

By UNMISSET Spokesperson's Office

Dili, 24 July 2002

SRSR MEETS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON FIRST JAKARTA VISIT

SRSR Kamallesh Sharma today began his first overseas visit to Jakarta, Indonesia, with meetings with government and human rights officials.

Indonesia's Director General for Multilateral Affairs Makmur Widodo hosted the SRSR for a lunch at which the two discussed common issues relating to East Timor and Indonesia in what was later described as an extremely positive and cordial atmosphere.

Thereafter the SRSR met with the Director and the Secretary General of KPP HAM, Indonesia's human rights commission, to discuss issues including the importance of rule of law in any society, especially developing societies, and various solutions to problems faced by nascent judicial systems.

The KPP HAM officials made a special request for the SRSR to facilitate the establishment of cooperative links with appropriate institutions in East Timor both at the governmental and non-governmental levels.

The SRSR is tonight scheduled to attend a dinner hosted by Minister of Foreign Affairs Hassan Wirajuda and Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Bambang Yudhoyono along with several other senior members of the Indonesian government.

UNHCR ANNOUNCES UPSURGE IN REFUGEE RETURNS

UNHCR officials in Dili today announced that more than 4,000 refugees have returned to East Timor so far this month, bringing the total since late 1999 to close to 217,000.

Officials cite the recent increase to ongoing reconciliation efforts between the government and leaders of refugee groups, the determination of the Indonesian government to prioritize voluntary repatriation as a solution to the West Timor refugee problem, and the Indonesian government's discontinuance of material assistance to the refugees.

The nearly 1,000 refugees – including former TNI soldiers and Indonesian civil servants – that crossed into East Timor on Monday were bid farewell at the border town of Atambua by TNI UDAYANA Commander Brigadier General Willem da Costa.

FALINTIL-ETDF AND PKF HOLD FIRST COORDINATION MEETING

Staff officers from UNMISSET's peacekeeping force and East Timor's newly formed FALINTIL-FDTL defence force held their first weekly coordination meeting in Dili today.



MEDIA BRIEFING NOTE

By UNMISSET Spokesperson's Office

The purpose of the meeting is to further cooperation between the PKF and the East Timor Defence Force and avoid any potential misunderstandings as uniformed members of FALINTIL-FDTL move throughout the country in order to attract recruits as part of the force's ongoing recruitment campaign.

Meanwhile, New Zealand's new Consul in East Timor, Susannah Gordon, and New Zealand's Special Advisor on East Timor, Andrew Neads, paid a visit on PKF Commander Lieutenant General Winai Phattiyakul yesterday afternoon.

Issues discussed included UNMISSET's ongoing military downsizing that includes the scheduled departure of New Zealand peacekeeping troops in November.

