



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE

FRETILIN

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FRETILIN offers joint investigation into violence, denounces false rumours

FRETILIN today offered to conduct a joint investigation with United Nations officials into reports of politically-motivated violence in Timor Leste (East Timor) including an attack on a UN convoy on Friday 10 August.

FRETILIN Vice President Arsenio Bano said the party would do all it could to assist the UN mission in Timor Leste (UNMIT) in a joint investigation to determine the facts and prevent further violence.

'We condemn all acts of violence and again call on our supporters and those of other parties to exercise their legal right to demonstrate by peaceful means,' Bano said.

He said opponents of Fretilin were spreading false rumours and exaggerations to damage FRETILIN's image.

"In particular we denounce rumours reported in foreign media that FRETILIN members are distributing weapons in preparation for an armed insurrection. This is completely false.

"Similar false rumours were spread last year with the aim of subverting the FRETILIN government."

Bano said it appeared Friday's attack on UN vehicles was sparked when UN police set about destroying banners and flags of peaceful FRETILIN demonstrators.

"Despite this extremely provocative and illegal action by UN police, we urge our supporters to avoid any violent response," he said.

"We have a legal right to demonstrate peacefully against this illegitimate government which excludes the biggest party in the country. We maintain our position that only a government representative of all parties in parliament, and headed by an independent prime minister, can bring stability to Timor Leste."

Bano said UN police and foreign troops of the International Stabilisation Force were taking a much tougher stance against FRETILIN supporters than they did against FRETILIN's opponents in the year leading up to recent elections.

"UNPOL and the ISF sat on their hands and did nothing to stop months of violent persecution of FRETILIN supporters in Ermera and other places last year," he said.

"UNPOL and ISF have now surrounded all IDP (internally displaced persons) camps in Dili in order to prevent them taking part in peaceful demonstrations against the illegitimate government.

"President Horta has threatened to sack civil servants who join anti-government demonstrations, despite the fact that the president has no constitutional right to do so and there is no law to stop civil servants taking part in peaceful protests in non-working time."

Bano said FRETILIN was conducting its own investigation into media reports of an alleged rape of students at a convent on Friday.

"It seems that some form of abuse did take place in the Bagaia area of Baucau district but it was a purely criminal act having nothing to do with political problems. It is slanderous to suggest this had anything to do with FRETILIN," he said.

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