Preventing deadly conflict in divided societies in Asia: the role of local NGOs
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Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia
The Role of Local NGOs

Academisch Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus
prof. mr. P.F. van der Heijden

ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties ingestelde
commissie, in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Aula der Universiteit op
woensdag 11 mei 2005, te 14.00 uur door

Elisabeth Everdina Scheper
geboren te Amsterdam
In memory of two civil society leaders, friends and champions of peace:

Neelan Tiruchelvam.

Sri Lankan human rights lawyer and Member of Parliament for the TULF, who worked tirelessly for a just resolution of the ethnic conflict and a peaceful co-existence based on mutual respect and appreciation of cultural diversity. He died in a suicide bomb attack while driving to his Colombo office on 29 July 1999; and

Munir,

Indonesian human rights lawyer and member of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in East Timor, who tenaciously investigated the role of the State, military and rebel groups in human rights violations and disappearances. He died from arsenic poisoning on a flight to the Netherlands to further his academic studies on 7 September 2004.

"We can not glorify death, whether in the battlefield or otherwise. We, on the other hand, must celebrate life and are fiercely committed to protecting and securing the sanctity of life, which is the most fundamental value without which all other rights and freedoms become meaningless."

From the last speech in parliament of Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam on 15 June 1999

"Human rights in the sense of human solidarity has created a new universal and equal language going beyond racial, gender, ethnic or religious boundaries. That is why we consider it a doorway to dialogue for people of all socio-cultural groups and all ideologies."

From Munir’s acceptance speech at the Right Livelihood Awards ceremony in Stockholm on 9 December 2000