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**Australian Government**  
**Department of Defence**  
Defence Science and  
Technology Organisation

## Pre-Deployment Handbook: Timor-Leste

*Alison Hickman, Rebecca Karlsson and Kathy Radoslovich*

**Joint and Operations Analysis Division**  
**Defence Science and Technology Organisation**

DSTO-GD-0813

### **ABSTRACT**

This Handbook provides information that will assist in understanding the complex environment that is Timor-Leste. The research and analysis supports a range of contingencies that might see the Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel operating in Timor Leste in support of the Timor Leste Government. These include bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises, stabilisation and capacity building missions and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

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# Pre-Deployment Handbook: Timor-Leste

## Executive Summary

Australia and Timor-Leste (TLS) have a long, enduring and close relationship. The ADF continues to conduct regular bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises in order to support a professional, capable and sustainable *Falintil Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste* (F-FDTL). The skills and interoperability developed between the F-FDTL and ADF units enhance the F-FDTL's border and maritime security capabilities and foster security and stability in the region.

This Handbook contains research and analysis on Timor-Leste's history, geography, culture, society, government and internal stability as well as providing information on the nature of Australia's whole-of-government assistance to the country. As a consequence of Timor-Leste's proximity to Australia and the persistent threat of natural disasters the ADF can expect to support the F-FDTL in future HADR operations.

**The Handbook has been developed at the request of the Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Division and forms part of the material provided to all Australians prior to their deployment or posting to the country.**

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# Pre-Deployment Handbook

# Timor-Leste



  
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- HQ 1st Division
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Updates, observations or feedback to maintain the utility, accuracy and relevance of this handbook are welcomed and can be emailed to [HQ1DIVAWB@DRN.MIL.AU](mailto:HQ1DIVAWB@DRN.MIL.AU)

## This guide is available electronically at:

<http://teamweb/sites/1div/awc/Afghanistan%20Case%20Studies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

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# Foreword

Success on operations favours those who adapt fastest. Being an adaptive force means we must not only learn quickly, but then rapidly and comprehensively apply relevant lessons. The culture of a learning organisation is fundamental to our success as an Army – of being an Adaptive Army. The ADF has extensive experience and knowledge harnessed through operations within Australia and around the globe.

This handbook is a compilation of these practical, hard-learned lessons from our forces on the ground, and of rigorous academic studies by DSTO. It contains general knowledge about the environment, culture, history, people and combatants – essential information that everyone needs regardless of their role in the mission.

I recommend that you prepare yourself thoroughly by investing the time to read this handbook in detail, and be mentally prepared for the challenges of the operational environment that you are deploying into.

Remember: every soldier is a forward scout. Be the eyes and ears for the rest of the Army, report back so we can all learn from your unique perspective and experiences. Don't keep it to yourself.

I wish you every success on your mission.



**R. M. Burr**, DSC, AM, MVO  
Major General  
Commander 1st Division



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# Introduction

This handbook has been created to assist you in understanding the complex environment that is Timor-Leste in the 21st century. It will allow you to put your pre-deployment training into context and enrich your understanding of the operational environment.

This handbook concentrates on the political and social factors which are likely to develop in Timor-Leste over the next decade and which may influence Australia's involvement with the new nation. It focuses on the development of national and social institutions and what they might look like in the future.

Timor-Leste is undergoing an important and vulnerable period in its history. The behaviour of Australian people, whether as part of a security force, as monitors of democratic processes, or as international business stakeholders, will contribute to the way in which Timor-Leste perceives Australia. We cannot assume that our goodwill and proximity will ensure that we are perceived favourably in the years ahead. Timor Leste is quite capable and determined to choose its development partners in accordance with local preferences and cultural affiliation.

Your deployment is part of Australia's ongoing relationship with Timor Leste. A deep understanding of where Timor Leste is today and where it wants to go during your lifetime will



contribute to maintaining successful ties between our two countries. This understanding considers history, but like the new generation of East Timorese, is concerned more with the future than the past.

This is a time to think more broadly than security, and to look further than just your rotation. We are in the business of engagement, and the more informed we are in this endeavour, the greater the benefit to our region and ourselves.





# Part 1

## Geography

# Geography

## OVERVIEW

Timor-Leste is located in South East Asia, in the Lesser Sunda Islands at the eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago. Timor-Leste is surrounded by the Timor, Savu and Banda Seas. Lying 8.50 degrees South and 125.55 degrees East, Timor-Leste is well within the tropical zone and lies 650 km from Australia.



*Timor-Leste's position in South East Asia*

Source: <http://www.aai.org.au/operations/dili.html>

The state of Timor-Leste consists of the eastern half of the island of Timor, the enclave of Oecussi, and the Atauro and Jaco islands. It covers an area of 14,874 square kilometres. At just 275km x 100km, Timor-Leste would fit into Spencer Gulf in South Australia, yet 1.1 million people live there. The state has 6789 km of coastline and a 228 km border with Indonesia. The total east-west length of the country is 364 km (including Oecussi located approximately 50-60 km inside West Timor), while the longest north-south stretch is 149 km.

Timor is derived from "timur," the Indonesian and Malay word for "East." As an Indonesian province the area was known as "Timor Timur," which translates to "Eastern East." Indonesians would commonly shorten this to "tim-tim." "Leste" is the Portuguese word for East, while "Loro Sa'e" or

## A PLACE OF MANY NAMES – THE "EASTERN EAST":

### Official Name:

Republika Demokratika Timor Loro Sa'e  
(Tetum)

Republica Democratica de Timor-Leste  
(Portuguese)

### Short form:

Timor Loro Sa'e (Tetum)

Timor-Leste (Portuguese)

### Conventional long form:

Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

### English short form:

East Timor

"Lorosa'e" means "rising sun" in Tetum. So Timor-Leste remains the "Eastern East" or the "East rising sun."

## TOPOGRAPHY

Timor-Leste is a mountainous country. Mountain ranges down the centre of the country divide the country into geographically distinct areas. The western end of the country is the most mountainous, and is surrounded by a lower belt of hills. The central and eastern parts of the country contain several low plateaus and coastal lowlands fringed by a narrow coastal plain in the north and a wide coastal plain in the south.

The main mountain ranges are the Ramelau Range at the western end of Timor-Leste (i.e. the island's centre) and the Aileu Range, extending from the eastern boundary of Ermera District through Aileu District to southern Manatuto District. The highest peak in the Ramelau Range is Foho (Mount) Tamailau which has an elevation of 3,037m above sea level. The peak is located 11 kilometres east of Atsabe village on the Dili to Gleno road.

Timor Leste's mountainous terrain has contributed to an expansive network of water ways. There are



Source: Martin Wurt ; <http://www.flickr.com/photos/timoradventures/4800652521/in/photostream>

at least 60 noteworthy rivers and similar numbers of tributaries that run along ravines and through the valleys of the mountainous interior. The longest river is the Lacló, at 80 km. Other significant rivers include the Lakla, Lies and Seical. Despite the abundance of rivers, water shortages caused by



*Lacló River near Manatuto in summer*  
Source: DSTO, Defence

lack of water storage options are a major problem for Timor-Leste. In the dry season, some rivers may dry out completely. For example, trucks can be driven along the Comoro River in Dili during the dry season.

### FEMALE SEA, MALE SEA

In local custom, the Banda Sea to the north is called Tasi Feto (female sea) because of its calmer nature, while the Timor Sea to the south is called Tasi Mane (male sea) because it is rougher and more challenging to navigate.

### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

Timor-Leste is divided into thirteen administrative districts, as shown in the map on page 2. See Table One for population distribution and district capitals.

The more populous districts, such as Dili, Baucau and Ermera, are located on the north coast, while particularly mountainous central districts, such as Aileu, Manatuto and Manufahi, are less densely populated. The majority of the population (70%) live in rural areas, while 30% are located in urban

centres, particularly Dili and Baucau. Dili district alone is home to 20% of Timor-Leste's population.

### MIGRATION TO DILI

Internal rural to urban migration is a significant phenomenon in Timor and is putting significant strain on Dili.

Approximately 42.6% of Dili's population was not born there and its population has increased from around 84 000 to 234 000 in the last 11 years. Most of these migrants are teenagers and young adults with over half of the 20- 29 year olds in Dili being migrants. The most common reason for rural-urban migration is to escape rural poverty by finding work in the city. Unfortunately, this is frequently a false hope with high rates of unemployment.

### Climate

Timor-Leste's climate is tropical, warm and humid, and is shaped by the monsoon/cyclone seasons. The wet season is from December to March in the north and from December to July in the south. The months of August through November are the driest.

The north and mid-central parts of the country have a hot and dry climate with annual rainfall estimated at 50-110 cm and an average temperature of 26 degrees.

In mountainous areas of the interior above an elevation of 1,350 m, the climate is cool with rainfall above 320 cm evenly distributed.

Due to its exposure to warm, humid winds from Australia and its flatter nature, the southern coastal plain is much rainier than the northern zone, receiving over 200cm of rain a year. The average temperature is higher than 24 degrees.

District	Capital	Area (km2)	Population (2004 Census)	Population (2010 Census)	Population density/ km2 (2010)
Aileu	Aileu	729	37,926	45,512	61.8
Ainaro	Ainaro	797	52,480	59,382	73.9
Baucau	Baucau	1,494	100,748	111,484	74.0
Bobonaro	Maliana	1,368	83,579	89,787	65.3
Cova Lima	Suai	1,226	53,063	60,063	49.9
Dili	Dili	372	175,730	234,331	638.5
Ermera	Ermera	746	103,332	114,635	149.3
Lautém	Los Palos	1,702	56,239	60,218	33.2
Liquiçá	Liquiçá	543	54,973	63,329	115.4
Manatuto	Manatuto	1,706	36,897	43,246	24.3
Manufahi	Same	1,325	45,081	48,894	37.0
Oecusse	Pante Macassar	815	57,616	65,524	80.5
Viqueque	Viqueque	1,781	65,449	70,177	37.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>14 631</b>	<b>923,198</b>	<b>1,066,582</b>	<b>71.5</b>

Table One: Population by District

## NATURAL DISASTERS

One of the most dangerous aspects of Timor-Leste's weather is the prevalence of flash flooding in the wet season. The effects of floods are exacerbated by the mountainous terrain which makes avoidance of valleys and gorges impossible. There is also significant erosion due to local harvesting of firewood which leads to landslides that frequently destroy crops and roads, and increase water-borne disease in flooded homes. The seasonal destruction of roads is one of the most significant challenges to Timorese development and seriously impedes freedom of movement for locals, NGOs and foreign forces alike.

Timor-Leste is located on the Ring of Fire, an area of heightened seismic activity around the edge of the Pacific Rim. There have been a number of moderate earthquakes ranging from 5.2 to 6.2 on the Richter scale that have occurred north of Dili in the last five years, most recently in December 2010 (5.2 on the Richter scale). While these quakes did not cause significant damage, it is unknown how well the Timorese government would handle a major disaster.

## AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCES

Agriculture is a central part of Timorese life, with 90% of the workforce engaged in agricultural activities. Timorese agriculture is largely subsistent (i.e. people only grow enough to survive). Crops include coffee, rice, maize, cassava,



*Timorese Coffee at Harvest Time*

Source: DSTO, Defence

sweet potatoes, soybeans, cabbage, mangoes, bananas, and vanilla; however these crops are part of a subsistence economy only. Timor-Leste also has potential sources of mineral wealth, including gold, petroleum, natural gas, manganese and marble.

## THE TIMOR GAP

The Timor Gap refers to an area of seabed established as a boundary between Indonesia and Australia in 1972, which is in the progress of being renegotiated as a boundary between Australia and Timor-Leste. The debate largely centres around ownership of the tens of billions of dollars in oil and gas located in the area. Two significant agreements have been made on the area, the 2002 Timor Sea Treaty between Timor-Leste and Australia and the 2008 Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea (CMATS). These documents set the rules for joint petroleum exploration of the Timor Sea by the two countries.

The Treaties provide for the sharing of the proceeds of petroleum found in an agreed area of seabed, called the Joint Petroleum Development Area (JPDA), and do not determine the sovereignty and maritime boundary between the two countries.

Negotiations and agreements over the Timor Gap have been met with controversy in both Timor-Leste and Australia.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Timor-Leste's infrastructure is still recovering from the Indonesian withdrawal in 1999 when Indonesian troops and local militias destroyed a significant amount of the country. Approximately 70% of Timor's buildings were destroyed, roads, electricity, water supply and telecommunications were also ruined. Further damage occurred during the 2006 unrest. A lot of international assistance now focuses on rebuilding infrastructure, but much work remains. Potholes, open sewers and abandoned buildings are a fact of life in many of Timor-Leste's urban settings. Poor infrastructure



makes road travel time consuming and sometimes dangerous while poor sewage systems result in a large range of health issues. Electricity supplies can be very unreliable and are non-existent in some areas. Care should be exercised at all times while driving in Timor-Leste. Road accidents are common and driving skills and pedestrian discipline is poor.



*Following the 1999 violence: 5/7 RAR, Support Company secures the town of Liquica amid rumours that militia forces are in the area*  
Source: Defence

## ROADS

The country's main arterial roads are located along the north coast, and some may permit speeds of up to 50 km/hr. The roads on the south coast are mostly in extremely poor condition and surfaces consist of gravel or dirt requiring 4WD vehicles, and may be impassable during the wet season. Some sealed roads may be found in and around major towns, but most remain in poor condition. Most roads need maintenance to improve banks and prevent landslides. Potholes are common and most roads are narrow from 3.5 to 5 metres wide.

There are 450 bridges, some of which are well constructed. In the south a few important bridges are either out or incomplete. Where bridges are out, the streams are shallow and can be forded most of the year. The central mountain ridge can be crossed in several places but the roads are poorly maintained one or two lane tracks with gravel or dirt surfaces.



*SF Patrol crosses river near Los Palos*  
Source: Defence

## ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS

There are a number of potential environmental risks you should be aware of while in Timor-Leste.

- Mosquito born diseases
- Gastro-intestinal infections
- Waterborne illnesses
- Sunburn, dehydration and heat illness
- Heightened risk of infection of injuries
- Rabies
- Crocodiles
- Snakes
- HIV/AIDS and STIs



*Timorese Crocodile*  
Source: DSTO, Defence



## Chapter 2

### History

## Chapter 2 – History

### PRE COLONIAL

Little is known about the island of Timor and its inhabitants before the 14th Century. Hunter-gatherer populations have lived on the island since at least 11 500 BC. Communities have been engaged in agricultural activities since at least 3 000 BC. Since the 14th century and perhaps as early as the 7th century, the island of Timor was part of the Chinese and Indian trade routes through the Javanese and Sulawesi islands. Timor was a major source of sandalwood, a highly valued commodity in trade, along with rice, honey, wax and even slaves.

In response to growing Topasses dominance in Oecussi, a new Portuguese settlement was established in Dili during the 1700s. By the 1800s, the Dutch and Portuguese colonies were well established. Colonial competition between them had divided the island into two, but control was still disputed. After over 60 years of negotiations, an official border was finally established in 1916.

Over time, a variety of kingdoms and chiefdoms populated the island. These chiefdoms intermarried, feuded and traded with each other, maintaining geographical boundaries between territories. No tribe was successful at gaining influence over the island, and confrontations over land, marriages and perceived disrespect emerged many times. However, most tribes did acknowledge the importance of the Wehale Kingdom and its capital, Laran (in modern Indonesia), as the ancestral centre.

### PORTUGUESE COLONISATION

In 1515 the Portuguese arrived in what is now Oecussi. Mainly interested in the sandalwood trade, the Portuguese did not attempt to colonise the island at this time. Instead, Dominican priests established isolated Catholic missions on Timor. Slowly, the missions grew, with no other Portuguese administrative presence for the next hundred years.

Portuguese interest in Timor increased only in response to Dutch competition over control of the Sandalwood trade. The Portuguese Dominicans built a military fortress on Solor Island to the north of Timor to help protect their presence. In 1613, the Dutch captured this fortress and the Portuguese consequently relocated to nearby Flores Island. During their time there, the Portuguese intermarried with the local women and created a new mixed community called Topasses. The Topasses eventually established a Portuguese colony on Timor. The centre of the new colony was Oecussi, from which the Topasses oppressed all opposition to their rule, including indigenous Timorese and Dutch.

In 1653 the Dutch defeated the Portuguese at Kupang (on the far-Western tip of Timor), creating a centre for their own rule on the island. Throughout the remainder of the 17th century, Portuguese sandalwood traders, Topasses, Dominican friars and indigenous Timorese kingdoms jostled for dominance in the Portuguese areas, but united against the common enemy – the Dutch.



*Australian Seamen sit in front of the ruins of a 400 year old fort in Lautaim.*

*Source: Defence*

In response to growing Topasses dominance in Oecussi, a new Portuguese settlement was established in Dili during the 1700s. By the 1800s, the Dutch and Portuguese colonies were well

established. Colonial competition had divided the island into two, but control was still disputed. After over 60 years of negotiations, an official border was finally established in 1916.

Throughout this time, Timorese life went on relatively undisturbed. The Portuguese used indirect rule to manage their colony by attempting to gain control over the traditional rulers, the liurai kings. However, the liurai never accepted Portuguese rule, instead seeing missionaries and Portuguese support as tools for increasing their own influence. There were frequent revolts against the Portuguese, which were put down violently. In the late 19th Century, the Portuguese put a number of policies in place to try and disrupt the traditional political system. One of these was to restructure the administrative divisions and abolish the liurai kings and their kingdoms. In their place the smaller administrative divisions – the sucos - would become the first level of traditional governance. Between the sucos and the governor they put two more divisions, governed by Portuguese. This restructure, they supposed, would reduce the nepotism evident in the kinship alliances.

The restructure didn't change the indigenous practice of ratifying subordinate decisions with the liurai kings however, and so the two administrations - colonial and customary – existed side by side.

During the 1930s Lisbon brought all Portuguese colonies under centralised control and made a distinction between indigenous and non-indigenous people, referred to as Mesticos. The Mesticos included indigenous Timorese who had assimilated into the Portuguese population, including people employed as part of the administration. They were offered Portuguese citizenship and became the new political elite. These families still hold political influence today within Timorese business and government.

## WORLD WAR TWO

World War II was particularly traumatic for Timor. The island of Timor was strategically important

to Australia, particularly after the outbreak of the Pacific War. Seeing Timor as a potential stepping stone to the Australia, 400 Australian and Dutch troops were sent to the island at the end of 1941 to pre-empt Japanese advances, without the consent of the Portuguese government. The Australian force was known as 'Sparrow Force'. The Japanese interpreted the landing as an indicator of legitimate military operations and subsequently invaded in February 1942 with 20,000 troops. The Timorese people had mixed reactions to the Japanese invasion. Some welcomed the Japanese as liberators and supported them against the Allied forces, while others supported the Australian and Dutch against the invading force. The Japanese occupation was brutal, with the local population subjected to forced labour, systematic rape and beatings. 60 000 Timorese died as a result of the occupation. This occupation still features in the local psyche. Locals may recount stories of the war, including efforts to help Australian forces on the island.

### Sparrow Force

Sparrow Force consisted of the 2/40th battalion group supported by units from the 23rd Infantry Brigade, based in Kupang and the 2/2nd Independent Company, based in Dili. The 2/40th group surrendered in February 1942, while the 2/2nd fought rearguard actions and withdrew to the mountains to fight a guerrilla war.



*Members of the 2/2nd Independent Company at Ailalec, 1942.*

*Source: Australian War Memorial*



*One of the last creados ("little mates"), Timao da Silva, meets with a Warrant Officer Class2 at the Dare Memorial*

Source: Defence

2/2nd Independent Company established communications with Australia and were able to be re-supplied and supported in their efforts against the Japanese. The vital link in ensuring this support (and the survival of the Australians in general) was the support of the Timorese people living in the mountains. These people (often children) known as creados ("little mates") gave the Australian soldiers shelter, food, acted as guides, led them to re-supply points, cleaned their kit and aided their camouflage and protection. There is no doubt that the Australian successes against a dominant Japanese force would not have been possible without this help. Sparrow Force withdrew completely by February 1943.

Today there is a memorial at Dare in the hills behind Dili commemorating the Timorese assistance given to the soldiers of 2/2nd and 2/4th Independent Companies. The memorial was rebuilt and dedicated in 2009 and includes a museum and café which presents the story of the special relationship between the *creados* and the soldiers. Rufino Correia, one of the last remaining creados, died in April 2010 and a video of his recollections can be seen on [www.suaimediaspace.com](http://www.suaimediaspace.com).



*The Australian memorial at Dare*

Source: Defence

## POST WAR YEARS

As other states freed themselves from colonial rule in the aftermath of World War Two, Timor-Leste continued to be controlled by Portugal. The end of the war prompted renewed and increased Portuguese interest in all the colonies, with the hope they would support a post-war economic boom. Initially, there was a surge in activity in Timor, as forced labour was increased to rebuild infrastructure destroyed by the Japanese. Suco leaders were given increased powers to round up labour, contributing to revolts such as the one in Viqueque in 1959, which resulted in around 1000 deaths. However, the momentum and interest was not sustained, and overall development was

slow. Minor improvements were made in health and education, but the situation remained dire. Malaria, tuberculosis and malnutrition were rampant, and infant mortality was high. Population growth also began increasing significantly during this period, further straining communities. The economy improved slowly, but its character did not change. The Chinese community maintained control of the economy and subsistence agriculture was the main livelihood of the vast majority of East Timorese. Nevertheless, the situation was comparably better than Nusa Nusatenggara Timur (the neighbouring Indonesian province including West Timor).

In 1955 Portugal declared Timor-Leste an "overseas province" but invested very little in its development. A governor and legislative council presided, but direct control was largely left to the traditional liurai structures. A few Timorese were given opportunities to attend university in Lisbon, but opportunities remained scarce.

### **CARNATION COUP: LISBON, 25 APRIL 1974**

In 1974, a military coup overthrew the authoritarian government in Lisbon and a new left wing party (the Armed Forces Movement) took power. Insisting on democracy, the victors promised they would decolonise all remaining territories. This left Timor-Leste with three options: federate with Portugal, integrate with Indonesia or gain independence.

Three political parties emerged in 1974 representing these agendas.

### **THE FIRST PARTIES**

#### **Timorese Democratic Union (UDT).**

Represented by brothers Mário, Manuel and João Carrascalao, Domingos de Oliveira, Francisco Xavier Lopes da Cruz and César Augusto Mousinho, UDT favoured ongoing association with Portugal leading to eventual independence. Membership included business people and people with a high professional status in Dili and family ties to liurais.

#### **Timorese Popular Democratic Association (APODETI).**

Arnaldo dos Reis Araujo, Osario Soares and Dom Guilherme Gonçalves (a liurai from the Atsabe kingdom) were the founders of this party. They took an anti-Portuguese stance and favoured autonomous integration with Indonesia. Gonçalves in particular wanted to unify the island again under the spiritual eye of the Wehale Kingdom.

#### **Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT); later the Revolutionary Front for an Independent Timor-Leste (FRETILIN).**

Francisco Xavier do Amaral, José Ramos-Horta, Justino Mota, Nicolau Lobato and Mari Alkatiri were the founders of this party. Members included sons of liurais and people in middle management government positions. They sought full independence, and presented a progressive social agenda of health, education and economic development.



*Xanana Gusmao and Fretilin members in 1975*

*Source: Liberaldale*

### **THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE**

In 1974 Portugal sent an administrator to oversee the decolonisation process and register the new parties. The first local elections were held in March 1975. Candidates did not represent parties, but it was obvious from the results that associations with FRETILIN were now widespread. The administration encouraged the three main parties to form a coalition. FRETILIN and UDT agreed (APODETI refused), and a transitional

government comprising representatives from both parties and the Portuguese government was formed. The plan was to exercise a transitional government for three years and then hold general elections for a constituent assembly.

During this time, Indonesian agents began actively operating in Portuguese Timor. Operation Komodo, launched in 1974, was a political and propaganda campaign designed to support APODETI and gain momentum for integration without the use of force. Their efforts helped split the UDT and FRETILIN coalition by convincing UDT that FRETILIN posed a communist threat. By May 1975 the coalition was dead. In August, civil unrest broke out between supporters of FRETILIN and supporters of UDT. Many Timorese in the Portuguese military supported FRETILIN, and the Timorese Liberation Army, the *Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste* (FALINTIL), was born. UDT fled over the border and its members were forced to sign a petition calling for integration. On 08 October, Indonesian soldiers clandestinely attacked and captured Batugade in the border district of Bobonaro. They then attacked Balibo in Bobonaro and the other border district of Cova Lima.

FRETILIN unilaterally declared the independent state of the Democratic Republic of East Timor on 28 November 1975. The state received recognition from 12 states (not including Australia, Portugal, the US or Indonesia) before Indonesia invaded on 7 December 1975.

Ramos-Horta, by this time in New York, appealed to the UN for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops. The Security Council agreed in principal.

Six months later Timor-Leste became the 27th province of the Republic of Indonesia, but Indonesian sovereignty was not recognised by the Timorese or the UN. FALINTIL troops withdrew into the mountains and started a long guerrilla war which lasted the next 24 years.

## INDONESIA: EYES ON TIMOR-LESTE?

The islands of the Indonesian archipelago were first colonised by the Dutch in the 17th Century, but it was not until the early 1900s that a sense of national identity began to emerge. The Indonesians fought a bloody four-year war against the Dutch, before being granted independence in 1949. Indonesia held its first democratic elections in 1955.

Initially, the new Indonesian state had little interest in Portuguese Timor. Even from Jakarta's perspective, Portuguese Timor was a small and isolated area of little strategic value. Despite occasional comments by politicians, Portuguese control over eastern Timor was never questioned and Indonesia publicly declared it had no intention of integrating the area. Indonesia remained focused on consolidating its existing provinces, and saw Portuguese control of the area as a stabilising factor.



*Sukarno, Indonesia's first President and independence leader, votes in Indonesia's first elections, 1955*

*Source: State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia*

This changed over the following years. During the early 1950s, secessionist movements emerged in Java, Aceh, Sulawesi and the Molaccas. There were calls within Indonesia for the incorporation of Portuguese Timor, North Borneo and West Papua into Indonesia, prompted by fear that the emergence of small, independent states in the region would further encourage these movements. The government became increasingly

authoritarian in its response to threats to state integrity. Opposition and separatist groups were repressed with heavy casualties. Communism was particularly feared and hated.

**Bhinneka Tunggal Ika** (“unity in diversity”) is the Indonesian national motto. It reflects the aspiration of Indonesia’s founders that Indonesia exist as a unified state, with people rising above ethnic and regional differences to embrace their love of the state.

Religion is an important unifying factor in Indonesia. Indonesian Islam has absorbed many cultural influences from around the archipelago.

As Portuguese rule wound down, Special Operations groups increasingly perceived an independent, and potentially communist, Timor-Leste as a security threat and from 1972-3 took a strong stance against independence. Contact was made with Timorese sympathetic to integration. By 1975, the Indonesian government determined that integration was the best response. Any potential for resistance was to be immediately and decisively quashed.

### **COLD WAR POLITICS: AUSTRALIAN AND US REGIONAL INTERESTS**

The events of 1975 were strongly influenced by the broader regional politics of the time. In 1975, the Cold War was still in full swing. The US and Australia had recently pulled out of Vietnam, and were deeply worried by the potential for communism to spread through South-East Asia. Both Australia and the US were concerned about the potential security implications of Portuguese Timor becoming an independent state with a communist-sympathising government (FRETILIN) was seen as sympathetic to communism. Furthermore, Australia did not consider the colony to be economically viable as an independent state. Following World War II, Australia supported

Portugal’s ongoing position in Timor. However, by the 1960s Portuguese rule was increasingly seen as a geopolitical liability. With Portugal unable to maintain the colony, and the prospects of stable, friendly post-independence government looking shaky, Australia and the US determined that integration with Indonesia was the best resolution.

### **DECISION TO INVADE**

There were some advantages to being incorporated into the larger state, but a number of concerns outweighed the benefits. West Timor was a backwater within Indonesia. Economically and in terms of education and health care, Portuguese Timor was better off. There were also significant cultural and linguistic differences between the Catholic, Portuguese influenced east and the Muslim, Indonesian speaking west. The Indonesian government would have been aware of these feelings in 1975, but they were also being misinformed about local support for APODETI (pro-integration party). Peaceful attempts were made to gain support for integration, but by 1975 it was clear to the Indonesian government that integration could only be imposed. Thus, the decision to invade was made.

### **THE BALIBO FIVE**

The Balibo five were a group of Australian based journalists sent to Portuguese Timor to capture the emerging threat of Indonesian invasion and the collapse of the decolonisation process. All five died on 16 October 1975 in Balibo (near the border with West Timor). It was unclear at the time whether their deaths were a result of cross-fire, as claimed by the Indonesian government, or a deliberate action by Indonesian Special Forces to prevent their activities being reported.

Australia has conducted two enquiries (1995 and 1998) into their deaths,



which have found that Indonesian Special Forces were responsible for these deaths and that their actions were deliberate. They recommended Indonesia pursue prosecutions. No one has been charged over the incident. A NSW coronial enquiry was conducted in 2007, naming the Indonesian officers responsible and recommending prosecution under the criminal code for war crimes.

Roger East, another Australian reporter stationed in Timor-Leste, tried to investigate and report on their deaths. He was killed in Dili on the morning of the invasion on 08 December 1975.

Reporter Greg Shackleton's last televised report can be seen at:

<http://balibohouse.com/last-communications.html>



Just days before his death in 1975, Greg Shackleton paints "Australia" on a shop wall in Balibo.

Source: The Age

## INDONESIAN OCCUPATION

The Indonesian invasion and subsequent occupation resulted in significant casualties. Operasi Seroja (Operation Lotus), as the invasion

was code named, resulted in the deaths of 60 000 to 100 000 East Timorese in its first year. By mid 1976 Timor-Leste had been incorporated into Indonesia as Timor Timur, the 27th province. Despite the casualties a strong resistance movement remained throughout the occupation. Indonesian sovereignty was not recognised by the UN or the East Timorese. Nevertheless, they retained control of the province until 1999.

Over the course of the occupation, at least 200,000 East Timorese died – some from Indonesian violence and others from neglect. The Indonesians employed two distinct tactics to try and gain the support of the population; coercion and persuasion. Initially, the Indonesian objective was to neutralize resistance to their rule. This meant defeating armed resistance movements, particularly FALINTIL, and counteracting civilian resistance. Opposition was not tolerated in any form. Indonesian use of force actually increased opposition. Human rights abuses were systematic and extensive. McCloskey summarises:

*"The massive human rights violations in East Timor which followed Indonesia's invasion included random massacres, extra-judicial killings, starvation, deaths from preventable diseases, torture, forced movement of populations, coerced sterilization of women, rape and imprisonment without legal redress."*

The objective was to forcefully assimilate the Timorese into Indonesian society and establish acceptance of Indonesian rule. There were deliberate operations to eradicate Timorese culture, language, religion and even blood lines (including Indonesian in-migration programs and compulsory indigenous sterilisation).

The other side of the Indonesian occupation were their efforts to win hearts and minds. In making Timor Timur a province, Indonesia reorganised the administrative systems, began developing infrastructure, including roads and hospitals, and expanded the education system. Health and literacy levels improved somewhat. Indonesian

was imposed as the official language, and schools were used to teach the new language and promote Indonesian values. The local economy was encouraged to grow. Infrastructure was favoured over social concerns, and between 1983 and 1997 the economy averaged 6% growth each year.

### The Resistance

Timorese resistance to the occupation was multi-faceted. The bulk of the fighting was done by FRETILIN's militia and FALANTIL. FALANTIL forces fought a brave campaign against the Indonesians from the mountains but were severely depleted over time. By 1978 guerrilla numbers were reduced from 50,000 to 700. In 1983 FALANTIL leader Xanana Gusmão negotiated a cease fire, which Indonesian forces broke almost immediately.

As the armed resistance came under increasing pressure, groups were formed by village men to protect their communities from Indonesian soldiers and militias. Meanwhile, an underground movement in the towns and cities emerged. The Catholic Church played a key role in supporting the resistance movement and the local population.

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church has a long history in Timor-Leste. However, until the Indonesian occupation, the Catholic Church had been slow to gain influence amongst the local population. In 1970, only a third of the population had been baptised, but by the end of the occupation 98% of the population identified as Catholic. This was a direct result of the Catholic Church's actions during the occupation. The Church acted as the voice of the East Timorese people, helping to support and protect the local people. Internationally, the Church was vocal in opposition to the occupation. Many members and leaders of the FRETILIN movement were devout Catholics who attended mass daily.

From 1983, the Timorese Church worked under the guidance of the new Apostolic Administrator, Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo. Belo campaigned publicly against the abuses happening in his country, offering shelter to the persecuted and facing ongoing threats from the Indonesian regime. He was consecrated as Bishop of Dili in 1988. In 1996, Bishop Belo and José Ramos Horta were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their efforts.



*Bishop Belo being carried to the new church in Darlau before the dedication service.*

*Source: Defence*

The Indonesian regime repeatedly tried and failed to gain Church support in Timor-Leste. In the 1999 withdrawal, clergy and church property were deliberately targeted by militias. Today, the Catholic Church and clergy members are greatly respected within society and their influence is significant.

FRETILIN remained a centre of political resistance throughout the occupation. However, factionalism grew in the party and in 1987 Ramos-Horta and Gusmão left FRETILIN to form the National Council for Maubere Resistance (CNRM). An international resistance movement grew outside Timor, led by the Catholic Church, some non-government organisations and to a certain extent, Ramos-Horta and Alkitiri as diplomats in exile. Finally in 1991, the Santa Cruz Massacre bought the violence in Timor-Leste to the world stage.

### SANTA CRUZ MASSACRE

The Santa Cruz Massacre of 12 November 1991 marked a significant turning point in the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste. After an official Portuguese visit to Dili was cancelled at the last minute, the Indonesian military undertook a crackdown against students and FRETILIN members who had been planning to use the occasion to publicise human rights abuses. On 28 October 1991 Indonesian soldiers killed a student taking refuge in Motael Church, Dili. On 12 November 1991, hundreds of mourners attended his funeral ceremony, and were joined by over a 1000 demonstrators calling for independence as they proceeded to the Santa Cruz Cemetery. On arrival, the Indonesian army opened fire on both mourners and protestors with automatic weapons. At least 271 people were killed, and over 200 "disappeared." This particular

atrocities took on global significance when footage taken by a British journalist was smuggled out of the country and extensively publicised. The result was increased international pressure against the Indonesian occupation and human rights abuses. This contributed to changing Australia's position on the occupation.



*East Timorese mourners flee as Indonesian troops open fire.*

Source: ETAN

In 1992 Xanana Gusmão was captured by the Indonesians and sentenced to life imprisonment. Gusmão served seven years in Cipinang prison, Jakarta, during which time he continued to lead the resistance.



*Xanana Gusmão moments after his capture. Dili, 20 November 1992*

Source: Worldpress

In 1997 CNRM was transformed into the National Council for East Timorese Resistance (CNRT). Their main agenda was the preparation of a new government (a kind of 'government in waiting') should Timor-Leste gain its independence in the near future. (Note: This CNRT should not be confused with the political party the Congresso Nacional da Reconstrucao de Timor (CNRT), which was founded in 2007 and is led by Xanana Gusmão.)

### The Popular Consultation

By the mid 1990s, the Indonesian government faced increasing international pressure. The 1990s saw human rights emerge as a central theme in US, Australian and European foreign policy, resulting in increased concern about the treatment of citizens by governments around the world. At the same time, East Timorese pro-independence leaders Belo, Ramos-Horta and Gusmão had achieved a high profile for the independence cause. Following President Suharto's fall, Indonesia began a process of rapid democratisation. It became increasingly difficult to justify an occupation that was clearly in conflict with the new democratic system. Indonesia was also in dire straits economically as the 1997-1998 Asian Financial Crisis had almost bankrupted the country, and the cost of maintaining Timor-Leste was becoming prohibitive. On 27 January 1999 President, Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie announced that a referendum would be held giving the people of Timor Leste the choice of special autonomy within Indonesia or independence.

The decision to hold the referendum was met with great concern by Indonesian military command in Timor. To them it was clear that desires for independence were strong in the province, and they resented an announcement they saw as encouraging independence movements. Quite accurately they predicted that Indonesia would lose Timor Timur if the referendum went ahead, and promised a bloodbath would follow. By December 1998, Indonesian Military forces

had established and trained pro integration militia forces to intimidate the population and discourage them from voting for independence. This widespread coercion was so effective that the voter registration date and the voting date had to be deferred to allow for more voter education. Militia groups targeted journalists, election observers and UN staff, leading to evacuation of some staff prior to election day.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan oversaw the agreement on the referendum, which would be called the 'popular consultation'. In June of 1999 the UN established the United Nations Assistance Mission for East Timor (UNAMET), and voter education started.

On 30 August 1999 the 'popular consultation' was held and 78.5% of the people voted in favour of independence. When the result was announced a few days later, the militia rampage began supported by Indonesian troops. Between 1000 and 2000 people died in the ensuing violence and thousands were forcefully evacuated across the border to Atambua. At least 70% of Timor's infrastructure was destroyed in the Indonesian's 'scorched earth' tactics. The UN called for help.



*Australian INTERFET Soldier greets local boy.*  
Source: Defence

Two weeks later the Australian led International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) arrived. Evacuated UN staff members from UNAMET returned, and on 20 September, Indonesia formally acknowledged the end to the integration effort. On 28 October UNAMET transitioned to the United Nations Transitional Administration of East Timor (UNTAET). The Indonesian administration and the majority of Indonesian citizens departed rapidly, leaving East Timor without any form of government.

### Independence

UNTAET was responsible for rebuilding the country, while INTERFET was responsible for providing a secure space in which rebuilding could be done. During 2000, a transitional government was established called the East Timor Transition Administration (ETTA). Its ministries were split evenly between Timorese and UN members.

#### INTERFET

INTERFET was a UN-mandated multinational force established in 1999 to address the deteriorating humanitarian and security situation in Timor. It had three key tasks:

- Restore peace and security in East Timor,
- Protect and support the United Nations Assistance Mission East Timor (UNAMET) in carrying out its tasks, and
- Within force capabilities, facilitate humanitarian assistance operations.

During 2000 and 2001, UNTAET facilitated the repatriation of the refugees who had been ‘evacuated’ to West Timor. The returning families inevitably included people who had participated in militia activities, which caused some dissent among the population. UNTAET also established

the Serious Crimes Unit to investigate human rights abuses.



*Foot patrol in Suai after 1999 violence*  
Source: Defence

Timor-Leste held its first elections on 30 August 2001, electing members to the ETTA Constituent Assembly, which became the National Parliament following independence in 2002. Voter turnout was very high, with over 91 per cent participation. An extensive voter education program was undertaken prior to the elections, ensuring that even remote communities had access to information. However, serious questions have been raised about how well the local population actually understood the concept of “democracy” and the processes of government. The elections occurred in an atmosphere of tension, with widespread fear that civil unrest would result from competition between parties. Some incidents of voter intimidation were reported. Overall, the elections were considered fair and free, and seen as a success with minimal levels of violence. Candidates representing sixteen parties competed. FRETILIN won 55 of the 88 seats and formed government.

By February 2002 the constitution was written and approved. The presidential elections were

held with Francisco Xavier do Amaral representing ASDT and Xanana Gusmão standing independently. Gusmão won with 82.7% of the vote and was sworn in as the first President of the Republic, with FRETILIN leader Mari Alkatiri appointed Prime Minister.



*Resistance leader Xanana Gusmao speaks to the people of Bobonaro shortly after the Indonesian withdrawal, 1999.*

Source: Defence

On 20 May 2002, Timor-Leste became an independent state and the 191st state of the United Nations. UNTAET became UNMISET – the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor with a mandate to provide assistance to Timor-Leste for two years until all operational responsibilities were devolved to the Timor-Leste authorities.

In May 2005 the UN Security Council extended UN presence in Timor-Leste by mandating UNOTIL - United Nations Office in Timor-Leste - to continue supporting progress towards self-sufficiency. This assistance focussed on building capacity in critical state institutions like the national security forces. By mid-2005 the UN ended its peace keeping activities in Timor-Leste.

Overall, the supervised transition is considered one of the UN's greatest successes, and was groundbreaking in its scope. However, there were also a number of valid concerns raised about

the UNTAET process. UNTAET was strongly criticised for being undemocratic, and essentially a “benevolent dictatorship.” Unelected Timorese representatives had only a limited role in the administration. Inadequate attention was given to training East Timorese to take on administrative and governance roles, with UNTAET instead focusing on efficiency and progress and using trained UN personnel. Some have argued that the administrative problems facing the country in the years after independence stemmed from this lack of preparation. However, it would be unfair to underestimate the achievements of the UNTAET and the Timorese people in establishing a democratic state that has successfully held two elections.

### CHENGA!

From 2001-2005, the Timor-Leste Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) was tasked with truth-seeking for the period from 1975-1999. CAVR was an independent body, led by East Timorese commissioners working under a UN mandate. The result was a 2,800 page report titled “Chenga!” documenting serious crimes and abuses that had occurred. “Chenga!” is Portuguese for “no more, stop, enough!” reflecting the objective of the report. The report made recommendations to assist the process of community reconciliation. The report was presented to parliament in October 2005, and is available from the CAVR website:

<http://www.cavr-timorleste.org/en/chegaReport.htm>

### THE 2006 CRISIS, INTERVENTION AND UNMIT

While progress was being made in many areas, under the surface, ethnic tensions, legacy resentments and institutional competition for

power remained. In early 2006, these tensions were manifested in a crisis within the military (which in 2001 had become 'FALINTIL – Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste or F-FDTL), involving members from the West of the state against members from the East. The Westerners (in the minority) felt they were being discriminated against with poor conditions and lack of promotion, while many Easterners claimed to represent the 'true' origins of the guerrilla movement, and therefore, claimed entitlement to leadership within the national military force.

Initially 159 soldiers, of western origin, submitted a petition to the then President Xamano Gusmao, complaining about discrimination. Having received little response, the soldiers deserted their barracks in the eastern city of Bacau, provoking condemnation from F-FDTL leadership and the government. The deserters based themselves in Dili to continue protesting, where their numbers grew. Following failed negotiations and refusal to return to barracks, 591 soldiers were dismissed (including some who were not petitioners, but had been underperforming or absent without approval). By late April violence broke out in Dili between the supporters of the petitioners and serving F-FDTL members.



*Gangs armed chase their rivals through the streets of Dili, May 2006.*

Source: Reuters

This violence quickly escalated to F-FDTL attacks on PNTL members, PNTL attacks on F-FDTL military police headquarters, and widespread communal

violence and lawlessness. On 3 May Major Alfredo Reinado, the commander of the F-FDTL's military police unit, and most of his soldiers including Lt Gastão Salsinha abandoned their posts in protest at what they saw as the army's deliberate shooting of civilians. Reinado's splinter group then also embarked on attacks against F-FDTL and PNTL members.

The violence culminated on 25 May when unarmed PNTL members who were being escorted on foot to their Dili headquarters by UN Police, were fired upon by F-FDTL members. Nine PNTL were killed, and 27 PNTL and two UN Police were wounded. Over the following months, around 150 000 people fled their homes, becoming internally displaced persons (IDP). The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reports that at least 50 IDP camps were established throughout Dili and its surrounds. Many IDPs remained in such camps for several years, and some were not resettled until 2010. Land tenure problems were a significant reason for this delay. [See chapter 6.]

Despite increasing demands on President Gusmao to sack Prime Minister Alkatiri during the crisis, Gusmao refused and instead took over direct control of the police and military under arrangements extending from the 'state of emergency', becoming Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Immediately following the PNTL shooting, Ramos-Horta, (who was Foreign Minister at the time) called for international assistance. In response, the Australian-led International Stabilisation Force (ISF) was established, including contingents from Malaysia, New Zealand and the Portuguese Republican Guard (GNR). Australia's contribution included three ships and a battalion sized force.

By mid June, violence had dissipated and the Australian Force was facilitating a weapons amnesty. The United Nations Integrated Mission to Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was established. UNMIT's responsibilities continued to focus on security sector capacity, community reconciliation,

humanitarian relief and preparation for the 2007 national elections.



Former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri addresses a 2007 Independence Day rally.

Source: Defence

In June 2006, Gusmão finally called for Alkatiri's resignation. Gusmão offered his own position as security against the consequences of the Prime Minister not resigning, saying that he (Gusmão) would resign if Alkatiri did not. Alkatiri refused and as a consequence Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta announced his resignation. Alkatiri finally resigned on 26 June 2006 to save the President's position.

On 08 July, Ramos-Horta was appointed Prime Minister by Gusmão. In 2007, elections were held with relative peace with minimal violence or public disturbance reported. Ramos-Horta was elected president, and Gusmão became Prime Minister at the head of a CNRT-led coalition government. This government is known as the Alianca Maioria de Parlamentar (Alliance of Parliament), or AMP.

### REINADO AND THE SIEGE AT SAME

Following the weapons amnesty, Reinado was detained by Australian soldiers on charges of illegally possessing weapons. He was later charged with murder and incarcerated in Beccora Prison in Dili. In August 2006, Reinado escaped during a

mass breakout from the prison, and fled to the mountains.

Australian forces were asked to assist in the search for Reinado, who had been offered a pardon by the Prime Minister. By the beginning of 2007 however, Ramos-Horta had lost patience with Reinado's public rantings and threats in Indonesian and Australian media. He told the Australian forces to cease negotiations and bring him in.

Reinado's knowledge of the jungle enabled him to evade capture throughout the months ahead during which a standoff between Reinado's men and the ISF ensued. It became known as 'the Siege at Same'. Every time the ISF believed they had cornered him, his armed compatriots, support from local sympathisers, and local knowledge allowed him to slip through their fingers.

After a number of Reinado's men were killed in a raid, Ramos-Horta once again called off the manhunt and re-opened negotiations. In August, Ramos-Horta (now President) met with Reinado, but by the end of the year, Reinado was charged with eight counts of murder and numerous weapons offences.

When he failed to appear at court in January 2008, Ramos-Horta again ordered his capture, but by this time, Reinado had run out of friends. Isolated, he began to plan desperate action.

Major Alfredo Reinado  
Source: Unknown





## THE SHOOTING OF RAMOS-HORTA

On the morning 11 February 2008, Reinado led a group of rebel soldiers into Ramos-Horta's compound looking to confront the President. Ramos-Horta was out on his morning walk, but his security detail discovered the perimeter breach, found Reinado and a compatriot, and fatally shot them.

Ramos-Horta by this time had been alerted to the shooting at his compound, but continued to walk up the hill from the beach. As he approached, Reinado's men opened fire and Ramos-Horta was shot three times. Ramos-Horta's bodyguard was also shot.

Rebels also attacked Prime Minister Gusmão's house and convoy, but Gusmão managed to escape unharmed.

Ramos-Horta meanwhile was evacuated to the ISF medical facility and then to Darwin, where he underwent emergency surgery. A state of Emergency was declared and lasted until Ramos-Horta's return in mid April 2008.

## TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE UN POPULAR CONSULTATION

On 30 August 2009, President of the Republic Dr José Ramos-Horta stood on the dais in front of his new Presidential Palace to deliver a speech marking the 10-year anniversary of the popular consultation. However, the day will also be remembered as the day that the Timorese senior leadership ignored public outrage and released Maternus Bere, a militia leader indicted for crimes against humanity in the Suai Church massacre, from prison. This political interference in the judicial process was in response to the Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda's refusal to travel to Dili until Bere was transferred to Indonesian control.

In a speech surrounded by controversy, Ramos-Horta asked for an end to pressure for an International Tribunal and advocated the dissolution of the Serious Crimes Unit.



*President Jose Ramos-Horta inspects the East Timorese Defence Force*

*Source: Defence*

## TIMOR-LESTE IN 2011

In 2011, Timor Leste continues to address ongoing development challenges, through investment in health, infrastructure, education, security, and law and order. In March 2011, responsibility for policing was fully returned to the PNTL. The Timorese people are becoming increasingly vocal about their aspirations to be independent and prosperous, and are looking to the evolving Government of Timor-Leste to meet their expectations. .



# Chapter 3

## Society

## Chapter 3 - Society

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Timor-Leste has a very young and rapidly growing population, and the total population has doubled over the past 30 years. When considered in context of the economic issues covered in Chapter 4 and Underdevelopment covered in Chapter 5, this demography is an enormous challenge for the future wellbeing of the population. In 1980, the population was only 555,350. By 1990 this had increased to 747,557, and by 2010 the population was over 1 060 000. Timor-Leste has one of the highest birth-rates in the world, at times second only to Afghanistan. The birth rate had reached 7.8 births per woman, but recent estimates show this has dropped to 5.7, thanks to improved education and availability of contraception. 65% of the population is under 25 years old, including 45% who are under 15 years of age. In addition to the implications of the rapid growth of the population, the ratio of dependent-age children impacts on the ability of the remainder of the population to have enough time work or participate in education or development programs.



*ADF soldier entertains local children*

Source: Defence

### ETHNICITY

The Timorese people are comprised of a number of distinct ethnic groups, largely mixed Malayo-Polynesian and Melanesian-Papuan descent.

However, Portuguese interracial colonisation practices, Chinese trade and Indonesian occupation also brought a mix of other ethnicities into the area, including Chinese, Indonesian, European, African and Goan elements.

#### MAUBERE

The Timorese people refer to themselves collectively as Maubere. Originally used by the Portuguese to describe the 'uncivilised' indigenous population, it was adopted by the population to describe themselves as noble underdogs, and later used by the resistance movement as a badge of honour. The term is still used today by members of the leadership to evoke populist sentiment of a community that has overcome adversity and foreign tyranny.

The largest Malayo-Polynesian ethnic groups are the Tetun, primarily living in the north coast and around Dili; the Mambae, living in the mountains of central Timor-Leste; the Tukudede, living in the area around Maubara and Liquica; the Galoli, living between the tribes of Mambae and Makasae; the Kemak, in the central north and the Baikeno, living in the area around Pantemakassar.

The main tribes of Papuan origin include the Bunak, living in the central interior; the Fataluku, living in far east around Los Palos; and the Makasae, living in the central east.

There is also a smaller population of people of mixed Timorese and Portuguese origin, known as the Mestiço. Many national leaders and government officials of the older generation are Mesticos, including President Ramos-Horta.

The Chinese community in Timor Leste is relatively small, but plays a significant role in the economy, holding a monopoly over many industries. Generally, the Chinese community lives in harmony with the rest of Timorese society. However, elements of society harbour resentment

over Chinese economic dominance, and the use of Chinese labour in Chinese-owned construction projects. As history has shown in many countries in Southeast Asia, this resentment can lead to targeting of Chinese communities and their assets during periods of instability such as the 2006 crisis.

## LANGUAGE

Timor-Leste is a linguistically diverse country, and language is a controversial issue. According to the United Nations, there are approximately 30 languages or dialects spoken in Timor-Leste. 80% of the population understands Tetum, 40% understand Indonesian (Bahasa), 8-12% speak Portuguese, and 2% speak English. The official languages are Portuguese and Tetum, and Portuguese is the dominant administrative and legal language, despite not being widely used. This means that shortages of Portuguese translators and interpreters cause delays in all aspects of governance and reform, but particularly the work of parliamentarians and in legal proceedings.

Many Timorese will converse in one language for official matters (or when they don't know you well), and switch to a more familiar language for 'small talk'. This allows the listener to recognise when the official engagement is over, and provides a good opportunity to discuss topics not previously open for discussion.



*ADF troops speak to a Los Palos district elder with assistance from an ISF interpreter during a community engagement patrol.*

Source: Defence

Where you will be visiting during your deployment and with whom you will be engaging will determine what language you will need most. If you are talking to residents of rural areas in the districts, Tetum is your first priority. If you will be speaking to students and young workers in Dili, Bahasa may be useful, although not preferred. If most of your business is with government officials and military, Portuguese is the expected (and respected) language, but English and Tetum are also spoken.

Use of interpreters is not as easy as it seems.

Many interpreters are young and educated, and have developed a good relationship with Australian forces since INTERFET. They may not speak the language of a particular group in an outlying district (particularly Oecussi), which may slow down communication. See the Operational Handbook Working Among Different Cultures (2011) for more advice on working with interpreters.

## RELIGION

Religion is an extremely important part of Timorese life. The population is predominantly Roman Catholic (90%-98%), with Muslim, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhist and Animist minorities. While in Timor-Leste, be aware of the significance of religion in people's lives. Try to be respectful of the Church. Challenges or insults directed against the Church may be met with hostility. Establishing positive relationships with local Church leaders will help improve your presence in the community.

### Catholic Church

The Catholic Church maintains a significant role in politics. Church leaders, such as the Bishop of Baucau, have considerable influence amongst the community and politicians. For example, Church political lobbying has prevented the legalisation



*Statue commemorating the visit of Pope John Paul II to Dili in October 1989. Built in 2008, it is a symbol of hope and a memorial for lives lost in the Indonesian occupation.*

Source: DSTO, Defence

of abortion for Timorese women under any circumstances.

There are three Catholic Dioceses in Timor-Leste: Dili, Baucau and Maliana. Each is headed by a Bishop. There is also a seminary in Dili (the Seminary of Saints Peter and Paul in Fatumeta), which had 85 seminarians in 2010.

The central Catholic Church in Dili (the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Villa Verde) was renovated during 2009 and is a significant landmark.

Churches have great social significance around the country. They provide local leadership through the clergy; unite social strata of people (which is central to Timorese political ideology); and are considered places of sanctuary. The Suai Massacre on 06 September 1999, however, severely tested this belief.

## SUAI MASSACRE

During the 1999 violence, militia attacked the people in the villages surrounding Suai (Cova Lima district). Seeking refuge, the people ran into Our Lady of Fatima church and the half built cathedral next door. The militia shot the priests and killed many people inside the church, including children who had climbed into the temporary scaffolding to hide. The militia disposed of the bodies by burying them in mass graves, taking them away in trucks, disposing them in the sea and burning them at Suai. Between 40 and 200 people died.

The next year 10,000 people gathered in Suai for a public mass in memory of the three priests and the people killed. A symbolic re-enactment of the attack was performed. Now each year, a memorial service is held for the victims at the site of the two buildings.



*The Suai Cathedral was under construction at the time of the 1999 massacre and has not been touched since.*

Source: DSTO, Defence

Another significant place of sanctuary is the church of San Antonio on the beachfront at Motael. Sebastiao Gomez sought refuge there in October 1991, before being killed, and sparking the Santa Cruz cemetery massacre (see chapter 2). In 2006 it hosted an Internally Displaced Persons camp in its grounds. This camp remained in place until 2009.

### Collective Memory and Re-enactment

Both the Suai and Santa Cruz Massacres have been re-enacted on occasion by the Timorese people, as have the killings that occurred on the day of the Indonesian invasion on 08 December 1975. These re-enactments serve as part of the practice of collective



*Thousands gather in a procession during a ceremony marking the 10th anniversary of the Suai Church massacre.*

Source: Defence

Collective Memory retains the meaning of events as opposed to the detail. In a community where literacy levels are low, the telling of stories in public is an important part of recording history and maintaining culture. This is called 'oral history'. In Timorese culture, memory is long, and whilst the details of events that have occurred in the lifetime of the current generations are fresh, other events (such as WWII, or even long past ancestral injustices and grudges) are reiterated as part of a collective identity. These themes include betrayal, abandonment and incarceration. The re-enactments should not be seen necessarily as political statements of blame, or a desire to fuel resentments. They are more likely to be an

effort to maintain a distinct cultural identity in a population where foreign interventions have deliberately tried to erase the indigenous identity and tradition.

### VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

The right to public protest is highly valued as a symbol of new freedoms and democracy, in contrast to life under Indonesian occupation. Attempts by police or other security forces to prevent such activities are likely to be viewed as a betrayal. The Timorese are very skilled at organising large protests at short notice. Often protests involve processions through the streets on board trucks and other vehicles. The protests are loud and colourful and generally peaceful.

Escalation is unlikely unless the event coincides with heightened popular frustration over another issue, or if there is miscalculation in the way in which security forces handle the situation.

However, history has shown that any large scale public gathering in Timor-Leste can quickly change from peaceful to violent, or be hijacked by opportunists to play out gang rivalries or settle disputes. This is not likely to be problematic and well within the capacity of local security forces to manage. Escalation is unlikely unless the event coincides with heightened popular frustration over another issue, or if there is miscalculation in the way in which security forces handle the situation

### Traditional Beliefs

Traditional beliefs continue to shape Christianity in Timor Leste, which has seen Catholicism practiced alongside traditional beliefs. Respect for the spirits of ancestors, acknowledgement of

sacred sites and objects (called luli), and a general practice of superstition are an important part of life. Such rituals often play a role in existing social interactions. Obligations to kin are seen as vital and continuous, with death marking a transformation in relationships, not an end. These beliefs and rituals help to maintain connections with the dead and the living.

Mt Ramelau is the highest point in Timor-Leste and an ancient sacred site. It is believed to house the spirits of the ancestors of the Timorese people, but it is also a Christian site dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Every year there is a pilgrimage up the mountain commemorating the 'Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. At the summit stands an imposing three metre high statue of Mary.

Myths and storytelling are an important part of Timorese culture. The story of how Timor came into being is particularly popular. A version of the story is recounted below:

**THE LEGEND OF THE CROCODILE**

Many years ago a small crocodile lived in a swamp in a far away place. He dreamed of becoming a big crocodile but as food was scarce, he became weak and grew sadder and sadder. He left for the open sea, to find food and realise his dream, but the day became increasingly hot and he was still far from the seashore. The little crocodile - rapidly drying out and now in desperation - lay down to die. A small boy took pity on the stranded crocodile and carried him to the sea. The crocodile, instantly revived, was grateful. "Little boy", he said, "you have saved my life. If I can ever help you in any way, please call me. I will be at your command..."

crocodile, who was now big and strong. "Brother Crocodile", he said, "I too have a dream. I want to see the world".

"Climb on my back," said the crocodile, "and tell me, which way do you want to go?"

"Follow the sun", said the boy.

The crocodile set off for the east, and they traveled the oceans for years, until one day the crocodile said to the boy, "Brother, we have been traveling for a long time. But now the time has come for me to die. In memory of your kindness, I will turn myself into a beautiful island, where you and your children can live until the sun sinks in the sea."

As the crocodile died, he grew and grew, and his ridged back became the mountains and his scales the hills of Timor. Now when the people of Timor-Leste swim in the ocean, they enter the water saying "Don't eat me crocodile, I am your relative".



*The headland of Dili resembles the crocodile who became the island of Timor. On the nose of the crocodile stands the famous statue "Christo Rei".*  
Source: DSTO, Defence

Be mindful and respectful of sacred relics and sites in Timorese communities. The most

significant structure in a Timorese community is the *uma luli* (sacred house). These buildings are generally found in the centre of the village, are home to a community's sacred relics, and are often the first building to be (re)built after damage or when villages move. Timorese people place great emphasis on tracing their origins through the sacred house lineages that lead back to the founding villages and founding ancestors of their community. In practice, connection to a sacred house can be reasonably fluid, and may be based on proximity rather than bloodline. Marriage alliances are used to create connections between sacred houses. Always ask for permission before entering any building that may be a sacred house and be aware that local grudges and obligations may be derived from invisible sacred house allegiances.



An '*uma lulik*' or sacred house in Com.  
Source: DSTO, Defence

## CUSTOMARY GROUPINGS AND AUTHORITY

The sacred houses are connected to the Timorese kingdoms, called *liurais*. Traditionally, the *liurais* were the main source of governance on Timor. Authority lay with the *liurai* king, and power was derived from proving yourself a direct descendant of the founding ancestors. Legitimacy of that power was gained from the possession of the sacred objects (*luli*), because the *luli* imbue the holder with a certain spiritual potency.



Village elder in Oecussi district  
Source: Defence

The subordinate levels of authority and power were held by secular chiefs and sacred men respectively, or by the same person fulfilling both these roles. This concept of power has transferred into modern political systems, with secular political and military leaders taking on chiefly roles, and priests gaining sacred authority, particularly through the possession of sacred Christian objects.



The political elite from both Portuguese and traditional liurai structures still form the basis of the power blocs today. Marriage between elite families enhances the family networks, which are at the same time respected as sources of power, while also drawing popular resentment through accusations of nepotism.

### WEDDINGS IN TIMOR-LESTE

Weddings are big business in Timor. When a couple marries, the groom’s family pays a “bridewealth” to the bride’s family. The content of the bridewealth varies depending on the status and sacred house of the families involved, but traditionally includes brau (water buffalo) and cumara bote (large ceremonial disks worn by men). The bride’s family then offers a counter-gift of equal quantity, commonly including pigs and textiles. Today, money of equivalent value may be given instead of gifts. The ongoing practice of bridewealth has been identified as a significant contributor to the extremely high rates of domestic violence in Timor-Leste. While it helps build ties between families, it also results in attitudes that the wife has become the bought property of her husband and family and that she should be obedient. Sections of the community campaigned strongly to have limits on “bridewealth” outlined in the constitution, to limit the financial problems caused.

### GENDER ISSUES

Timorese society is still strongly divided along gender lines. Traditionally, men are seen as breadwinners and community leaders, while women are responsible for maintaining the house and raising the family. Women face strong obstacles to full participation in community life, including high rates of domestic violence, lack of control over reproductive health, socially conservative attitudes to a woman’s chastity, discrimination in employment and the legal system.

However, women do hold key roles in government, and make up approximately 19% of the police

force. They play a vital role in the economy, particularly in agriculture, and are largely responsible for maintaining family welfare. Decreases to the birth-rate, increased access to contraception and improvements to maternal health have the potential to change the status of women in society and allow for greater participation in the work force. In addition to this, proactive steps are being taken to improve the status of women.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence remains an enormous challenge for Timor-Leste. Progress towards community rejection of domestic violence is progressing slowly, but is significantly hindered by an inadequate judicial system and a population desensitised to violence by recent history. *President*



Ramos-Horta says “stop violence against women.”

Domestic violence has been criminalised, but courts are inadequately staffed and experienced to handle the vast numbers of cases and

the complexity of the issue. Local police are inadequately trained to deal with this issue, and often are reluctant to interfere, seeing it as a private issue rather than a serious crime.

Numerous NGOs and advocacy agencies are challenging this issue. Key community leaders such as Gusmão, Ramos-Horta, President of National Parliament Fernando “Lasama” de Araujo, and Dr Rui Araujo, the former Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Health, have been publicly involved in campaigns against domestic violence.

While being aware that domestic violence is prevalent and the ADF is not performing a policing role in Timor-Leste, it is important that ADF members are seen to be promoters of welfare and justice.

### Youth Culture

With such a young population, youth are a central part of life in Timor-Leste. With high rates of youth unemployment and low school attendance, group activities provide purpose and a sense of inclusion. Popular activities include sport (soccer, basketball and volleyball are the most popular), art and music. Sport is a great way to engage with the local population.

Many youth activities are carried out as part of youth groups, which may be formal or informal, and have been central to youth culture in Timor-Leste since Indonesian times. Some groups have membership spreading across multiple districts, but many are based at the *suco* (village) or *bairo* (neighbourhood) level. Most youth groups are valuable contributors to society, and represent a diverse range of interests. One of the more formal forms of such groups is Martial Arts Groups (MAGs), membership of which extends beyond youth. MAGs are often associated with crime and inter-gang violence (See Chapter 5), but there are many other more constructive, but less visible aspects of MAG membership.

For more information on types of youth groups and related security considerations see Chapter 5.



*Members of the Timor-Leste Aviation Group (TLAG) play with the children from Bidau Orphanage in Dili*  
Source: Defence

### CULTURAL ADVICE

For more information on working in new cultural environments, see the Operational Handbook Working Amongst Different Cultures.

### Language Issues

- Learn some simple Tetum phrases, such as hello and thank you. This will help break the ice in a new location and improve your interactions with locals. Keep a phrasebook handy. Don't be scared to try the local language.
- More advanced language learning will allow you to enhance the effectiveness of all of your interactions, monitor the quality of your interpreters and greatly increase your potential to enjoy your time in Timor-Leste.
- Timor-Leste is a linguistically diverse country, and few people speak English. As a visitor you are responsible for making yourself understood by locals.

- Treat your interpreter with respect, not as “hired help,” and they will provide a better service. Involve them in planning where appropriate, but always be aware of security restrictions and procedures. Local interpreters may have helpful information, and may be able to help overcome cultural barriers. But remember, your interpreter’s loyalty may ultimately lie elsewhere.
- Be aware that local languages and dialects can vary significantly across Timor-Leste. Make sure your interpreter speaks the languages of the area you are visiting.
- Don’t let your interpreter answer questions for you. They are there to be your voice, so make sure you do the talking.

### Interactions with Locals

- When speaking, the tone of your voice is important. Avoid aggressive or frustrated tones, as people can hear this even when they cannot understand your words. Don’t swear around locals: it will cause offence
- Locals are typically polite and quietly spoken. Don’t underestimate their intelligence, experience or capability.
- Gestures and body language may be interpreted differently in Timor. Avoid pointing at people or touching a local person’s head. These are both considered rude and offensive. A smile is universally understood.
- Eye contact is important during conversation. It shows respect and consideration for the speaker.
- A handshake is a common greeting between men in Timor-Leste, but be gentle! A strong shake may be seen as overly aggressive. Local men may shake hands with a foreign woman (although rarely with local women). Foreign men should wait until a local woman initiates a handshake. Women often kiss on the cheek when meeting other women, even if meeting for the first time.

- When entering a village, always approach the chief first. He will not normally be distinguished by any particular dress, so ask local people to help you find him. You may be offered coffee, which should be accepted.
- Time is a very flexible concept in Timor-Leste. Lack of attendance at meetings is frequent, and meeting times may be considered flexible. Lack of attendance does not mean lack of interest. Instead, it reflects the nature of life, where people have a range of competing commitments and a different attitude to time. Family may take priority over other appointments. Be patient. Do not expect anything to happen in a hurry. Never show frustration when an appointment is not kept. This reflects poorly on you, is counter-



productive and will lower your standing in the eyes of locals.

*ADF member talking to a group of girls in the town of Darlau*

*Source: Defence*

- Make time to explain what is going on to village elders.
- Treat all people with respect, particularly village elders. Be polite and address people by their proper titles.
- Timorese society is conservative and strongly divided by gender. Be careful when interacting with someone’s boyfriend/girlfriend/partner/spouse. Timorese are protective and may

react strongly if they feel challenged by your actions. Timorese men are often very protective of women.

- Many Timorese people are socially conservative. Topics such as sex, same sex relationships, divorce, abortion, women's rights, and racism should be approached very cautiously. Avoid directly criticizing the Church.
- Avoid directly criticizing Indonesian people and do not assume that Timorese people dislike Indonesian people as individuals.

### Professional Relationships

- Maintaining relationships is an important part of Timorese social and business life. To work effectively with the local population or your counterparts, give special attention to developing good relationships.
- Much time will be spent socialising before business/a meeting/a training session begins, including drinking coffee. This is an important part of establishing relationships and trust.
- A host is unlikely to ask a guest what they wish to eat or drink, but instead will offer the best they have. These offerings should always be accepted. It is considered offensive to reject these offers of hospitality.
- Always flash a smile when you passing someone you know. If possible, stop and greet them.
- Good conversation starters include asking about the part of the country people are from, Timor-Leste's natural beauty, Timorese foods and Timorese cultural celebrations. Avoid talking about politics.
- Family is a very important part of Timorese life. General conversations about family and community may be well received, and locals will likely be interested in your family as well.
- Timorese people have a vibrant sense of humour, and may use humour to help cope with serious situations. However, Australian humour may not always translate into local

humour.

- Timorese can be very honest and direct about the people they are around. Their humour is often about other people, and they may make comments (e.g. about weight, appearance



or mannerisms) that might make Australians uncomfortable. This is not intended as an insult, but rather is a sign of honesty.

*Lospalos. Street art and graffiti are an important outlet for self-expression in Timor-Leste. Ruined buildings often get a make-over.*

*Source: DSTO, Defence*

- Locally engaged staff or cooperation partners may be reluctant to show that they don't understand what is being asked of them, or feel unable to perform. Instead, they may just appear to be unmotivated or even not show up for work. Allow significant time to explain tasks and expectations, and ideally have them explain them back to you, to ensure that trust and understanding is established. Before assuming that someone is lazy, explore the possibility that they are feeling uncomfortable or uncertain.

### Personal Behaviour

- Public displays of affection are frowned upon. Locals (men and women) may hold hands with friends of the same sex or kiss in greeting. This is just a sign of friendship and does not

indicate they are gay. However, even when dating or married, locals generally will not hold hands, kiss, hug or engage in other displays of affection in public.

- Public displays of anger are not socially acceptable. However, in certain situations men



may become angry and violent, particularly if they feel disrespected or challenged. The most common way of expressing anger is through silence and non-interaction.

*Timorese men dry coffee beans for export*  
Source: USAID

- Avoid aggressive or public confrontations with local counterparts. Be careful how you discipline or correct people. A private conversation may be more appropriate
- Timorese people dress quite conservatively. Clothes that come above the knee or leave shoulders bare are not acceptable for men or women in professional or traditional social settings. Swimwear should be modest, and covering clothing should be worn when leaving the beach.
- Always ask permission before taking a photo.

### **Local Landscape**

- The Padre should be able to develop quick rapport with the local population. Soldiers attending a local church service would be seen as positive.
- Some beach and other sites could be sacred. Seek advice from local leaders/elders before

conducting activities/operations.

- Coffee beans are often left to dry on the road. Vehicles should drive around them.
- If you cause damage to private property or cause an injury, take details for potential compensation. Follow standard procedures on this matter.
- Unless the ROE determines otherwise, knock and request entry before going into a residence.



# Chapter 4

## Government

## Chapter 4 - Government

### DIVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Timor-Leste is divided into 13 administrative districts, each with a capital city and a District Administrator. The 13 districts are divided into 67 postos (sub districts), with one of these each designated as the capital sub district. For district capitals and populations see Chapter One.

These sub districts are further divided into approximately 495 villages called sukus (sucos). These are the smallest administrative divisions within the Government of Timor-Leste. The Suco Chief and Suco Council are elected by popular vote. For ease, the sucos are then divided into aldeias (hamlets) which provide representatives on the Suco Councils. There are approximately 2, 230 aldeias. Sucus in Dili are divided into bairros (neighbourhoods).

### MUNICIPALITIES – A NEW SYSTEM

Since Independence, there has been concern that Government in Timor-Leste is too centralised. A number of decentralisation reform policies have been proposed, one of which is the establishment of municipal assemblies to devolve some national government functions to the districts and empower local governance.

Elected local assemblies (municipalities) with wide-ranging local administrative responsibilities would be established. They would consist of representatives from a main town and surrounding villages. The municipalities were designed to be laid over current district boundaries replacing them as administrative divisions. A mayor would replace the current District Administrator.

As part of this proposal, the first municipal elections were planned for

2009, have been postponed until at least 2014. The main obstacle to the municipal process is that the laws required for segregation of national and localised government have not been devised.

### NATIONAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Timor-Leste is a Democratic Republic. It has a parliament (Parlamento) consisting of between 52-65 seats which are publicly elected every five years. The Head of State is the President, who is publicly elected for up to two five year terms. Executive authority is held by the Prime Minister who is appointed by the President.



*Prime Minister Gusmao and President Ramos-Horta at the United Nations 60th-year celebration ceremony in Dili*  
Source: Defence

The President's role in Timorese politics is largely symbolic. However, the president does have an important role in ensuring the Constitution and state institutions are respected, and can veto legislation. The President presides over the Council of State and the Superior Council of Defense and Security. He or she also has the power to grant

pardons for those who have committed crimes. The Prime Minister, as Head of Government, is responsible for managing the day-to-day running of the country.

Currently, Dr José Ramos-Horta is the President of the Republic and Kay Rala 'Xanana' Gusmão is the Prime Minister. Both positions will be contested in 2012 when Presidential (around March) and parliamentary (mid-year) elections are scheduled to be held.

Government is currently held by coalition between four parties, the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), Social Democratic Association of Timor (ASDT), Social Democratic Party (PSD) and Democratic Party (PD). Prime Minister Gusmão presides over this so called 'Alliance of Parliamentary Majority' (AMP) The FRETILIN party is in opposition.

The Prime Minister's Cabinet is called the 'Council of Ministers' and consists of the Prime Minister, two Vice Prime Ministers and 12 elected Ministers. Seven autonomous Secretaries of State are also included in the Council of Ministers but do not have voting rights. The five Vice Ministers and remaining 19 Secretaries of State may also be called upon to sit in the Council of Ministers, also without the right to vote, unless they are deputising for their respective Minister.



*PNTL parade past the Timor-Leste Parliament*  
Source: Defence

Elections in Timor have so far been characterized by high voter turnout and reasonably low levels of violence. Both the 2001 and 2007 elections are generally considered to have been free and fair. However, the community remains fearful that competition between political parties could spark violence. Some incidents of voter intimidation and violence were reported in both elections. Political leaders have an important responsibility to ensure their supporters do not use violence. Given the 2007 elections occurred against the backdrop of unresolved tensions from the 2006 unrest, it is an encouraging sign that these elections were so successful. The 2012 elections are likely to be accompanied by increased social tensions and possible political violence, but it is hoped that this will be within the capacity of the PNTL to manage.

## POLITICAL PARTIES

While FRETILIN still dominates Timorese politics, a multi party system has emerged over the last 10 years. 16 registered parties contested the 2007 parliamentary elections. Eight parties currently hold seats in parliament.

### CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY IN TIMOR-LESTE

The 'Alliance of Parliamentary Majority' (AMP) government has been a major test of the Timorese understanding of democracy. To the confusion of some, FRETILIN gained more seats than any other party, but was not able to form government. The idea of a coalition government is new to Timor-Leste. Some FRETILIN supporters were angry that FRETILIN did not form government, and saw the AMP as part of a conspiracy to keep FRETILIN out. FRETILIN launched an unsuccessful legal action against the coalition, before accepting its place in opposition.



## KEY POLITICAL LEADERS

### Dr José RAMOS-HORTA



Born in 1949 in Dili, José Ramos-Horta is a Timorese national. Exiled from Portuguese Timor in the early 1970s for political activities, Ramos-Horta became known internationally for his efforts to promote

international awareness and resistance to the Indonesian occupation. He was awarded a NOBEL Peace Prize in 1996, which he shared with Bishop Belo, for their joint efforts to promote the Timorese cause. Ramos-Horta helped establish the FRETILIN Party, but is no longer a member. He played an important role in negotiating the institutional transition to independence. As an independent, he became a minister in the first post-independence government, and served as Prime Minister from June 26 - May 2007. He was elected as President in 2007.

### Kay Rala "Xanana" Gusmão



(Born José Alexandre Gusmão) Born in 1946 in Manatuto, Xanana Gusmão was a key resistance leader within the FRETILIN movement and Commander-in-Chief of FALINTIL from 1981. He was Speaker of the National Council

during the UNTAET administration. Running as an independent, he became the first President of independent Timor-Leste on 20 May 2002. In 2006-7 he helped found the CNRT Party and is its leader. He became Prime Minister in 2007.

### Mari ALKATIRI

Mari Alkatiri was a founding member of FRETILIN. Overseas on a FRETILIN diplomatic mission at the time of the Indonesian invasion, Alkatiri was influential in setting up the FRETILIN



External Delegation which campaigned for international recognition and support for an independent Timor-Leste. He lived in exile in Angola and Mozambique, before returning to Timor after 1999. He became Timor-

Leste's first prime minister in 2002, but resigned on 26 June 2006 following the unrest of that year. He was reelected to parliament in the 2007 elections, and continues to serve as a senior member of the FRETILIN party.

### José Luís GUTERRES



José Luís Guterres was an important member of the FRETILIN diplomatic effort during the Indonesian occupation, and became the first Ambassador of Timor-Leste to the US following independence. A long-term member of the FRETILIN

party, he unsuccessfully challenged Alkatiri for the party leadership in 2006. He has since parted ways with the main part of FRETILIN. He served as Foreign Minister under Ramos-Horta's 2006-2007 government, before leading the breakaway Mudanca ("reform") faction of the FRETILIN party to the 2007 election. This faction joined the CNRT-led coalition that formed government. Guterres is currently the Vice-Prime Minister for Social Affairs. In 2009, he was charged with corruption and abuse of power, but was acquitted in 2011.

### Francisco "Lu Olo" GUTERRES



Francisco Guterres, or "Lu Olo" as he's known, was an important member of the resistance and has since made the difficult transition into politics. He was the only founding member of FRETILIN to survive

the entire occupation in Timor, and one of few FALINTIL commanders to evade capture or death. He became a Member of Parliament and president of Fretilin in 2001, and was the first President of the National Parliament. He came second in the 2007 presidential elections after a second round run-off with Ramos-Horta, and remains an important and influential person in the Timorese political sphere. He currently holds the position of Secretary of State for Security.

### Francisco Xavier DO AMARAL



A founding member and first leader of FRETILIN, Do Amaral was ousted from the party in 1977 over disagreements about the best way to oppose the Indonesian occupation. He was arrested by the Indonesians in 1978 and

spent much of the occupation under house arrest in Bali and Jakarta, returning to Dili in 2000. He founded the Social Democratic Association of Timor (ASDT) in 2001 and ran against Gusmão in the first post-independence presidential elections. In 2002 he became Vice President of the Parliament. Tensions remain between him and FRETILIN. He came fourth in the 2007 presidential elections, and serves as a member of the current coalition government.

### ECONOMY AND THE PETROLEUM FUND

Timor-Leste is one of the poorest countries in the Asia Pacific. Economic growth has fluctuated in response to periods of instability and international presence, but overall Timor-Leste has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. This growth is significant for a country rebuilding in a post conflict period. The reality of this rapid economic rise, however, is more complex and less optimistic. It is important to remember that Timor-Leste is starting from a very low base point.

Timor-Leste has a small GDP and the GDP per Capita for 2011 is only US \$582, which is

exacerbated by a high inflation rate of 4%. Petroleum dominates the economy, representing about 87% of the GDP total. There is also a significant amount of money entering the country in the form of aid, and spending by ISF and UN workers. This money does not reach most sectors of the population and although the overall GDP is rising, the majority remain in extreme poverty.

Timor Leste's budget for 2011 is only US \$985m. 88% of the income for this budget comes from the Petroleum Fund. The Petroleum Fund, which was established as a national investment to use for long term development, is currently worth USD 6.3 billion, and continues to grow. This Fund must be carefully managed if it is to provide long-term support to the Timorese economy. So far, commentary from the UNDP and other international observers suggests that the fund is performing well. An Estimated Sustainable Income (ESI)<sup>1</sup> level of US\$ 407.8 million has been established as a guideline for how much money can be withdrawn each year, and legislation governs how the money may be spend. However, there are looming areas of concern. A 2008 Timorese Government review concluded that the ESI was too conservative. Spending has since increased beyond the ESI. In 2010, it was US\$ 309 million above ESI, and may exceed the ESI by over US\$ 500 million by 2015. If Timor-Leste continues down this path, spending may become unsustainable. There have also been significant concerns raised about the government's ability to actually spend the money in its budget. Timor-Leste's institutional capacity is still development.

There is much international pressure for Timor-Leste to go into debt, but there are valid concerns that Timor-Leste could not repay debt. Under current Fund Law, the Petroleum Fund cannot be used to repay loans, and Timor-Leste does not have an adequate alternative income for this purpose. Nevertheless, many international companies and oil scarce countries are already offering soft lines of credit and infrastructure solutions in exchange for oil access. Timor-Leste

is investigating such arrangements with China and Portugal.

These issues are currently overshadowed by controversy over where to process the petroleum. Operator Woodside Petroleum estimates that the Greater Sunrise Oil and Gas field has recoverable revenue of 5.13 Tcf (trillion cubic feet) in the field which will be divided almost equally between Timor-Leste, Australia, company profits and exploration costs. The debate lies in whether to run a submarine pipeline to Australia, to Timor-Leste or process the oil in a floating LNG plant in the middle of the sea.

### THE NON-OIL ECONOMY

In order to maintain the GDP and economic security, Timor-Leste has had to address the non-oil economy. This is not helped by the fact that foreign investment in Timor-Leste is problematic. Current land title laws prevent foreigners from owning land in Timor-Leste. Private sector investment is still cautious of political instability, and lack of infrastructure assurance, particularly in transport, communications and power. The World Bank ranks Timor-Leste as 174th out of 183 countries for “ease” of doing business.



*Terrace Gardens near Suai*  
Source: DSTO, Defence

### THE PELICAN PARADISE AFFAIR

In 2009, the Government of Timor-Leste sold land at Tasi Tolu to Malaysian consortium Pelican Paradise Holdings to build a five star resort and golf range. The problem was that the land contains the sewage treatment settling ponds (built by Australia after INTERFET) which treat all transportable waste from Dili, including the waste from the International Stabilisation Force sites.

In 2009, without the waste disposal contractor or clients’ knowledge, the consortium secured the site and started draining the ponds into the sea. Dili did not have an alternate waste disposal site and temporary measures were taken.

Adding to the trouble, when construction started in 2010, human remains of several massacre victims were found on the site. Work was halted and a government investigation started. Alternate treatment ponds are being built for both ISF and Dili residents. Work on the resort is delayed indefinitely.

### OTHER RESOURCES

Agriculture is the largest employing sector in Timor-Leste. However, agriculture only makes up 32.2% of the GDP (2005). Timorese agriculture is largely subsistent (i.e. people only grow enough to survive). Only 4.71% of the total land area is available for agriculture. Many farmers across the country lack a secure, quality water source. Timor-Leste is reliant on imports to meet local needs.

Current industries include printing, soap manufacturing, handicrafts, and traditional woven cloth. Exports consist of coffee, limited sandalwood products and marble. Potential exists for oil and vanilla exports.

Maritime resources include large tuna, sailfish, marlin, trevally, coral reef fish and deepwater

snapper. A number of humpback whales and pilot whales are to be found on the north coast. The large coral reefs mean that there is potential for eco tourism, including game fishing and diving, and aquaculture. Timor-Leste has already started to take advantage of this and in 2009 it held its inaugural sports fishing competition attracting 265 participants.



*Dili's international fishing competition 2009*

Source: Atuario, IslandofAdventure.com

The continuing period of stability and growth has seen a rise in the number of foreign businesses investing in Timor-Leste. There has been some ventures in the eco tourism sector, which includes diving, hotels, trekking, bike riding and fishing. A small number of ventures include retail, hospitality, beauty and permanent accommodation construction. A number of these business ventures are run by Australian companies or Australians living in Timor-Leste. Many employ Timorese labour and cater for the international clientele of the UN in particular. It is expected that after the withdrawal of the UN, a substantial amount of this economic activity will cease. However, the marketing of successful tourist events, such as the Tour de Timor, International Marathon Race, Darwin to Dili Yacht Race and an Underwater

Photography Competition, are attracting more people each year.

## POVERTY

Timor-Leste is one of the poorest countries in the world. In Timor-Leste, the government considers US\$0.88 per day the minimum required to survive (i.e. the poverty line). Nearly 50% of the population are surviving on less than this. Disturbingly, poverty has actually risen significantly since independence with only 36% reported as living below the poverty line in 2001. As a result, many people do not have enough to eat, cannot access medical care, and do not have adequate housing.

Up to 80% of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture and are outside the monetary system. Therefore, while monetary measures of poverty are important, they must be considered against other indicators. Health statistics, school enrolments and life expectancy are slowly improving, but not enough so far to ensure that positive trends will be sustained, or to ensure a prosperous and healthy future for the population. Timor-Leste still has a long way to go in improving the well-being of its citizens.



*Woman in Com making traditional Timorese Tais*

Source: DSTO, Defence

## ENDING POVERTY

The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted in 2000, represent concrete targets to be achieved by 2015 to reduce poverty. These goals have UN endorsement, and shape the provision of development aid by governments, International Organisations, and NGOs. The extent to which progress is being made against these goals varies depending on which institution or organisation is assessing them, but the Government of Timor-Leste assesses that significant progress is being achieved.

There are 8 MDGs, with 21 targets and measurable indicators for each. The Goals are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality rates
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

## EDUCATION

The literacy rate of East Timorese over 15 years of age is 58.6%. In 2011, 85% of children are enrolled in primary school. However, low attendance rates, high drop out rates and low completion rates mean that real participation in school is lower than this figure suggests.



*Fatu-Ahi Primary School. Many schools across the country are damaged or unfinished, and lack basic facilities like toilets. Despite this, classes continue.*

One of the greatest obstacles to effective education is severe teacher and resource shortages. Many teachers left with the Indonesian withdrawal in 1999, and most education infrastructure and resources were destroyed by militias in 1999 and are still being re-established. Even today, classrooms are usually makeshift spaces which are overcrowded and do not have sufficient books, stationary, blackboards or any form of teaching equipment.

Language barriers also persist as an impediment to education, with primary schools continuing to teach in Tetum, while Portuguese is the main high school language and university language. Many teachers were educated in Indonesian, not Tetum or Portuguese, but there is a strong bias against using Indonesian in schools.

Girls and women face additional barriers to seeking an education. Women's higher drop-out rates, lower literacy rates and lower university enrolment are due to cultural barriers, family pressure to continue manual labor, marry, and care for the family. Once married, women are unlikely to continue their education, and on average women are marrying at a younger age. Poor education not only effects women's participation in the workforce, but is also a direct cause of alarming women's and children's health statistics, resulting

in lack of understanding of health requirements and options.



*“Sometimes I wish to be able to do something, but I have no power and education to free my people”*

*Graffiti in Suai Loro Oct 2009*

*Source: DSTO, Defence*

## HEALTH

### Health Problems

Health is a major issue and provision of health care is very limited. Life expectancy is low at 67 years (male: 65.54 years, Female: 70.47 years) although this has been slowly rising in recent years.

Mosquito borne diseases are endemic. In 2007 Timor-Leste reported 46,832 cases of malaria - nearly one-twentieth of the population, and this figure is likely to be much higher with large portions of the population accepting malaria as a part of life rather than a disease.

#### HEALTH TIP

Do not play with dogs. There is a high prevalence of rabies among dogs in Timor-Leste. All dog bites must be treated for rabies. Australian soldiers have been bitten by dogs, either while playing with them or trying to kick them away.

Maternal health is poor. 929 women die in childbirth for every 100 000 babies born. This is almost double the South Asian average (490), and is the eighth worst rate in the world. By comparison, Australia has only 5 maternal deaths per 100,000 births.



*Primary School children at Ralaico*

*Source: DSTO, Defence*

Child mortality also continues to be high, with 4% of children dying before their 5th birthday. Children typically succumb to such diseases as diarrhoeal illnesses, malaria and respiratory infections. Malnutrition is a major cause of ill-health in children, and little progress has been made since the beginning of international interventions in Timor-Leste. In 2001, 45% of children under 5 were under their target weight. In 2011, chronic malnutrition affects 54% of all children. Poor childhood nutrition has significant long term impacts on physical and mental development. This is visible in low birth weight and diminutive size of the population in general.

Common adult diseases include respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, malaria, dengue fever, tuberculosis, urethral discharge and other gynecological problems, and leprosy. Widespread smoking is a major cause of respiratory illness, as are cooking fires, refuse fires and slash and burn farming practices. Another emerging problem is the spread of HIV, with a slow but increasing public awareness campaign on the use of condoms. Road accident injuries are another major concern.

The Timorese population is psychologically fragile, having suffered repeated trauma, under Indonesian rule, during the 1999 and 2006 unrest, and as a result of other social disturbances. Social and domestic violence remains widespread. It has been estimated that a third of the population suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and up to 50% of women suffer from domestic violence. As a result of traumatic past experience, people are quick to react to rumours of unrest by fleeing their homes and are reluctant to return for long periods after instability. This fear can also be seen in increased tendency for individuals to take pre-emptive action in response to perceived threat, rather than waiting to confirm or disconfirm rumours, or to rely on authorities to provide protection.

Significant contributors to health problems include poor infrastructure that makes it difficult to reach health centres, and a lack of medical personnel. Poverty makes preventative measures and treatments unaffordable.

**HEALTH TIP**  
 Local hygiene standards are different to Australian standards. Depending on their role, locally employed civilians may need to be instructed in and monitored to ensure compliance with required hygiene standards.

**Health Solutions**

The Ministry of Health (known as Servisu Integrado Saude Comunitaire) sponsors free mobile clinics which visit the districts each month. These clinics provide pre and post natal care, family planning, treatment and prevention of common diseases and infections, and information on hygiene and nutrition.

The Dili Hospital employs Timorese resident doctors and has recently gained specialists from outside Timor, in particular Indonesia, Cuba and China. Australia (through AusAID) trains Timorese

nurses and midwives, and provides scholarships for medicine and medical administration. Cuba also trains up to 1000 Timorese doctors and health workers in Cuba, whilst paying the salaries of the 300 Cuban doctors working in Timor-Leste.



*'Midwives on Motorbikes' - an outreach initiative by the Marie Stopes clinic in Dili.*

Source: Marie Stopes International

Australia is heavily involved with efforts to improve health in Timor-Leste. You may be involved with this, perhaps through assistance to health clinics or assistance to infrastructure projects that make it easier to reach health care. These activities are something to take pride in, and are greatly appreciated by the community.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Communications, News and Media**

Timor-Leste's telecommunications infrastructure suffered catastrophic damage in 1999, after which the country started a new system. Australia's Telstra provided mobile phone coverage until 2003 when Timor Telecom (owned by Portugal Telecom), took over, adding landline services to Dili.

Second Generation digital cellular network coverage is nationwide, via satellite, and currently provides service to 86% of the population.

Throughout 2010 the 3G network commenced with coverage activated in Dili, Baucau, Gleno, Aileu, Los Palos and Oecussi.

Internet access is very slow and limited to about 80,000 people, with plans to double that in 2011. Dili has an increasing number of internet cafes and community centres with internet access started to be established in the districts during 2010. Internet is accessible via dial up modem and ADSL, but there is currently no broadband network.

Mobile phones are the Government's preferred option for rapid mass communication, using SMS for emergency alerts on road closures, health warnings and current events.

Radio is also an effective means of communicating with the public, with most people owning a radio. There are at least 21 radio stations operating across the country, including a number of local, community radio stations. Radio Australia offers an English-language news and information service (on frequency FM 106.5 in Dili). TV access is limited, with only one public TV station broadcasting nationally, although Dili also has a commercial TV station. In rural areas only some houses will have a television, and this is often connected to Indonesian cable networks. There are a few Tetum language newspapers in circulation, and *Tempo Semanal* is the main national newspaper. However, low literacy levels make this less effective as a means of sharing information. English, Portuguese and Indonesian language newspapers can also be found in Dili. Online English news providers include:

<http://www.timornewslines.com/>

<http://www.guidetotimor.com/>

<http://reliefweb.int/taxonomy/term/230>

## Energy

Power supply to urban areas is intermittent and centred around the government and hospitality buildings. In Dili only 50% of residential houses have electricity, and in rural areas, domestic supply is unreliable and only available for designated periods. Even in major towns, such as Baucau, Suai, Los Palos, Viqueque and Aileu, electricity may be available for a few hours a day, every couple of

days, or at best only for 12 hours at night.

To rectify this, the Government has planned a large project to build three heavy oil power plants in Same, Manatuto and Hera. These plants will fuel a National Power Grid which will provide 1 GW of power capacity to the whole country (ideally by 2020). However, problems such as financing and the absence of poles and wires are hampering progress. Concerns have also been raised about significant health and environmental impacts from the plants. Work stalled at the Hera site in February 2009 and is yet to resume. Hera is anticipated to be operational by the end of 2011, while the Betano plant may come online mid 2012.

## SECURITY FORCES

The most important sectors being developed in Timor-Leste today are the justice and security sectors. These sectors consist of many components: laws, government departments, the courts, the various elements of police and military forces, private security firms and public compliance. The Timorese government, the UN and bilateral partners like Australia and Portugal are all helping build these capabilities and gradually handing over responsibility for training and security roles to local forces.

Security sector development is fragile and complex. Fundamental questions like *"do we even need a land military force?"*, *"what level of armament is justified?"*, *"what constitutes authority and justice in local terms?"* have to be addressed. Added to this in the Timorese context is the strong legacy of the former guerrilla independence movement which dominates government and military force leadership. This legacy affects expectations of the behaviour and form of security forces and brings with it the issues of transitioning members of the guerrilla force into a national security framework. It is important to remember that assistance provided by bilateral and multilateral partners must occur with the consent of the sovereign government, and be shaped by local will.





*PNTL member at a ceremony marking the hand-over of policing from the UNPOL to the PNTL within the Oecussi district*

Source: Defence

The *Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (PNTL) and *Falantil - Forcas Defesa de Timor-Leste* (F-FDTL) are gaining public confidence and credibility as sustainable, independent institutions. But a number of endemic weaknesses persist, including tensions between the PNTL and F-FDTL, which have not made security sector reform an easy process. Both forces are characterised by many specialised units, each with their own leaders and niche functions. This multitude of sub-elements has the potential to result in overlaps and conflict of spheres of authority, as most recently demonstrated by incidents between the F-FDTL Military Police and the PNTL.

### JOINT COMMAND – WHAT IS THAT?

The National Security Law provides for an 'Integrated System' between the Defence and Security functions. To achieve this, the police and military portfolios were combined under one ministry which is headed by the Prime Minister, and the Integrated Crisis Management Centre (ICMC) was established to increase and coordinate collaborative responses of the PNTL, F-FDTL and other agencies to internal security threats and natural disasters. The integrated system involves strengthening collaboration between PNTL, F-FDTL and other agencies. Criticism of the law says that there is a lack of clarity on the delineation of the roles of PNTL and F-FDTL.

One manifestation of joint operations was seen in joint patrols between F-FDTL military police and PNTL officers in 2009. These patrols took place at night in Dili and were designed to target off duty F-FDTL servicemen committing weapons offences.



*National Police Sub Inspector, Euclides Belo, Defence Cooperation Program Advisor, and F-FDTL Sergeant Joau Carrascalau*

Source: Defence

## THE MILITARY (F-FDTL)

### Background

There has been significant debate internally and internationally about the ideal nature of an East Timorese defence force. The UN and most states in the multi-national intervention forces have recommended a half-regular, half-reserve army. In 2006, the Timorese Government produced a strategic 'white paper' called Force 2020 which set out goals for F-FDTL development over the next ten years. It sets out expectations for a fully fledged national military including conscription, anti-armour weapons, armoured personnel carriers and patrol boats. Despite criticism by many for being too expensive and unnecessary, Force 2020 has been adopted by the Timorese government, and it is in accordance with this plan that the F-FDTL is aiming to develop.

### Organisation

The structure of the F-FDTL has moved ahead rapidly since 2006. A surge in recruitment and training following the 2006 crisis (which saw essentially a battalion's strength of personnel dismissed for abandoning their barracks) has allowed force structure and development plans to progress. Since 2009, there have been changes in the structure and leadership with the position of CDF raised from BRIG to MAJGEN, as currently held by Major General Taur Matan Ruak (TMR). A new VCDF position was created and is held by BRIG Lere Anan Timor. The Chief of Staff is Colonel Philomeno (Meno) Paixao. Headquarter staff positions (J1-8) are CAPT/LT rank.

There are three other full Colonels in the force: the Commandant of the Training Centre is Colonel Falur Rate Laek; Naval Component Commander is Colonel Pedro Klamar Fuik; and Support Services Company Commander is former J2, Colonel Mau Nana.

During a January 2011 recruitment round, 600 recruits were added, taking total numbers from 1257 to 1857, as part of a plan to build a

3000 member force, notwithstanding budget constraints.

### Leadership

Taur Matan Ruak (TMR: Tetum for 'Two Sharp Eyes'. Real name: José Maria Vasconcelos) was a FALINTIL combatant during the Indonesian occupation, and has a distinguished military career. Gaining his first official appointment at the end of 1976, over the course of the campaign TMR rose through the FALINTIL ranks, becoming Commander of FALINTIL on March 11, 1998. He has significant leadership, combat and logistics experience. On 20 August 2000 TMR was appointed Commander in Chief of FALINTIL, and with In dependence on



MAJGEN Taur Matan Ruak

20 May 2002 he became *Chefe Estado Maior General Forças Armadas* of the F-FDTL. He was promoted to Major General at the end of 2009. He is married to Isabel da Costa Ferreira.

TMR is a highly professional and diplomatic leader. His confidence derives from his wide support throughout the F-FDTL and his close association with PM Gusmão. Like Gusmão, he is the key decision maker in his organisation on matters ranging from the strategic to the tactical. He is committed to remaining in his position for the next few years to oversee the rebuilding of the F-FDTL into a capable force, and the advancement of a new leadership group. At the moment there is no immediate successor, although opportunities for overseas staff colleges are opening up for more senior officers. F-FDTL Chief of Staff, COL Meno Paixao, is one such officer, while COL Meno appears to be the natural replacement for TMR.

Options for TMR after F-FDTL include running for President of the Republic. TMR already has significant political influence, beyond military affairs.

### Training

Over the next two years, the F-FDTL will continue to focus on training new recruits and bringing new capabilities into service, such as its maritime, disaster relief, border security and international peacekeeping capabilities.

The Nicolau Lobato Training Centre (CICNL) at Metinaro is the primary training facility for all F-FDTL individual training. A team of Portuguese military personnel supports the conduct of the recruit training course, and all other promotion courses conducted in Timor-Leste. These courses are taught in Portuguese and Tetum. Portuguese is the official language of the military, but the majority of soldiers recruited from rural areas speak Tetum and have not had much exposure to Portuguese. Portugal also supports F-FDTL personnel attending courses in Portugal, China, Korea, Japan, Canada, America, Cuba, India, Indonesia and Malaysia.



*ADF and F-FDTL soldiers on a skill-sharing exercise in Viqueque.*

*Source: Defence*

There are many other donors who contribute to the development of the F-FDTL which can make coordination of effort and consistency of approach problematic. The Australian Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) conducts an English Language Training Program, and courses in maritime operations, engineering, medical support, communications, logistics and peacekeeping capabilities. The DCP also supports infrastructure development, including training rooms, armouries and ranges.

Some F-FDTL personnel travel to Australia each year to participate in seminars and courses. Every six months two F-FDTL officer cadets start at the Royal Military College-Duntroon. The Portuguese and Australian Militaries also have advisers throughout the F-FDTL and government.

## CAPABILITY

### Army

The Land Component (*Componente Terrestre*) is located in Baucau to the east of Dili and is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Calistro Coliati (a graduate of Australian Command and Staff College). The current membership of the

Componente includes many older FALINTIL Veterans who are waiting to discharge from the F-FDTL once the government's policy on Veterans Affairs is completed. (This policy is likely to include pensions and re-education opportunities). Portugal has sole responsibility for assisting in the development of the Land Component.

F-FDTL is focusing on improving the land component's operational capabilities, including by engaging in collective training opportunities and international training missions. For example, the F-FDTL participates in Exercise CROCODILO, a joint combat exercise held annually with US and ISF forces. F-FDTL also supports the US PACIFIC ANGEL exercises, and the Australian Army Skills at Arms Meet (AASAM). In 2011, Timor-Leste's Foreign Minister announced that his country would send 14 soldiers (engineers) to Lebanon to assist Portuguese troops participating in UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon). The F-FDTL also trained 40 soldiers with the intention of sending them to Japan to help with the relief effort following the March 2011 Tsunami. In the near future F-FDTL is likely to engage bilaterally with Australia, USA, China and Indonesia for more joint exercises.

## **Navy**

The Maritime Component of the F-FDTL, known as the Armada, currently has 235 personnel. It is equipped with two aging Portuguese Albatroz class patrol boats, two Chinese Type-62 (Shanghai) class patrol boats, and has accepted an offer from South Korea for three more patrol boats. Although Naval personnel have received some engineering training in China, and continue to be supervised by the Chinese instructors on operations in Timor-Leste, training is hampered by the language barrier. Maintenance of the boats is another great challenge for the future, with an absence of complimentary logistics systems, and they all have limited sea-going capacity.

Despite these challenges, limited maritime operations have been carried out by the Armada, operating in conjunction with the PNTL Maritime

Unit. In 2010, after being tipped off by local villagers on the south coast, the two new Shanghai patrol boats intercepted a large illegal fishing boat in Timorese waters. This was a great confidence boost for the F-FDTL, despite the fact that the patrol boats were said to find it difficult to operate in the high sea states of the south coast, and subsequent evidence collection and prosecution was ineffective.

## **Weapons**

Current weapons routinely used by the F-FDTL are M16 5.56mm rifle, Minimi 5.56mm light machine gun, M203 40mm grenade launcher, 9mm Self Loading Pistol, .50 calibre Naval gun, and bipod mounted AK47 7.62mm rifles for support of naval boarding parties.

## **THE POLICE (PNTL)**

### **Background**

The PNTL are more advanced as an independent national security force than the F-FDTL. As of 27 March 2011, they assumed full control over policing, following a long and gradual process of the UN Police (UNPOL) handing back responsibility as PNTL units were assessed as meeting established standards district by district.

The handover of policing responsibilities from UNPOL to PNTL was a slow and difficult process with contention over standards and expectations of timeframes, and a deterioration in the relationship between UNPOL and the PNTL. During the UN assessment process, districts and units repeatedly failed to reach the minimum standard, because they lacked transport, accountability, communication capability, accommodation facilities, or appropriately trained staff. Some of these issues persist, however since handover the PNTL has continued to maintain law and order with a reasonable degree of success. While official responsibility has been handed over, in practice, UNPOL officers, UNPOL assets will remain on hand for mentoring and support until UNMIT's expected withdrawal in December 2012.

UNMIT assesses that the PNTL needs to develop further in complex policing skills such as leadership, criminal investigations, forensic and crime scene management, legislation and procedures, community policing, border policing, counter-narcotics, ethics and human rights. The UN continues to be concerned about police excesses, politicisation, militarisation of the PNTL and continuing PNTL / F-FDTL rivalries.

### Organisation

The structure of the PNTL has been reorganised under the command of Longuinhos Monteiro. There are seven basic components of the PNTL.

The first component is directly under the control of Monteiro, and includes Justice, INTERPOL, Public Relations, Gender, the Police Academy and Intelligence and Investigations.

The next two components are the Operations and Administration branches. The Operations branch contains the National Operations Centre (NOC), Weapons and Explosives, Traffic, and Community Police. Administration contains Plans, Finance, Human Resources, Logistics and Information Technology.

The fourth component is the SPU. This contains the Special Operations Company (COE), Personnel Security Company (CSP) and the Public Order Battalion (previously known as UIR, UPR and BOP).

The Police Maritime Unit and the Border Patrol Units make up the fifth and sixth components, and the 13 District Commands form the seventh.

The rank structure of the PNTL has recently undergone reform. The number of ranks has increased from 4 to 13 as part of this process. Discontent persists over systems for and transparency of promotions.

### Leadership

Longuinhos Monteiro has been the General Commander of the PNTL since March 2009. Prior to this, he served with the Indonesian Army, studied law in Denpasar, held various legal appointments, and was Prosecutor General from 2001 to 2009. Monteiro's appointment was intended to be temporary to oversee the transition from UN control, and the certification of governance procedures. But his legal background has resulted in an emphasis on the discipline and accountability of PNTL members under his leadership.

Monteiro's leadership style is relatively autocratic and militant. He alternates between focussing on the strategic issues, leaving his deputy Alfonso de Jesus to concentrate on the daily running of the force; or at times, taking a personal interest in detailed aspects of the force.



*Former ISF Commander Brigadier and Chief of the F-FDTL, MAJGEN Taur Matan Ruak congratulate Longuinhos Monteiro on his appointment as head of the PNTL*  
Source: Defence

He has demonstrated a strong personal interest in automatic weapons, and has established a very positive and personal relationship with successive ISF Commanders.



### Training

The training of the PNTL continues to be reliant on international support from a range of bilateral and UN contributors including Portugal, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the USA, and Singapore. Individual skills training through the Police academy is the responsibility of a Portuguese training team, but some individual training has been carried out by the Australian Federal Police's Timor-Leste Police Development Program (TLPDP), who also participate in collective training advice, investigations and governance training. This division of training assistance has left the PNTL with a number of compatibility and consolidation challenges.

### Capability

The PNTL's authorised strength is 3172. As at June 2011, 3149 officers were registered. Around 20% of the force is female, which is a relatively high proportion in the region. Overall, the PNTL can effectively respond to large-scale public disturbances, but their capacity to sustain this

*PNTL on parade at Independence Day celebrations*

*Source: Defence*

effectiveness over time or distance, or in the event of multiple incidents is unlikely.

More specifically, the PNTL district commands are currently capable of limited community policing. There have been improvements in case management, administration, weapons storage and community relations; but district posts are severely restricted in transport (with only motorcycles in most stations), work facilities, communications and standard operating procedures.

The Information Management Department has no national criminal data base in place. The majority of record keeping and prisoner management is done on by hand in paper files.

The BOP is currently limited to responding to public disorder incidents in Dili and Baucau. Border patrol units lack communications, basic accommodation, office facilities and other logistics to address

illegal border crossing and human trafficking. The Police Maritime Unit is currently capable of limited maritime patrol activities.

The PNTL's capability is significantly enhanced by the presence of UNPOL personnel and communications and transport assets. Their ability to respond to incidents is underpinned by the presence of four Formed Police Units (FPUs) which are the operational arm of UNPOL. Permanently based in Dili, Baucau and Maliana, the Malaysian, Bangladeshi, Portuguese and Pakistani FPUs make up a total of approximately 500 officers. They are mandated to provide static security, are dispatched for riot control and deal with civil disturbances. The Portuguese FPU also provide close protection for government leaders and include a water rescue and SWAT team. These units are expected to be the component of backup support to election security.

### **Weapons**

The BPU use early generation F88 Steyr (not Austeyr) rifles, Mossberg 500 pump action shot guns and Glock 17 pistols. There are currently no stocks of spare parts for any weapon. The BOP use Steyr AUG rifles and is equipped with two water canons from Indonesian manufacturer PT Pindad.

Serviceability of many PNTL weapons is poor. Storage facilities outside (and some within) Dili are substandard, barrels are worn due to using excessive use of tracer rounds, and cleaning of weapons is often carried out with contaminated diesel, soap and water. High levels of humidity also have a detrimental effect on weapon maintenance. Much of the PNTL's ammunition is over seven years old and is unsafe to use.



## Chapter 5

### Causes of Instability



## Chapter 5 – Causes of Instability

Since 2007, Timor-Leste can be described as relatively calm and increasingly resilient to violence. Institutions are still immature, however, fragility exists around popular expectations and the ability of the government to take responsibility for the welfare of its people.

Throughout 2008, 2009 and 2010, there were a number of incidents which could have erupted into conflict but did not. There are four key reasons for this: leadership, resilience, stability and deterrence. Strong leadership from key political identities such as Gusmão, Ramos-Horta, and other influential figures such as Major General Taur Matan Ruak (TMR) and church leaders, has helped strengthen the nation's confidence in resolution of issues by non-violent means. The community is increasingly resilient to violence and more able to absorb incidents without them escalating and causing communal fracturing. Increasing stability means that there is an evolving cohesive national identity and concept of consistent patterns of life. This allows the population to make plans for the future and increases the likelihood of recovering to an established state of normalcy after disturbances. The motivation of members of government and the population to cause or participate in criminal activity is also deterred as national institutions increasingly demonstrate their capacity to intervene and hold individuals accountable. In this respect, the example set by government transparency; as well as the role of security and justice institutions are vital. The extent to which the presence of the ISF and UNPOL provides a deterrence effect is also a factor for consideration.

Tensions will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Some are old unresolved issues with origins in community history and culture which can not be resolved by external intervention. Others are new issues created in the process of nation building. This chapter will look at the potentially

destabilising issues which are apparent in Timor-Leste today.



*Children play in a Dili market,  
Source: Defence*

### UNDERDEVELOPMENT

There is significant overlap between the causes of conflict and poverty. Prolonged conflict causes poverty, and countries with low levels of development are more likely to experience internal conflict.

Aspects of underdevelopment that may contribute to conflict include resentment caused by the failure of justice mechanisms, groups seeking alternatives to overthrow non-representative systems of government, and community competition for scarce resources.

Another key driver of conflict is perceived inequality. All societies suffer from this to some extent, but it is exacerbated when individuals do not feel that they have opportunities to improve their prosperity, or do not believe that their leadership is working to improve equality. In these situations, crime, violence and informal power brokers take over as the means to resolve conflict or achieve goals, instead of going through

legitimate channels. At an individual level this may lead to a deterioration in law and order. However, if it occurs at a group level, it can lead to inter-group conflict and communal or political violence.

Underdevelopment is closely related to virtually every destabilising factor facing Timor-Leste, as a cause or consequence. Following independence, expectations of new levels of equality and prosperity were high, which is typical of the optimism of post-conflict societies. However, these high expectations can equally lead to a return to conflict if the population becomes disillusioned with the 'new deal' and if there are opportunistic power-seekers to encourage destabilisation. Reducing poverty is central to the future stability of the country.

### Unemployment

Unemployment is one of the most significant challenges facing Timor-Leste. The national rate of unemployment is 20%, but this rises to 40-50% amongst the urban youth. Since 2000, the Timorese economy has been growing, but much of this growth has been driven by the temporary UN and ISF presence, and has caused significant inflation. With the withdrawal of the bulk of the UN planned by the end of 2012, many jobs, such as security, hospitality and interpreting, will end.



*Plan's Youth Income Generation Group.*

*Source: Plan*

Youth unemployment is a major destabilising factor with increasing disillusionment with unfulfilled promises of education and development. Frustrated, unemployed youth are more vulnerable to coopting by destabilising elements to stage protests or commit political violence. Organised crime or gang turf wars also provide an alternative source of income, purpose and entertainment.

Foreign competition for employment is an area of sensitivity for Timorese people, which is occasionally raised by political and business leaders when it suits their agenda. However, there are some legitimate concerns about foreign-owned companies bringing in their own labour even for low skill manual labour jobs.

In general, Timorese do not consider subsistence farming (upon which the majority of the population rely) as employment. Employment is often defined as owning your own business or drawing a salary. Aspirations to get a job usually refer to sitting the public service exam and acquiring a government administrative position. This is particularly the case for tertiary students who have a sense of entitlement to a government job following graduation.

The Timorese government currently employs a disproportionately large public service for the budget and actual work available. And yet, there are not enough positions to take on the growing number of university graduates. The future for this large, well-educated and potentially disillusioned portion of the population may include instigating opposition to government, especially in the event that the government make staff cuts in the future.

Equally, as the work force becomes better educated, and global media becomes more accessible, awareness of comparative pay and working conditions in neighbouring states may raise expectations. This could lead to industrial relations disputes, which may escalate if legislation and formal mechanisms for peaceful resolution are not well established.

**Rural-Urban Migration**

Significant rural-urban migration, particularly to Dili, is another factor that has led to tensions. Young men in particular have been coming to Dili in search of work. When work cannot be found, many become reliant on extended families and may be forced into roles of domestic servitude for their hosts. The combination of reliance and unemployment is extremely humiliating for many, contributing to anti-social behaviours.

The international presence in Dili has contributed to the influx of rural migrants. Youths, based in the districts, may work in Dili during the week to support their families, and return home on the weekends. The impact of the eventual loss of these jobs will not only affect the economy in Dili, but in the districts as well.

Rural community conflicts are often continued by relatives living in urban areas. These community tensions are played out on the street by youth gangs or MAGs. What is often identified as urban youth violence is frequently actually inter-community conflict. This is why mediation of incidents of youth violence may be ineffective if it fails to address these underlying causes of tension.

**Food Security**

Food security is problematic in Timor-Leste; 46% of the population lack food security. A low baseline



*Locals sell their produce at the Taibisse Markets, Dili*  
 Source: DSTO, Defence

arable land, poor education about long term planning, lack of access to storage capacity, and lack of investment in agricultural infrastructure mean that seasonal fluctuations in agriculture have a direct impact on food security. These factors all leave the population especially vulnerable to natural disasters such as a failed wet season, landslides or flooding.

**Lack of Infrastructure**

Timor-Leste’s infrastructure program is lagging behind almost every other area of development. The situation is so poor that any significant natural disaster or conflict will almost certainly lead to a humanitarian crisis. Any infrastructure needed for robust, reliable agriculture such as irrigation and a serviceable road system which was established during Indonesian times is degrading and in need of vast investment.



*Main Supply Route: Dili-Suai*  
 Source: DSTO, Defence

The necessity to rebuild basic infrastructure across the country has been somewhat compromised by a focus on the more visible signs of development, especially around Dili. For example, the lack of basic infrastructure such as roads, health care facilities and communications networks has not deterred the rapid construction of retail, hospitality and government buildings in Dili.

## STATE FRAGILITY

### Government Corruption

Family ties are a characteristic of Timorese politics. The political elite, stemming from the original mestizo families (see chapter 2 and 3), still dominate positions of influence within government, and hence are a primary target for accusations of nepotism, cronyism and corruption.

Corruption often involves government tenders to family businesses both within and outside Timor-Leste. Sometimes it involves collusion by spouses between departments or placements for spouses in high profile jobs.

For example, Deputy Prime Minister José Luis Guterres recently faced corruption charges for securing a high paid placement for his wife Ana Maria Valerio when he was UN Ambassador in 2006. Guterres was acquitted of the charges against him in 2011. Guterres' case illustrates the stage that the anti-corruption effort has reached, as it focuses on transparency, but is not yet effective on ensuring accountability.

### Judiciary and Legal System

The judiciary and legal system faces significant resource issues. There are shortages of trained staff, legislation is still being developed, language issues persist, and shortages of translators hamper proceedings. Court facilities and adequately equipped office space are also sparse, impeding professional legal functions, especially information management.

Government interference in the legal system remains a significant obstruction. Senior politicians often exert pressure to have politically sensitive cases resolved in a favourable way. Attempts to have corruption charges against government members prosecuted have repeatedly proved difficult. The President frequently negates the findings of courts by offering pardons to the convicted, particularly perpetrators of crimes during the independence period.

In the face of these weaknesses, informal justice systems remain the initial preferred option, for all but the most serious violent crimes. These traditional justice mechanisms are effective and well understood by the population, but are subject to cultural traditions of discrimination against women and children and detract from government visibility of the prevalence of crime or issues affecting the population.

### Land Title

Land title legislation and mechanisms for resolving ownership disputes continue to be one of the most volatile issues for the East Timorese judicial system. Multiple land ownership systems and the destruction of almost all land registers in 1999 mean that much land ownership is disputed. Further displacements in 1999 and 2006 have contributed to the 'illegal' and temporary occupation of land. Intensifying the matter are the claims of veterans for land rights 'earned' during the resistance.

Legislation is very slowly being processed through parliament, but in the meantime there is no way to legally buy, sell or prove undisputed ownership of land in Timor-Leste. Even when the legislation is passed, the backlog of disputes and compensation claims will be slow.



*Homes on the salt plains*

Source: DSTO, Defence

The government's determination to treat the issue with sensitivity is brought into question each time land is sold to international developers, or compulsorily acquired through forced evictions to make way for expansions of the airport and development activities, especially in Dili where housing shortages make land a prominent issue. Land ownership was one of multiple causes of conflict leading up to the 2006 unrest. While questions of land ownership are unresolved, the population is less likely to invest time or money in improving the productivity, sustainability or appearance of their properties.

### **Security Force Weakness**

Community perceptions of the professionalism and reliability of the national security forces is an important factor for stability. As discussed under Chapter 4, internal instability within the security forces has been a driver of conflict in the past and continues to result in minor conflicts today. In this respect, the security forces have shown a potential to be active participants in conflict, as well as failing to serve as a deterrent to others engaging in conflict.

Perceived lack of professionalism such as excessive use of force by PNTL and F-FDTL members, or bias in dealing with public complaints, undermine popular confidence in national authority and rule of law. Without the ability to maintain law and order, the government of Timor-Leste will lack legitimacy and support.

### **Veterans Affairs**

Timor-Leste is yet to establish a pensions and retirement system for its security forces, which is a source of disenfranchisement for pre-independence resistance fighters and security force veterans. In addition to pensions, there is also debate about entitlement to land, and senior positions in government in return for fighting to establish the East Timorese nation. Many older members of the PNTL and F-FDTL are holding off retirement until this issue is resolved, deferring the rise of a new generation of leadership. Outside of

the security forces, a number of resistance veterans have become involved in (mainly rural) anti-government groups, and have the potential to use their historical credentials to gain popular support, and undermine government legitimacy.

## **SOCIAL TENSIONS**

### **Youth**

Youth represent Timor-Leste's greatest opportunity and one of its biggest challenges. Most young people are eager to participate in community life and embrace their country's future. However, independence has failed to meet expectations of a better future for many. Frustrations continue over the lack of education and work opportunities, malnutrition and health problems, lack of voice in politics, a social order that favours age, social conservatism, and poverty, leading to social isolation, feelings of hopelessness and anger.



*Gangs and MAGs often use graffiti to mark their areas of activity.*

Youth groups provide an outlet for sharing concerns and frustrations and are an important source of identity and purpose for many young East Timorese. Some groups have a reputation as sources of social instability, and indeed some are involved in criminal activities. However, many face unfair negative stereotyping. Most youth groups are valuable contributors to society, and represent a diverse range of interests.

## Youth Groups

**Examples:** Slebor, Green Villa Blok M, Aqui Jazz, Predator, Church Groups, Youth Peace Club, União Nacional dos Escuteiros de Timor-Leste (Scouts), Mankodo ("Black and Blue from a Beating), Choque, Dalan Klot, Jopal, Nelfocoganagi, Samfrus, Has Bongkok, Aldeia Freche Group, Luro Mata/OBOR, and many others.

**Membership:** Youth of all ages, genders and classes. Membership varies from less than a dozen to hundreds. Found throughout Timor-Leste. Operate at bairo, suco, district and national levels. Especially prominent in Dili's migrant communities.

**Purpose:** Provide recreational activities for young people, particularly sport, music and art. Other activities include skills training, education, community service (e.g. street cleaning) and drinking. Church groups are particularly popular. Youth groups mostly present no threat to the community. They play a vital role in engaging young people positively in their community, and present alternatives to gang activities and other anti-social pursuits.

*An ISF Operations Analysis Team talks with local youth in Los Palos*

*Source: Defence*

**Political Allegiance:** Mostly apolitical, but may be mobilised in support of a cause. Individual members may be involved in criminal activities, and small, male groups may take on gang-like characteristics. May have links to NGOs or international organisations.

## Martial Arts Groups (MAGs)

**Examples:** PSHT, KORK, Kera Sakti, Kung Fu Master

**Membership:** 20 000 registered members, and up to 90 000 in total. MAGs include members of both genders and all ages, and all classes of society. Significant representation in the security forces.

**Purpose:** Many MAGs began as clandestine resistance groups during the occupation. Today, most are legitimate sporting organisations. MAGs are often blamed for community violence, and it is true that some members of MAGs engage in criminal activities or fight out their grievances with other MAGs on the streets. However, the MAGs as organisations are rarely involved in violence or criminal activities.

**Political Allegiance:** Often proclaim neutrality, but are generally associated with political parties, depending on the allegiances of MAG



leaders. They may be mobilised by politicians for demonstrations and violence, or by organised crime.

Currently, there is a state of relative peace amongst Dili's MAGs. Conflict still occurs frequently, but is mainly confined to the borders between MAG territories (often the same as *sucu* and *bairo* boundaries). In mid May 2011 leaders of major MAGs swore an oath in front of Prime Minister Gusmão to help reduce violence, but concerns remain about the potential for renewed violence in the lead up to the 2012 elections. MAGs, and youth affiliated with organised crime groups have previously been used as agents of political violence, and there remains the potential for this to occur.

### **East / West Tension**

Tensions between easterners and westerners are complex and have a variety of historical origins. Some refer to a distinction in ethnicity including speaking very different Tetum dialects. At other times, the extent of affiliation with the Portuguese or Japanese occupiers is a point of contention. There are also claims that the heart of the resistance movement lay in the east (the *Loro s'ae*). Westerners are accused of colluding with the colonists (Dutch and subsequently Indonesian) while letting their eastern compatriots make all the sacrifices for freedom.

More recently, during the 1999 crisis, inhabitants of the western *sucos* point out that they were subject to the more extreme violence as militia and TNI travelled across to West Timor. This in turn led to greater numbers of displaced people and resentment over land grabs in their absence. Again during the 2006 crisis, perceptions of inequality emerged as F-FDTL members from the west claimed that they were being discriminated against by an eastern-dominated force. These resentments combined with on-going land disputes, and a popular belief in the west that they were not receiving the same independence benefits enjoyed in the east, to spark widespread

conflict. The basis for these tensions have not been addressed, but it is hoped that land legislation, improved security force discipline, strong political leadership and general popular desire to avoid further violence, will prevent resentments from manifesting in communal violence in the future.

### **Attitudes to Violence**

Timor-Leste's long history of trauma and members of society, are likely to have witnessed, suffered or participated in violence. In such conflict-affected societies, communities can have lower thresholds for resorting to violence, and higher tolerance for accepting violence as part of everyday life – whether committed by security authorities, economic or criminal groups, or even family members, as discussed under Domestic Violence in Chapter 3. This means that individuals or groups may be more likely to resort to violence as a means of achieving their goals or responding to disagreements. This tendency is evident in the prevalence of individual disagreements ending in violence; in the PNTL responding to an incident by beating the guilty party, rather than arresting them; in the violent treatment of dogs and livestock; and in resorting to violence in retaliation for perceived injustice or insult.

Community education initiatives are attempting to change attitudes to violence. Some success is evident in community restraining from violent reaction to incidents such as the 2008 attempted assassination of Ramos-Horta.



# Chapter 6

## Stabilisation



## Chapter 6 –Stabilisation

Since 1999 an enormous amount of international assistance has flowed into Timor-Leste. This assistance has taken various forms and been directed at a diverse range of areas, discussed below.



*ADF soldier chats with locals in Dili*  
Source: Defence

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Many international organisations have established offices in Timor-Leste to assist the government in managing all sectors of society and monitor progress. These organisations include:

- Asia Development Bank (ADB)
- Canada International Development Agency (CIDA)
- International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- International Republican Institute (IRI)
- Japan International Organisation Agency (JICA)
- United Nations (UN)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- World Bank (WB)

### TIMOR-LESTE AND ASEAN

Timor-Leste has recently applied to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Membership in ASEAN would help Timor-Leste integrate into the region, providing economic opportunities and greater international stature. Indonesia has strongly advocated the application, but Singapore has raised concerns about Timor-Leste's economic or administrative capacity to fulfil the obligations of membership, and suggests that economic integration could be damaging for Timor-Leste at this time. As membership can only be granted by unanimous vote from members, Timor-Leste is unlikely to gain entry in 2011.

### United Nations Mission In Timor-Leste (UNMIT)

Established in 2005 as a multi-dimensional peacekeeping operation, UNMIT is the 6th UN mission to Timor-Leste since 1999. This mission is mandated to support the Government of Timor-Leste in "consolidating stability, enhancing a culture of democratic governance, and facilitating political dialogue among Timorese stakeholders, in their efforts to bring about a process of national reconciliation and to foster social cohesion".

As of June 2011, UNMIT had a total of 1,241 uniformed personnel, including 1,208 police and 33 military liaison officers. It also comprises 393 international civilian staff, 884 local civilian personnel and 173 UN Volunteers.

In February 2011, the United Nations Security Council voted to extend the UNMIT mandate until 26 February 2012. A rapid drawdown is envisaged for after the elections in 2012.

The current leaders of UNMIT are Special Representative of the Secretary General Ameerah Haq and Deputy Special Representative of the

Secretary General Finn Reske-Nielson. It is these two leaders who will oversee the end of the UN mission and the withdrawal of the UN presence from Timor-Leste. Individual UN agencies (like the UNDP) will remain to continue development projects. Other significant leaders include Shigeru Mochida, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Security Sector Support and Rule of Law, and Luis Miguel Carrilho, the Police Commissioner.



*UNMIT Special Representative of the Secretary General, Ameerah Haq*

Source: UNMIT website

## UNPOL

The United Nations Police (UNPOL) has taken the lead role in supporting capacity building of the PNTL. Since May 2009, UNPOL has undergone a phased transfer of policing responsibility to the PNTL (See Chapter 4). The PNTL has been fully responsible for law and order and policing since 28 March 2011. Despite many years of cooperation, the relationship between UNPOL and the PNTL is currently very tense, with disagreements over the pace and nature of police reforms. UNPOL will remain in Timor-Leste in a supportive capacity until the withdrawal of UNMIT at the end of 2012.

Most prominent and active among UNPOL's FPU's (as defined in Chapter 4) are the Portuguese who are drawn from the para-military style Portuguese National Guard or Guarda Nacional Republicana, (GNR). They have very different rules of engagement to the ADF and often operate in response to PNTL and Timorese government requests rather than through UNMIT. They are also allowed to drink alcohol and spend their recreation time in local bars and nightclubs, which

has often resulted in altercations with locals. Nonetheless, they have great respect from the population and have proven particularly effective in controlling unrest.

## UN Agencies

There are currently 16 UN agencies resident in Timor-Leste assisting UNMIT to fulfill its mandate across a wide range of areas. The agencies currently in residence are:

- Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
- United Nations Office for Project services (UNOPS)
- United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

## BI-LATERAL ENGAGEMENT

### International Stabilisation Force (ISF)

At the request of the Government of Timor-Leste, Australian and New Zealand troops arrived in Timor-Leste during the 2006 crisis as

the International Stabilisation Force (ISF). The ISF's role was to regain order, help ensure the maintenance of peace and stability, and support the ongoing UNMIT presence. Australia's contribution to this is under Operation ASTUTE, accompanied by a New Zealand Defence Force contingent. An ADF member holds the position of Commander ISF, with a NZDF Deputy Commander. ISF activities include community engagement and small assistance projects, security monitoring and crisis response. In the past, the ISF has had some limited involvement in capacity building activities involving the Timor-Leste security forces, particularly the F-FDTL. However, as mentioned above, military capacity building is carried out through the DCP and other contributing nations, not through the ISF.



*Corporal Wayne Doolan Gives a young child from a local Baucau crache a dose of medicine to help with an illness*  
 Source: Defence

### Foreign Missions in Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste receives support and funding from many bilateral partners. Many of these countries have established embassies or consulates in Timor-Leste. You can expect to see representatives from these missions at official events in Dili.

Amongst the national Missions is the Australian Government Mission which oversees a range of agencies active in Timor-Leste. Australia's assistance to Timor-Leste is contingent on a

coordinated multi-agency contribution, which necessitates communication and collaboration by the ADF with other Australian agencies in the operating space. Key agencies include the Australian Defence Organisation through the Defence Cooperation Program (DCP), Australian Federal Police (AFP), AusAID, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Attorney General's Department and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Many of these agencies have advisors embedded in Timorese Government departments. Awareness of the roles of these other agencies and both formal and informal interaction at every opportunity is essential to enhance situational awareness and identify opportunities for maximising effectiveness of military and non-military activities.

Whilst the DCP is part of Defence, it does not operate under the ISF. Instead, it sits under the Australian Defence Attache, within the Australian Mission and is managed by Defence's International Policy Division. The DCP is responsible for Australia's contribution to building the capacity of the F-FDTL, and includes ADF military advisors. As with other nations in Australia's region, Australia's long-term military engagement with Timor-Leste will occur through the DCP.

Australia contributes to capacity building of the PNTL through the AFP's Timor-Leste Police Development Program (TLPDP), which delivers some mentoring and niche training programs.

### TIMOR-LESTE / INDONESIA RELATIONS

Despite their turbulent history, Timor-Leste and Indonesia currently have solid diplomatic relations. Interaction occurs at all levels of society, with strong interpersonal and economic ties, and frequent diplomatic visits. Persistent areas of tension include reconciliation over the Indonesian occupation and post-independence violence, prosecution of war crimes,

border control, refugee returns and TNI (Indonesian National Armed Force) activities on the border. While many Timorese continue to demand justice for past crimes, the national leadership consistently encourages the population to forget the past and look to the benefits of productive relations with Indonesia.

Bi-lateral aid programs include the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Portuguese Institute for Development Support (IPAD) and the New Zealand Aid Programme. The Chinese government has made significant contributions in a number of areas, particularly infrastructure. The Cuban contribution to health care, especially in the training of Timorese doctors, has been invaluable.

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is responsible for coordinating the Australian Government's development assistance in Timor-Leste, which it does from offices in the Australian Embassy in Dili. AusAID works in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste to identify priority projects, which are then mostly carried out by contracted commercial agencies and NGOs. Australia's country program budget for Timor-Leste in 2011-2012 is approximately \$80 million. Key targets for the period 2009-2014 are:

1. Strengthening basic health and education service delivery, including a special focus on maternal and child health
2. Increasing employment by:
  - a. increasing agricultural productivity
  - b. improving infrastructure, including through labour intensive initiatives
  - c. promoting vocational education
  - d. promoting private sector development, including through enhancing access to microfinance

3. Improving government accountability, transparency and integrity
4. Building the foundations of a safer community.

### **NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS**

NGOs can be found all over Timor-Leste, often working to deliver aid to the local level. NGOs commonly try to maintain a level of independence from government, and especially the military. Others receive funding from government aid agencies to implement programs. For example, AusAID works in partnership with local and international NGOs to implement its development program. Also, there have been occasions where ADF assets have been used to evacuate sick or injured Australian's working for NGOs in remote parts of the country. Some NGOs are very small local groups which rely on community donations.

There are hundreds of international and Timorese NGOs operating in Timor-Leste, specialising in everything from women and children, health, housing, education, refugees, agriculture, forestry, water, engineering, economic sustainability, music, sport, water safety and life saving. As a result, there is a large ex-patriot population of NGO workers, that you will meet at cafés, markets, restaurants and see driving around Dili and especially at the beach near Cristo Rei. These people usually live quite comfortably amongst the population, rather than in protected compounds.

There are also 'sister city' programs, with groups such as "Friends of Aileu", which sponsor visits and events. You may also find visiting Australian school or church groups.

### **BUSINESS VENTURES, FOREIGN EXPATRIATES AND TOURISTS**

The continuing period of stability and growth has seen a rise in the number of foreign businesses investing in Timor-Leste. There has been some ventures in the eco tourism sector, which includes diving, hotels, trekking, bike riding and fishing. A small number of ventures include retail, hospitality, beauty and permanent accommodation

construction. A number of these business ventures are run by Australian companies or Australians living in Timor-Leste. Many employ Timorese labour and cater for the international clientele of the UN in particular. It is expected that after the withdrawal of the UN, a substantial amount of this economic activity will cease. However, the marketing of successful tourist events, such as the Tour de Timor, International Marathon Race, Darwin to Dili Yacht Race and an Underwater Photography Competition, are attracting more people each year.

## Further Reading

### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- Dunn, J. (2003). *East Timor: A Rough Passage to Independence*. Longueville Books, Double Bay.
- Molnar, A. K. (2010). *Timor Leste: Politics, History and Culture*. Routledge, New York.
- Cabasset-Semebo, C and Durand, F, (eds). (May 2009). *East-Timor: How to Build a New Nation in Southeast Asia in the 21st Century*. Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia.

### RECOMMENDED REPORTS

- “A Survey of Gangs and Youth Groups in Dili, Timor-Leste.” AusAID Report by James Scambary, 15 September 2006. [www.etan.org/etanpdf/2006/Report\\_Youth\\_Gangs\\_in\\_Dili.pdf](http://www.etan.org/etanpdf/2006/Report_Youth_Gangs_in_Dili.pdf)
- “Groups, gangs, and armed violence in Timor-Leste.” Prepared by the Timor-Leste Armed Violence Assessment (TLAVA) for ActionAid and the Small Arms Survey, April 2009. <http://www.timor-leste-violence.org/pdfs/Timor-Leste-Violence-IB2-ENGLISH.pdf>

### OPEN SOURCE INTERNET SITES

- <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/easttimor/default.htm#TOC>

- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tt.html>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/etimor/epis2.htm>
- [www.suaimediaspace.com](http://www.suaimediaspace.com)
- <http://www.easttimordirectory.net/index.html>
- [http://coombs.anu.edu.au/Biblio/biblio\\_etimor.html](http://coombs.anu.edu.au/Biblio/biblio_etimor.html)
- <http://www.osolemedia.com/easttimor/index.html>
- <http://www.electionguide.org/country.php?ID=63>
- Timor-Leste Government Website: <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?lang=en>
- UNMIT Website: <http://unmit.unmissions.org/>

### AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

- <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/country.cfm?CountryId=911>
- [http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/east\\_timor/index.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/east_timor/index.html)
- [http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/east\\_timor/index.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/east_timor/index.html)
- <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/eastTimor/index.htm>

## **NEWS WEBSITES**

- <http://www.irinnews.org/Country.aspx?Country=TL>
- [www.etan.org](http://www.etan.org)
- <http://easttimorlegal.blogspot.com>
- <http://www.timornewsline.com/>
- <http://www.guideposttimor.com/>
- <http://reliefweb.int/taxonomy/term/230>

# Abbreviations

<b>AMP</b>	Alianca Maioria de Parlamentar (Alliance of Parliament)	<b>F-FDTL</b>	FALINTIL – Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste
<b>ADB</b>	Asia Development Bank	<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organization
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	<b>FALINTIL</b>	Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste
<b>AusAID</b>	Australian Agency for International Development	<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>AASAM</b>	Australian Army Skills at Arms Meet	<b>ICMC</b>	Integrated Crisis Management Centre
<b>DCP</b>	Australian Defence Cooperation Program	<b>IDP</b>	internally displaced persons
<b>TLPDP</b>	Australian Federal Police's Timor-Leste Police Development Program	<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee for the Red Cross
<b>CIDA</b>	Canada International Development Agency	<b>INTERFET</b>	International Force for East Timor
<b>CEMGFA</b>	Chefe Estado Maior General Forças Armadas (Chief of the Armed Forces)	<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>CAVR</b>	Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation	<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund (IMF)
<b>CNRT</b>	Congresso Nacional da Reconstrucao de Timor (National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction )	<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>PD</b>	Democratic Party	<b>IRI</b>	International Republican Institute
<b>ETAN</b>	East Timor and Indonesia Action Network	<b>ISF</b>	International Stabilisation Force
<b>ETTA</b>	East Timor Transitional Administration	<b>JICA</b>	Japanese International Corporation Agency
		<b>JPDA</b>	Joint Petroleum Development Area
		<b>MAG</b>	Martial Arts Groups
		<b>CNRT</b>	National Council for East Timorese Resistance
		<b>CNRM</b>	National Council for Maubere Resistance



<b>NOC</b>	National Operations Centre	<b>UNCDF</b>	United Nations Capital Development Fund
<b>CICNL</b>	Nicolau Lobato Training Centre	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>NGO</b>	Non Government Organisation	<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>PSHT</b>	Persaudaraan Setia Hati Terate	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>CSP</b>	Personnel Security Company	<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>PNTL</b>	Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste	<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>IPAD</b>	Portuguese Institute for Development Support	<b>UNMIT</b>	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
<b>CPLP</b>	Portuguese Language Speaking Nations	<b>UNMISET</b>	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
<b>GNR</b>	Portuguese Republican Guard	<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Office for Project services
<b>BOP</b>	Public Order Battalion (previously UIR, UPR)	<b>UNOTIL</b>	United Nations Office in Timor-Leste
<b>FRETILIN</b>	Revolutionary Front for an Independent Timor-Leste	<b>UNPOL</b>	United Nations Police
<b>ASDT</b>	Social Democratic Association of Timor	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>PSD</b>	Social Democratic Party	<b>UNTAET</b>	United Nations Transitional Administration of East Timor
<b>COE</b>	Special Operations Company	<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers
<b>SPU</b>	Special Police Unit	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>TMR</b>	MAJGEN Taur Matan Ruak (Tetum for 'Two Sharp Eyes'. Real name: José Maria Vasconcelos)	<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>ETTE</b>	Timor-Leste Transition Administration	<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>UDT</b>	Timorese Democratic Union	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>APODETI</b>	Timorese Popular Democratic Association		
<b>ASDT</b>	Timorese Social Democratic Association		
<b>CMATS</b>	Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea		
<b>MDG</b>	UN Millennium Development Goals		
<b>UNPOL</b>	United Nations Police		
<b>UN</b>	United Nations		
<b>UNAMET</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission for East Timor		



**Unclassified**

**Unclassified**

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19. ABSTRACT  This Handbook provides information that will assist in understanding the complex environment that is Timor-Leste. The research and analysis supports a range of contingencies that might see the Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel operating in Timor Leste in support of the Timor Leste Government. These include bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises, stabilisation and capacity building missions and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.					