

ANNUAL REPORT

Prepared for the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

28 February 2019

Background

The Australia-East Timor Association (AETA) was established in 1975, following occupation by Indonesia, as an information, solidarity and networking organisation to support the struggle for independence of East Timor. Meetings and rallies were organised, and a bookshop established for the distribution and sale of information material on Timor. East Timor was occupied for 24 years of occupation, becoming independent in 2002 after the UN-supervised referendum in 1999. Independence for Timor Leste was achieved – the main goal of AETA. Questions for AETA then arose – what now should be the focus and goals of AETA? Should AETA focus on humanitarian, social and economic development? AETA conducted a member survey and developed a Strategic Plan to address these issues in 2018.

AETA continues as an information, networking and support organisation in solidarity with the people of Timor-Leste, the East Timorese and wider community in Australia, working on archives, history and commemoration, with the bookshop and Annual Dinner. Several special interest groups have emerged – in Village Technology and Innovation, Education, Health and Communications.

The AETA Strategic Plan focuses on the development of information sharing and networking, an online bookshop, seminars, support of knowledge networks and special interest groups, archives, history and commemoration, the Annual Dinner, creation of a website to facilitate information sharing, networking and membership regeneration. AETA works mainly in Victoria, and there is increasing interest in supporting related activities in other states. AETA is an incorporated association, with the following objectives and mission:

- (a) AETA works in solidarity with the people of Timor-Leste and East Timorese community in Australia
- (b) The Association provides advocacy and information about Timor-Leste to members and public.
- (c) The Association supports specific projects in Timor-Leste and Australia.

(From AETA Constitution – approved 14 August 2014)

AETA Activities

A. Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Governance

The AETA AGM was conducted on June 28, 2018 with approximately 24 people present. Minutes of this meeting are attached in annex 1.

At the June AGM it was agreed that:

- This AGM meeting appoint 6 general members.
- AETA would write to the Attorney General expressing AETA's concerns regarding Witness K.

Action: Committee Meetings

AETA committee has met regularly (monthly) throughout this year, and AETA thanks Victoria University for providing a venue for these meetings. Thanks also to Helen Hill for providing office space for AETA.

The committee comprises as follows:

Role	Name
Chairperson	Jean McLean
Vice Chairperson	Tony Marjoram
Secretary	Brian Fairman
Treasurer	Roger King
General committee members	Carla Chung John Wallace Glenda Lasslett Ann Wigglesworth
ETSA representative	Gizela de Carvalho
Immediate past Chairperson	Helen Hill

Brian Fairman, Secretary AETA, is registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria and is responsible for supplying AETA's annual report.

Action: Witness K Advocacy

- AETA sent a letter to Attorney General, Christian Porter, demanding the Attorney General withdraw the charges against Witness K and his lawyer Bernard Collaery.
- AETA conducted a public demonstration on July 25 2018, which was attended by approximately 100 people, this AETA demonstration was extremely successful in that it highlighted support and public awareness for Witness K and his lawyer Bernard Collaery.

Award to Jean McLean

AETA congratulates Chairperson Dr Jean McLean on becoming a Member of the Order of Australia (AM), in recognition of her significant service to international relations, and to the Parliament of Victoria.

B. Advocacy

This last year our focus has been on justice for Witness K and his lawyer Bernard Collaery. AETA has advocated to Attorney General, Christian Porter, demanding the Attorney General withdraw the charges against Witness K and Bernard Collaery, held a demonstration in support of Witness K and Mr Collaery, invited AETA

members to support various relevant petitions and letter-writing campaigns, invited Mr Collaery to speak at the 2019 Annual Dinner, and shared articles and updates on the campaign to members through the AETA Facebook page.

C. Communication/Networking

AETA has worked to extend its information sharing/ networking role through a more active Facebook page and specific mailouts. This has resulted in more regular communication with members.

Members are regularly notified of Timor-Leste related events such as film and book launches, academic and general seminars, conferences, cultural events through the AETA Facebook page and membership emails. AETA has sent 8 emails to members using 'mailchimp' to communicate electronically to members. AETA has 319 people in its mailing list. Approximately 150 people actively open and read these mailouts.

AETA informs members about relevant non-AETA events, and encourages members to link with appropriate organisations and projects working in Timor-Leste. This includes solidarity groups such as the Victorian Timor-Leste Friendship Cities and the Timor-Leste Friendship Network.

An AETA sub-committee is working on the development of a simple, low cost, low maintenance website to present an active, and relatively up to date profile, for AETA for the information of members and the general public.

D. Committees

AETA has thematic interest groups to bring people together from different organisation with expertise or interest in a theme. Members and friends are invited to contact members of the AETA committee if you are interested in joining or hearing more about our three key committees:

- *Village Technology (including Permaculture)*
- *Education*
- *Health*

E. Bookshop

Bookstalls were held at AETA events such as the AETA AGM and two book launches. AETA is currently reviewing how to best disseminate publications about Timor-Leste. The first step in this process was to conduct a stocktake of the current books. The stocktake was undertaken on Wednesday 13th February 2019, with the following noted that we have approximately 154 titles see attached AETA Book List, and AETA values this stock at \$1,795 see attached AETA Financial Report.

AETA has conducted two book launches:

- AETA-VU conducted a book launch and Lecture by Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, on July 25th at Victoria University. Dr Ramos-Horta's book is titled *Words of Hope in a Troubled Time*.
- Prof. Michael Leach launched Prof. Clinton Fernandes' new book; *'Island off the Coast of Asia: Instruments of Statecraft in Australian Foreign Policy'* at the annual dinner.

F. Seminars

A joint AETA-VU-TLSA seminar was held on 22 January 2018 with the theme of 'Politics at a Crossroad' with Michael Leach, who shared an in depth understanding about the politics which led to the impasse in Timor-Leste resulting in another election being called just nine months after the previous election in mid-2017. More

seminars are planned for early 2019.

G. Archive project

AETA's documents and realia are a significant resource on the struggle for Timorese independence. Archiving these resources is being done in collaboration with Clearing House for Archival Records on Timor (CHART) led by John Waddingham with assistance from volunteers. The project recognises AETA's historic role in Australians support for Timorese self-determination.

H. AETA Dinner on the Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

The Annual Dinner was held on November 28 at William Angliss Restaurant. The dinner was a huge success with 150 present, the largest number gathering in recent years. The four speakers were:

- Bernard Collaery who spoke on the controversial events around the prosecution of Witness K, and its implications.
- Michael Leach who launched Clinton Fernandes' book, *Island off the Coast of Asia: Instruments of Statecraft in Australian Foreign Policy*.
- Clinton Fernandes who spoke on espionage against Timor-Leste and Australia's quest for a "rules-based international order" drawing on his new book.
- Elsa Pinto who spoke on her experience of being a Timorese student in Melbourne.

I. Support for Timorese Students

AETA invites a member of ETSA to join the AETA committee and welcomes the students and Timorese community to be active members of AETA.

AETA held a welcome for Timorese students studying at VU and other universities in February 2018. AETA also supported the National Youth Day Celebrations held on November 10 at St Michaels in Brunswick.

Financial Report

Financial year

The financial year of the Association is each period of 12 months ending on 30 September. This financial report covers 1 Oct 2017 to 30 Sept 2018 and is attached to this Annual Report and as noted in this report:

John Wallace was the AETA Treasurer up until June 28, 2018.

Roger King became the AETA Treasurer from June 28, 2018.