

# **CHEGA! 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY REGIONAL ROADSHOW**

Pat Walsh, December 2015

## **Introduction**

To mark the tenth anniversary of the CAVR Chega! report and to disseminate its new English edition, a series of seminars, conferences and launches have been held in the Asia-Pacific region during the latter part of 2015. Some were sponsored by Timor-Leste through the Post-CAVR Technical Secretariat (PCAVR), others were organised independently.

The regional roadshow follows an Indonesian roadshow conducted in 2014-15 by Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR) with support from Norway and the UK.

The events in question have been held in Canada, Australia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines. At the same time, with funding from the Timor-Leste government, copies of the English edition of Chega! have been shipped from Dili to recipients in a number of countries.

Both activities will continue in 2016. Events are scheduled for Oslo and Brussels early in the new year and continuing dissemination of the English edition will be supplemented by the distribution of a Portuguese version to members of the CPLP.

## **General comments**

This is the first time there has been an organised, systematic program of dissemination and socialization of Chega! outside Timor-Leste and Indonesia. The recent publication of the report in Indonesian, English and Portuguese by Gramedia (KPG) in Jakarta has made this possible.

The report's release has been warmly welcomed across the world. Peace researchers and practitioners in Ireland, Europe, Asia, North America and Africa have expressed keen interest in the report and the hope that Timor-Leste's experience will assist their work on situations as diverse as Colombia, Sri Lanka, Palestine and the Southern Philippines.

Archbishop Tutu's wish that Chega! should take its rightful place in the canon of international human rights and conflict resolution literature is finally being realised.

## **Roadshow highlights**

### **CANADA**

A/Prof David Webster of Bishop's University convened a one-day seminar on Timor-Leste in Ottawa on 15 October 2015. The seminar was attended by members of Canada's academic, church and NGO community and was followed by presentations at the Canadian Southeast Asian Studies Congress and delivery of a Chega! set to Canada's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a donor to CAVR.

The seminar proceedings will be published as a book in 2016 (for information contact David Webster [dwebster@ubishops.ca](mailto:dwebster@ubishops.ca)). Sets of Chega! have been provided to some of Canada's top universities and institutions including the Canadian Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg. Plain Guides were also distributed during the seminar.

## AUSTRALIA

The Australian Catholic University (ACU), represented by theologian Dr Joel Hodge, and PCAVR hosted a launch of Chega! in Melbourne on 7 October 2015 attended by representatives of some 30 organisations.

Launching the report, Professor Michael Leach, chair of the Timor-Leste Studies Association and Professor at Swinburne University, praised Chega's contribution to 'narrowing the range of permissible lies' (Michael Ignatieff) and concluded: '*Alongside the Right to justice, the Right to reparations, **the Right to know** is critical to dealing with the history of conflict, which together form "Principles against impunity", approved in 1997 by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. For its critical role in preserving this right, I commend the English translation of the CAVR report.*

Receiving the report from Chiquito Guterres on behalf of PCAVR, the ACU Vice-Chancellor, Dr John Ballard, undertook to publicise and promote its use by the university.

The ACU launch followed the distribution of Chega! to participants at a conference of the Australia-Timor Leste Friendship City network and to academics and others from Australia and elsewhere who attended conferences held by the Timor-Leste Studies Association and UNTL/VU in Dili in July 2015. Sets of the full Chega! have been placed in the National Library in Canberra and Australian universities engaged in Timor-Leste studies and related topics.

## INDONESIA

Chega! was featured in a number of presentations and panels at the **Ubud Writers and Readers Festival (UWRF)** in late October in Bali. These included the launch of AJAR's *Enduring Impunity: Women Surviving Atrocities in the Absence of Justice*, the personal accounts of 140 women victims in Indonesia (1965, Aceh and Papua), Timor-Leste and Myanmar; the launch of *Stormy With a Chance of Fried Rice* by Pat Walsh, which includes an account of editing Chega! in Jakarta; and a panel discussion on contemporary Timor-Leste.

AJAR, with the support of the UK Embassy, convened a **workshop on teaching Chega! at the Omar Munir Museum in Malang**, 4-5 November 2015. Academics and NGOs from Timor-Leste and Indonesia attended and produced a first draft of a Chega! based course for use in relevant tertiary courses and informal education. It is hoped that, when completed, the course will serve as a model for other countries. The course will be supplemented by an on-line collection of East Timor Key Documents being prepared by the Melbourne-based CHART organisation, with support from the Herb Feith Foundation. A Chega! MOOC is also under consideration.

## TIMOR-LESTE

The Presidency of Timor-Leste and PCAVR hosted a one day seminar on 13 November 2015 to mark the tenth anniversary of the hand-over of Chega!

Introducing proceedings, **Bishop Gunnar Stalsett** of Norway said Chega! was a national monument and legacy of international importance. A light should not be hidden, he said, but put on a lamp-stand for all to see and be guided by.

In his remarks, **Jose Ramos-Horta** said *Chega!* was a contribution to the world on truth, reconciliation and justice and should be converted into a practical, generally accessible educational resource that serves to promote non-violence and other values fundamental to society. He said a decision on a CAVR follow-up institution was a straightforward matter for the Council of Ministers and the Parliament and did not require a working group. He contrasted the positive border relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia with those of other former enemies.

**Nela Pereira** of ACBIT presented a paper entitled *Chega!+10: Where are Women Victims Now?* She said the most vulnerable feel they are no longer listened to and have not experienced truth or justice. She called for the relevant CAVR recommendations to be implemented and for the establishment of a victims trust fund. **Carmen da Cruz**, for the Ministry of Social Solidarity, said the government was committed to meeting the needs of all without discrimination.

**Nuno Rodrigues** and **Lia Kent** presented the findings of an ANU study on the impact of *Chega!* in Timor-Leste entitled *Chega! Ten Years On: An Uncertain Legacy* (see below). The study made a number of key findings and recommendations. It found strong support in Timor-Leste for the report as a record and welcomed moves by the Ministry of Education to utilize the report. It also found, inter alia, that parliamentarians and journalists had a poor knowledge of the report, that there is little awareness of the full spectrum of CAVR's recommendations and that one-off socialization was of limited value.

**Galuh Wandita** and **Pat Walsh** presented the findings of an AJAR study on the impact of *Chega!* and *Per Memoriam Ad Spem* in Indonesia. The study, entitled *Inconvenient Truths* (see below) found that few Indonesians outside limited civil society and expert circles knew of either report but that the post-Soeharto generation was open and receptive to their contents. Galuh Wandita also reported on AJAR's work to reunite stolen Timorese children.

**Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araujo** closed the seminar after listening to a report on its proceedings from Jacinto Alves, a former CAVR and CTF Commissioner. The Prime Minister announced he would establish a working group in 2016 to consult and advise the Government on the status of the CAVR recommendations, particularly the proposal of a follow-up institution.

## **TAIWAN**

I presented twice on CAVR/*Chega!* at an international human rights conference in Taiwan 16-18 November 2015. Convened by the University of Soochow and the Preparatory Office of the National Human Rights Museum, the conference was an opportunity to introduce *Chega!* for the first time to academics and other representatives from Taiwan, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, India, Japan and Korea. Prof Mab Huang was presented with a *Chega!* set for Soochow University's Center for the Study of Human Rights. Plain Guides were also distributed.

The conference included a tour of sites in Taipei where human rights violations had been committed by the Chiang Kai-Shek regime (the White Terror), including a Human Rights Museum located in a former political prison (**The Jingmei Human Rights Cultural Park**). The Museum's director, Yi-Chun Wang, was most interested to learn how Timor-Leste had converted the ex-Comarca Balide into CAVR and its prospects of becoming a permanent institute of memory and human rights, and is keen to visit and establish a partnership. Yi-Chun Wang

suggested that the new institute might join the UK-based Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM).

## THAILAND

PCAVR and Forum Asia, led by Evelyn Balais-Serrano, jointly hosted a launch of *Chega!* at the **Foreign Correspondents Club in Bangkok** on 8 December 2015. Sets of *Chega!* were presented by HE Francisco Fernandes (Timor-Leste Embassy) and Aventino Ximenes (PCAVR) to representatives of Forum Asia and Chulalongkorn, Mahidol and Thammasat Universities and Plain Guides were distributed to the eleven organizations present. Forum Asia will present a fifth set to the ASEAN unit in the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A panel reflected on the significance of *Chega!* to Indonesia, Southern Thailand and Myanmar. A notable feature of this event was the presence of several networks able to publicise the report widely in Asia including SEAPA (South East Asia Press Association, now chaired by the Indonesian AJI journalist Eko Maryadi/Item) and Forum Asia. PCAVR also met with Dr Surichai Wan'Gae, director of the Chulalongkorn University Rotary Peace Center, and staff. Dr Surichai believes that *Chega!* transcends politics and time. What it recounts, he says, should be seen as a human event that is part of humanity's history with universal lessons for all.

## PHILIPPINES

International Initiatives for Dialogue (IID) and PCAVR jointly hosted a launch of *Chega!* at the University of the Philippines College of Law in Quezon City on 14 December 2015. Timor-Leste's Ambassador, Juvencio de Jesus Martins, and Aventino Ximenes (PCAVR) presented *Chega!* to Gus Micalat of IID and to representatives of the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University and Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD). IID will separately present sets to the Philippines Bishops Conference and the Philippines Human Rights Commission. Plain Guides were also distributed. Tributes were paid to members of APCET who were honoured with the Order of Timor-Leste in 2015.

### Next steps

The ASEAN People's Forum will meet in Dili in November 2016. The event will be an important opportunity for Timorese organisations to build on the groundwork and engagement with regional NGOs on *Chega!* developed during the regional roadshow.

### Other reports and reading

- Websites: [www.chegareport.net](http://www.chegareport.net) [www.cavr-timorleste.org](http://www.cavr-timorleste.org)
- *Inconvenient Truths: the Fate of the Chega! and Per Memoriam Ad Spem reports on Timor-Leste* by Budi Hernawan and Pat Walsh. (AJAR, 2015). Available: [www.asia-ajar.org](http://www.asia-ajar.org)
- *Chega! Ten Years On: An Uncertain Legacy*, by Nuno Rodrigues and Lia Kent [lia.kent@anu.edu.au](mailto:lia.kent@anu.edu.au)
- *Enduring Impunity: Women Surviving Atrocities in the Absence of Justice*. AJAR (2015) [ajar@asia-ajar.org](mailto:ajar@asia-ajar.org)
- *Stormy With a Chance of Fried Rice* by Pat Walsh (KPG 2015). See chapter: *Two Sharp Eyes*. For availability see [www.patwalsh.net](http://www.patwalsh.net) (under publications)

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