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**Attention: International Affairs Reporter
Chief of Staff**

Alkatiri rejects Railos 'hit squad' allegations, Railos offers to disarm

Prime Minister of Timor-Leste Dr Mari Alkatiri today totally rejected allegations by Commander Vicente Reilos made on RTTL TV the previous day, that he had armed Reilos and asked him to kill oppositionists as well as opponents inside FRETILIN, and that delegates to the FRETILIN Congress had been given arms to kill opponents before the 2007 elections.

The Prime Minister presented his response to journalists from RTTL just before noon at the Government Palace.

He also rejected Commander Reilos' opening political statement on the TV news, that the Prime Minister symbolised foreign ideas that would divide and destroy the country. "This kind of statement has been used against me ever since I became Prime Minister in May 2002," he said, condemning Reilos for appearing armed, with other armed men, in the uniform of the Police Reserve Unit (URP), and for attacking the headquarters of the national army (F-FDTL) on May 24.

During questioning, the Prime Minister reported that Reilos had telephoned him this morning, to say he wanted to hand in his guns to President Xanana Gusmão. "I told him to give his weapons to the police or the Australian army, and asked him not to be used by people who want to destroy FRETILIN," said Dr Alkatiri. "I took his call because he is a FRETILIN member, and because a lack of communication is behind many of our problems".

The Prime Minister said he spoke to Reilos two or three times during the 3-day FRETILIN Congress, and certainly never told him to form an armed group. "I myself have called for independent, international investigations of all these incidents and allegations," he said. "Police have interrogated FRETILIN Congress delegates from Maliana about the alleged arms they received, and nothing was found".

The Prime Minister put the Reilos allegations into the context of previous failed efforts to smear his name with the aim of forcing the resignation of his government. He noted the alleged bribe from the oil company Conoco Philips, which could not be substantiated in court, or the misleading statements in 2005 that he was against religion, and this year, the allegations that he was the cause of the trouble with the petitioning soldiers. "They were calling for my resignation before the F-FDTL was deployed after the violence on April 28. They don't want to highlight the attack by Major Reinado on the army and the home of General Taur Matan Ruak on May 23, or his attack on the F-FDTL HQ the next day. They only focus on what can damage the Prime Minister," concluded Dr Alkatiri.

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