldest one, was abducted in a warship in September with her children.

But we went to Indonesia because never once in our lifetime we confused Indonesian people with the Suharto Regime, with the behavior of the Indonesian Army. So we invited Gus Dur to come to East Timor, and he came in February. He was warmly welcomed by all of us. He dared to speak in the square, in a new democratic East Timor.

We did have a demonstration, a small group who demonstrated against Gus Dur's visit. But they were demonstrating to demand the whereabouts of one of that group's particular heroes, who had been captured a year or two years earlier. That's all they wanted to know, and Xanana, my president, (Jose Alexandre Xanana Gusmao) organized a meeting between that group and Gus Dur's and that was possible because we never, never instigated or resorted to religious, ethnic arguments in order to justify the independence of East Timor. ...When religion is manipulated, when ethnicity, rivalries among communities are exploited, it brings war, it brings violence. ...

One of the leaders of this modern 20th century that I admire the most...is Willy Brandt. Why Willy Brandt? Simple reason: One day I had heard in the news that he had been to Poland and knelt down, apologized for World War II.

Well, a leader who has courage and humility, and to be humble, you must really have a lot of courage. A leader who acknowledges his country's collective responsibility, and apologizes, that is a great leader. That's why I always admire Willy Brandt.

But the topic is building a free media and democracy in East Timor.

Let me start by saying that when I launched, inaugurated, a journalists association, I said my policy is very basic: Let 1,000 newspapers blossom and bust. I don't care, set up whatever newspapers you want, and television.

But I told the journalists, let me tell you one thing. One thing I love about the American system is that if you tell lies, I'll sue you. I told the journalists, I'm saying it because your training has to do also with integrity, ethics, facts.

Because too often, if you look at the emerging media in Indonesia, in East Timor, in Eastern Central Europe, it does not do a great service to the true, independent democratic media. It is more like junk.

So one, I'm very pleased with the dynamic, the flourishing of the media in East Timor. The kids are terrific. The OTI, Office of Transition Initiatives, has been doing a terrific job in training them. I'm sending two people to Atlanta to CNN to learn CNN on line, paid for by Catholic Relief Services.

In the next few months, I hope I can be released from government duties after the transition to work with this younger generation to set up a national radio modeled on the BBC, a national television modeled on the BBC, but with one addition.

Besides the very independent nature of the BBC, I have proposed an addition to make it even more independent, foolproof to any government in power in the day. And that is to use the Le Monde democratic process in electing the editor-in-chief.

There are many independent agencies in Europe like Agence France Presse, the Portuguese television and others, but the head of the news is appointed by the elected government. In the case of East Timor, we will have that BBC (model) but also that the journalists would elect the editor-in-chief.

That would ensure that the government of the day does not interfere with their own appointments, at least judging from the experience in some European countries where there is national news agency, national radio, national television. They're very good, very independent, but the governments have a strong intervention. When they don't like the way the media's covering the government, well, they get the head of the media replaced.

As we build the democratic institutions for independence, which probably will take place at end of next year, as we build the court system, train the judges to have a truly independent legal system, as we begin the discussions towards a draft Constitution and election of Constitutional Assembly, there is no discussion, no debate about it, that a truly independent or democratic East Timor in the future will be dependent on us having a truly independent and democratic media.

I would dare to say that if in East Asia, in Indonesia, we had a dynamic independent media, maybe the economic and the financial crisis in East Asia would not have taken place.

If there had been more debate by the public, if there had been more questioning on the excessive borrowing, of the excessive lending, probably we would not have had this catastrophic economic financial crisis that ruined the lives of the poorest in the region.

So democracy, free media, is not just an abstract theoretical concept imposed or imported from the West, but it has to do with our daily lives. It's as simple as that. So there is no alternative.

A few months ago, a journalist asked me, was it worth the death of so many people, thousands of East Timorans, destruction of your continent to have an independent country?

Well, my answer was, one single life lost is one life too many. I personally do not accept, subscribe to any intellectual, political, ideological, religious argument to justify the killing of one single person. ...

But I would hope that five years from now when we look at our past, we will see a country that got rid of Malaria, TB, extreme poverty, that there is no corruption, there is transparency, tolerance by the Catholic majority toward the small Protestant and Muslim minorities, by a majority ethnic East Timorese toward the small Indonesian ethnic community.

Now we are left with an Indonesian ethnic community, and it is a tribute to the incredible tolerance of the people of East Timor that we haven't had a Kosovo-style ethnic cleansing in East Timor. Yes, there have been abuses, the random abuses, but absolutely nothing that one can say comparable with any other situation.

Former militia leaders, some have returned, foot soldier militia have returned. Not one single one of them have been lynched. I see many of them myself. I have visited the Indonesian Mosque in Dili.

One of the most beautiful moments of my time in Dili since I returned was that one evening two or three months ago, I was riding back home from an engagement. It was about 10, 11 p.m. I saw hundreds of people gathering, and I told my Brazilian security entourage who always escorted me, 'let's go there,' and we went.

What I did was I walked into a street fair, the first street fair in East Timor.

There was stalls, people doing different things, selling food, singing. There was even a snake charmer, and then I saw a special stall. I recognized some faces there, some Indonesians, Muslims who had their own stall.

I had visited them, had dinner with them in the Mosque a few months ago, when they were afraid to go out. But at 10 p.m., they were out, in their own stall, and I asked them how they went home. And they said, 'Oh, we just walked,' and they were not afraid.

If we can continue to promote, to preserve this extraordinary tolerance of the people of East Timor then I would say five years from now we did not betray the sacrifices of so many who died to have a country called East Timor.

Because having only a national anthem, a flag, there are many of them. There are many beautiful Constitutions, I don't mention countries or regions. The Constitutions, the ideals that they proclaim, what they describe are all beautiful. But I wonder what the founding fathers of some of those great countries, long dead, if they were to return to earth and see what has been done after they're gone, what they would think.

Unfortunately some didn't depart, they stay on, and they themselves betray the principles, the ideals they fought for. They stay too long in power, and power corrupts. And they betray the many years of dreams, of sacrifice.

I know many others who share this conviction, this belief. ... the international community itself, the UN, our friends in Washington and around the world, in Portugal, that extraordinary brave country that stood for the people of East Timor for 25 years.

Organizations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, our friends East Timor Action Network, ETAN, and many others in the church network, who gave so much of their lives and energy for the liberation of East Timor, they have earned the right to daily question, to daily scrutinize our policies so that East Timor doesn't descend into the same path of so many independent nations.

The independence is all we have in a flag, a national anthem, annual parades by the military. If in five years from now when you visit us and you see a country that is not terribly prosperous but is free like Liechtenstein, like Luxembourg, free like Long Island – I mention Long Island because it is about roughly the size of East Timor – then I will say we did not betray those who died.

I thank you.

**Mr. Ottaway:** I think we would all agree we have been in the presence of a great mind, great heart, great speaker, and a great representative of the principles of the Nobel Peace Prize. He has offered to answer a few questions.

**Q:** I'm Miguel Kamat, I'm a medical officer here in Washington with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, about to enter the foreign service, and a native of Goa, which is the Portuguese part of India. What is the official status of Portuguese in East Timor; and secondly, culturally speaking, what plans have the Cabinet made to have ties with other Portuguese speaking lands in the area?

**A:** Well, the last Congress of the Council of National Resistance in August adopted unanimously the policy of reintroducing Portuguese as the official language of East Timor. After 25 years, there are still 20 percent of the population that understand Portuguese. Bahasa Indonesia, obviously, is the largest language at the moment.

English is spoken by 0.1 percent. Some people argue that we should introduce English. I have a very, very good friend here in Washington, Senator Tom Harkin, one of the greatest human beings in this country. ...A few

months ago in Washington, he said, “Jose, you know I love you very much, but this idea of yours of introducing Portuguese instead of English does not sound to me to be terribly intelligent.” Then he said, “English would jump-start East Timor in the 21st century.”

What does it prove? I can show while Japan did not adopt English, and it’s in 21st century. France, Italy, you find very few people who speak English in Italy. I think it has nothing to do with the language or has little to do with the language. It has to do more with the policy.

But for us, Portuguese is identity. If it were not for the Portuguese language, where would be East Timor’s national identity? It was the Portuguese people that brought the policies, that made East Timor’s identity even stronger. But we also want to develop the national language, which has already hundreds of words from Portuguese, and Bahasa Indonesia also has hundreds of words, I think 2,000 words from Portuguese.

We hope to entertain these four languages, with Portuguese as official language. We develop that over a period of five years, then turn it into a second official language with Bahasa Malay, not Bahasa Indonesia, because – I apologize to my Indonesian friends here – to say Bahasa Indonesia is a bit like instead of saying English you say American, Canadian, New Zealander, Australian.

Well, there is one Malay, and that’s Bahasa Malay. It’s a bit like we would say, you know, instead of Portuguese, you say Brazilian language, Angolan language. No, it’s Portuguese. So we prefer to use Bahasa, the word Bahasa Malay, because that is the origin of the language.

So in 10, 20 years from now, Timor will be a great country, diverse, with diverse language and culture. Four languages: Portuguese, Tetun, English, and Bahasa. Which one will prevail, we don’t know. But we are giving this opportunity to the country.

Our relationship with the Portuguese-speaking community, it’s self-evident. We have the closest relationship with the five Portuguese former colonies in Africa, with Brazil and with Portugal. We are already a member of the Portuguese-speaking community.

But let me emphasize also that we are also developing, normalizing relations with Indonesia and Asian countries. We already began official talk with Asian countries to join us in Day One of independence, and at the same time, we defined three countries as strategic partners for East Timor in the future, and these are the U.S., Australia and New Zealand.

Australia and New Zealand are the two largest economies of the region. The U.S. is not right there, but it is everywhere, and it doesn’t require one to be an Einstein to understand the importance of the U.S. whatever it is, wherever you are.

So, and because of these special relationships we have developed in the last few years, particularly because of the U.S. Congress and our friends in the U.S., we have tremendous affinity with the United States.

The Australians and New Zealanders have been exceptional in their commitment to East Timor. So it’s not only because we need them, but because the support from the people of Australia and New Zealand is remarkable.

But we are not losing sight of the Asian countries. We have visited most of the Asian countries. We have met all the leaders already over there, and they all welcome us to join Asia. We have been to China, to Korea.

I don’t know how many more people nominated Kim Dae Jung, but this year, I was the one who nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize, and I’m very happy that he won that award. I just this morning got an e-mail from his office, inviting me to join him in Oslo December 10.

So we are also developing strong relations with South Korea, China, Japan, besides the other Asian countries.

**Q:** I'm Frank Sieverts. I'm with the International Committee of the Red Cross, but I was previously with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee where Senator Claiborne Pell was a great supporter of yours.

I just wanted to ask about the implications of what has happened and what you're describing for the rest of Indonesia; for example, the region of Aceh which is also seeking independence. I wonder if you could have any wisdom or comments on that situation, for the rest of Indonesia.

**A:** Comment and not necessarily wisdom. I want only to use this opportunity to say the following: We hear a lot of criticism today in the media by even friends in Indonesia of President Gus Dur, but when you realize the legacy of the Suharto regime, the vast archipelago of thousands of islands, 300 ethnic groups speaking 500 languages with one sect of the military bent on stopping the processes of democracy, I will say, he has achieved a lot.

So a lot of the criticism I see all over the place are so unfair to that great human being.

Indonesia can go two ways. The worst-case scenario is that Gus Dur does not prevail, does not have enough power, determination, to carry out the reforms and the dialogue with the people of Aceh and West Papua, and then the country could slide down further and further into anarchy, ungovernable.

The better scenario – not the best case scenario – is that this situation of instability is a passing situation, that we go along for many months, but manageable.

I feel totally uncomfortable in giving advice to my friends from West Papua and Aceh, who am I?

But I will say this: walk halfway, seize on the olive branch. The door is open. You are in a position of strength today. You can strike the best possible deal in an autonomy arrangement, genuine autonomy arrangement.

Don't think too much about five, 10 years from now. God will take care of that. Seize all opportunity now.

The problem with this very intelligent advice is that it can work IF. I know the West Papuans want peace, they want a settlement. The Acehnese the same. Gus Dur wants peace.

But there are too many voices now speaking out of Jakarta.

Gus Dur makes promises that point the way for an honorable solution to the problem. But then the vice-president and many powerful elements in armed forces say no to autonomy.

So where does this leave the West Papuans and Acehnese? I only hope that common sense, a sense of realism, wisdom prevail in Indonesia, so that they avoid what has happened in East Timor and keep the country holding together.

But if, in the worst-case scenario, Indonesia implodes, don't blame the Australians, don't blame the U.S.

They are the ones who have to blame themselves in Jakarta for lack of courage, for lack of vision to resolve their problems. None of the countries in the region, not Australia, not the U.S., want Indonesia to disintegrate. They're all scared of this scenario.

But if the country implodes, I would say so what? Would it be the start of World War III? Well, the mighty Soviet empire with nuclear weapons on its soil imploded, and it did not start World War III. And actually, it benefited NATO, benefited Europe. NATO expanded, EU expanded. So would the interests of the U.S. and Australia be threatened with an implosion, disintegration of Indonesia? I do not think so.

I'm not arguing, obviously, for the implosion of Indonesia. What I'm saying is that if the leaders in Indonesia fail to seize on the opportunity to really resolve problems in West Papua and Aceh, don't blame others. Don't blame Jose, don't blame Australia or the U.S., blame yourself.

**Mr. Ottaway:** Thank you, Jose. Thank you for this very vivid lesson in the price that you, your family, and your country have paid for self-determination, for independence, and for the free press that we hope will support all of your hopes and dreams in East Timor. We wish you luck as you go back home and start to build your new country. Thank you all for being here. Good afternoon.

### **About The Andersen Lecture**

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This lecture was the 14th in the Harold W. Andersen series on global media issues.

It was sponsored by the World Press Freedom Committee in association with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The lectures are intended to focus attention on international communication and press freedom issues.

A listing of the previous lecturers, including noted journalists, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of UNESCO, is set out on the inside back cover of this booklet.

The lectures honor Harold W. Andersen, chairman of the World Press Freedom Committee from 1979 to 1996. Mr. Andersen was chairman of the Omaha World-Herald Company, president of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, and president of the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers in Paris.

Mr. Ottaway, present chairman of the World Press Freedom Committee, is senior vice president of Dow Jones & Company and chairman of Ottaway Newspapers.

The World Press Freedom Committee is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, near Washington, D.C., and unites under its banner 44 journalistic organizations on six continents to provide a strong global voice in support of the freedom of print and broadcast news media in all countries.

Established in 1950, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation has long been a major supporter of organizations devoted to a free press, as well as of initiatives in other fields. Based in Miami, it is one of the nation's largest private foundations.