

UNITED NATIONS



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UNMISSET

United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor

## UNMISSET PRESS RELEASE

### *UNMISSET launches capacity-building programme for national staff*

(Dili, 2 December) – In a pioneering initiative among UN peacekeeping missions, UNMISSET's 900 national staff are being offered training options as a way of building national capacity and placing them in a more competitive position to apply for jobs once UNMISSET closes down.

Over 100 national staff attended the launch at UNMISSET's Obrigado compound in Dili where the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor-Leste, Ambassador Kamallesh Sharma, told them that Timor-Leste has a very big deficit to make up. " [Timor-Leste] started off without a professional class, without a middle class, without a trading, entrepreneurial class. The people I see before me will represent this class in the future". He urged them to take full advantage of the training on offer because such a comprehensive opportunity may not arise again.

Town hall meetings were organised in Dili and in the districts during which national staff were briefed on the initiative and asked to list their training needs. 722 people attended the meetings and over 650 returned completed questionnaires. These were then used as a basis for the design of some 15 courses. They include information technology, computer skills, office administration, Portuguese and English language courses, small business development and heavy machinery operation. There will also be presentations on topics such as the setting up of cooperatives and micro-finance.

International staff are contributing their expertise to train their national colleagues, and Timorese institutions, including PNTL, are contributing physical resources such as computer rooms to the programme.

The training programme, open to all UNMISSET national staff, is being conducted in Dili and in the districts and will continue until UNMISSET's drawdown in May 2004.

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(photos available)

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For further information contact:

Marcia Poole

Spokesperson/UNMISET

Mobile: + 670 723 0793

Telephone: + 61 8 8946 3900 Ext. 6059