

## HUMAN RIGHTS

- **UNTAET's Human Rights Unit** is an office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. It is based in Dili with six international and 10 East Timorese District Human Rights Officers.
- The **work of the Human Rights Unit (HRU)** includes institution building; monitoring the human rights situation; the safe return of refugees; assisting the Serious Crimes Unit; women's human rights; legislative reform; Constitution; the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation; training; future institutional protections for human rights; support to civil society; and human rights education and promotion.
- The HRU assists in the development of East Timor's national institutions by **assessing the human rights situation** and determining how national institutions such as the police and the courts are functioning to protect and promote human rights. The HRU advises UNTAET and the East Timor Public Administration (ETPA) on measures to prevent human rights violations.
- On a daily basis, the HRU receives complaints and assists in resolving human rights concerns by liaising with UNTAET, ETPA, UN Civilian Police, PKF and other agencies. Cases monitored by the HRU include the administration of justice; the use of traditional mechanisms to resolve disputes; returnees; human rights violations against women; minorities; and political party activity.
- The HRU facilitates **District Returnee Committees** which meet regularly to ensure that, where possible, preparations are undertaken for the return of refugees.
- **District Human Rights Officers** assist the Serious Crimes Investigation Unit by identifying human rights violations committed during 1999; sources of information or witnesses; and pass that information on to the Serious Crimes investigators and the Serious Crimes Prosecutor's Office. The HRU also monitors trials conducted by the Serious Crimes Panel to ensure that defendants' rights to a fair trial are guaranteed.
- The HRU monitors the implementation of women's human rights, in particular **women's access to justice**. Women victims of violence have often been encouraged or pressured by family members or their communities to use traditional dispute resolution mechanisms. As a result, perpetrators of violence against women have often received little or no sanction.

