FACT SHEET 18
By UNTAET Press Office

PEACEKEEPING FORCE

UNTAET’s Peacekeeping Force (PKF) maintains security in East Timor and renders humanitarian assistance to the people of East Timor. PKF's mission, in conjunction with other UNTAET agencies and in accordance with UN Resolutions, is to maintain a stable secure environment in order to facilitate an effective transition to an independent East Timor.

Mandate
The mission of the Peacekeeping Force and the United Nations Military Observer Group (UNMOG) is to help maintain a secure environment in East Timor in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1272 and 1338; to assist UNTAET in the conduct of safe and democratic elections; and to assist the East Timor Transitional Administration, within its capabilities, in the development of sustainable East Timorese organizations and infrastructure.

Force Commander
Lieutenant General Winai Phattiyakul (Thailand)

Troop Contributing Nations and Force Structure
Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, Ireland, Malaysia, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia and Thailand.

The UNTAET Peacekeeping Force is currently in the process of downsizing its strength to 5,000 soldiers by East Timor's independence (20 May 2002). The force now consists of around 6,200 personnel from 20 nations (8,000 troops from 22 nations in October 2001 whereas Kenya and Jordan left the mission in Dec 2001 and Jan 2002 respectively). There will be a Japanese engineering battalion of about 700 soldiers joining the mission in March 2002 replacing the departing Bangladesh and Pakistan engineer battalions.

Major units are based around national elements
- **Battalion Level:** Republic of Korea, Thailand, Portugal, Australia, New Zealand
- **Battalion Sub-units:** Fiji, Nepal, Ireland, Singapore
- **Other Support Units**
  - Force Communications – Pakistan
  - Force Engineers – Bangladesh and Pakistan
  - Force Logistics – Australia
  - Force HQ Support Unit – Philippines
  - Movement Control – Australia
Junction Points

Junction Points are manned on both sides of East Timor’s border by the TNI (Indonesian Army) and the Peacekeeping Force. They are the “gate-way” for refugees to return to East Timor. There are seven Junction Points on the Western border and five on the border of the Oecussi enclave.

Peacekeeping Force Disposition

Sector East

Thai Battalion (THAIBATT) Headquarters is in Baucau. Its responsibilities are Baucau, Viqueque and Lautem District.

Thai troops were among the first deployed to East Timor with INTERFET (International Force in East Timor) in October 1999 and transitioned into the UNTAET Peacekeeping Force in February 2000. As a consequence they have learnt how to operate effectively together during the past year.
Sector Central

Sector Central Headquarters is in Dili. The Portuguese Battalion (PORBATT) and a Brazilian Military Police Unit are the major elements under Sector Central command.

The PORBATT Headquarters is in Becora, Dili. The areas of responsibility of the Portuguese battalion are Dili, Liquica, Aileu, Ainaro, Manufahi, Ermera (previously KENCET's) and Manatuto (previously PHILBATT's) district.

The troops from Sector Central focus their efforts on retaining the confidence of the population through the provision and maintenance of a secure environment and fostering self-reliance.

Sector West

Sector West Headquarters is in Suai. The Australian Battalion (AUSBATT) and New Zealand Battalion (NZBATT) are the major units serving under Sector West command.

Within the New Zealand Battalion are troops from Fiji (Company), Ireland (Platoon) and Nepal (Company) and Singapore (Platoon). They operate as nationally structured sub-units.

The Australian Battalion Headquarters is based in Moleana. The Australian contribution to peacekeeping operation in East Timor has been continued since INTERFET period.

Oecussi

The Republic of Korean Battalion (ROKBATT) is responsible for maintaining security in the Oecussi enclave after taking over from the Jordanian peacekeepers on 13 Jan 02. The battalion Headquarters is located at Pante Macassar/Oecussi. Twenty Malaysian military interpreters assist ROKBATT in the enclave in order to assist and facilitate the coordination between PKF and Indonesian forces (TNI) along the border.

Operations

The PKF conducts active security operations throughout East Timor. Operations vary from vehicle patrols and checkpoints through to foot and mounted vehicle patrols throughout the region and along the tactical coordination line between East and West Timor. The PKF has plans in place to deal with any military contingency and will respond quickly and robustly to any threat to security, now and throughout the independence period.
The PKF will monitor any major breach of security and provide assistance to other UN agencies when appropriate. Civil disturbance is a law and order issue and is the responsibility of the United Nations Civilian Police (CIVPOL) and PKF will support CIVPOL when requested.

Civil Military Affairs

Despite normal PKF operations, the PKF renders humanitarian assistance to the people of East Timor through a comprehensive Civil Military Affairs (CMA) structure. The PKF CMA involves various community activities with East Timorese and other UN Agencies like UNHCR, IOM and District Administrations. PKF CMA activities include:

- Assisting movement of returnees from West Timor to East Timor.
- Distribution of educational materials to schoolchildren.
- Provision of First Aid and Language instruction.
- Instruction on improved agricultural and handicraft techniques including the construction of a demonstration village by the Thai Battalion.
- Provision of medical assistance to East Timorese in regular clinics conducted by PKF units.
- Improvement and maintenance in infrastructure i.e. bridges, roads and river embankment by PKF engineers.
- Rebuilding assistance for schools and other public facilities i.e. water wells and power stations.
- Tae Kwon Do instruction for East Timorese youth and East Timor Defense Force personnel by ROKBATT.

The PKF seeks to interact positively with the East Timorese people at all times. By maintaining this ‘partnership with the people’ the PKF is better positioned to maintain a safe and secure environment.

Significant Events

23 February 2000 – The PKF element under command of Lieutenant General Jaime Santos (Philippines) assumed control of security from the INTERFET multinational peacekeeping forces who had been in East Timor since September 1999.

March 2000 – The Portuguese battalion based in Sector Central conducted Operation Cobra, a very successful sweep and find operation seeking out militia in Ainaro district. Operation Cobra resulted in numerous surrenders and arrests.

21 July 2000 – Lieutenant General Santos handed over command of PKF to Lieutenant General Boonsrang Niumpradit (Thailand).

24 July 2000 – Private Leonard Manning, from New Zealand, was killed in a clash with an armed militia group at Nanu near the border with West Timor. He was the first PKF member to be killed in action.
3 August 2000 – Corporal Mohammad Abdul Aziz, from Bangladesh, was killed by a grenade explosion during EOD search and clearing operation at the Dili Beach.

10 August 2000 – Private Devi Ram Jaisi from Nepal was killed in a militia attack at Hobolo, east of Suai. Two other peacekeepers were wounded.

24 October 2000 – PKF soldiers from New Zealand (NZBATT) were involved in a clash with a militia group, killing one militia member, during a patrol near the Mota Raiketan River 7 kms northeast of Suai.

1 December 2000 – A PKF soldier from Australia was wounded in the leg following a suspected militia shooting incident near Balibo.

23 February 2001 – PKF soldiers from the Australian Battalion were involved in a clash with two militia members six kilometres east of Balibo near the border with West Timor. There were no casualties.

1 April 2001 – Two suspected militiamen were fired upon by a UN peacekeeper as they approached his sentry post at Junction Point, 8 kms east of Balibo. There were no casualties.

29 May 2001 – A militia member attacked Timorese civilians with hand grenades while they were at a market 7 kms south east of Balibo in the vicinity of the tactical control line between East and West Timor. As the result, 5 local civilians were killed and many injured.

12 June 2001 – A swift and successful security operation conducted by Australian PKF troops resulted in the voluntary surrender of 34 suspected militia members in and around the village of Lontama, seven kilometres south of Maliana.

14 June 2001 – PKF soldiers from the Australian Battalion (AUSBATT) encountered a small armed group of suspected militia well inside East Timor, eleven kilometres south of the village of Batugade. The suspected militia fired upon the PKF patrol with rifles. When the PKF patrol returned fire the suspected militia group withdrew. No one was injured.

28 July 2001 – PKF troops from the New Zealand Battalion on patrol along the border 4 kms southwest of Tilomar in Covalima district took cover after a shot was fired at them by an armed man dressed in civilian clothes. The PKF soldiers returned fire and killed the man, who turned out to be a TNI soldier. The incident is under investigation.

30 August 2001 – PKF conducted a successful operation to provide security for the East Timor Constituent Assembly election. The election was calm and peaceful with no violent incidents of any kind.

31 August 2001 – PKF Force Commander Lieutenant General Boonsrang Niumpradit handed over the PKF command to Lieutenant General Winai Phattiyakul, also from Thailand.
14 September 2001 – A large group of East Timor refugees returned from West Timor as a result of the peaceful security situation and successful election process.

26 November 2001 – Kenyan peacekeepers become first contingent to leave East Timor. The 264-strong contingent was based in the western district of Ermera. The Dili-based Portuguese battalion took over their duties.

1-15 December 2001 – The 520-troop Philippine battalion hands over operations to the Portuguese battalion headquartered in Dili, and returns to the Philippines, without replacement.

11 January 2002 – Official hand over of operations from the Jordanian Battalion in the Oecussi enclave hand over operations to the Battalion from the Republic of Korea (ROKBATT), which moved from Lospalos to make way for the deployment of the first East Timor Defence Force battalion.

15 January 2002 – The first battalion of East Timor Defence Force (FDTL) inaugurates its deployment to Lospalos.

The United Nations Military Observer Group – UNMOG

UNMOG is a part of PKF structure. The UNMOG Headquarters is located in Dili, near the PKF Headquarters.

Chief Military Observer - Major General Sergio Rosario (Brazil.)

There are more than 150 UN Military Observers (UNMOs) from 21 countries serving in East Timor. Liaison officers are also located in Jakarta and Denpasar. UNMOG is a neutral, unarmed force, which is the liaison interface between East Timor and West Timor for management of the joint border. UNMOG's role is to observe, monitor and report activity affecting security operations; liaise with different components of UNTAET, local population and TNI; monitor border control and repatriations; report on popular sentiment; patrol their Area of Operations; and report information of military significance to the PKF.