



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE
FRETILIN

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Ramos–Horta campaign organiser breaks election code

A top organiser of the Ramos-Horta presidential campaign breached the election code of conduct when he issued a statement defending the assault of an East Timorese civilian by Australian soldiers.

The statement signed by Dionisio Babo Soares titled “Fretilin party representatives hinder Australian troops” was published in full by Indonesia’s Antara news agency on Friday 30 March (<http://www.antara.co.id/en/arc/2007/3/30/fretilin-party-representatives-hinder-australian-troops/>)

Soares’ statement fails to disclose that he is Jose Ramos Horta’s official representative to the National Electoral Commission and interim secretary general of the “National Congress of Timorese Reconstruction” the new political party to be headed by outgoing president Xanana Gusmao.

Soares’ failure to identify his political posts is a breach of the election code of conduct under which all candidates and their official representatives pledged to act in a transparent manner, Filomeno Aleixo, member of Fretilin’s National Political Commission said today.

“It is misleading and deceptive for the official representative of a candidate to disguise his political position and pose as a neutral reporter of events,” Aleixo said.

He said Soares’ statement ignored the facts of the Australian troops’ unprovoked assault on Mr Agustino Ramos on March 26 and deliberately misrepresented Fretilin’s position on the Australian military presence in East Timor

“The Ramos-Horta team should have sought to establish the facts of the incident and stood up for the human rights of an East Timor citizen rather than automatically leaping to the defence of Australian troops,” Mr Aleixo said.

Fretilin has protested to the commander of Australian forces in East Timor, Brigadier Mal Rerden over the assault which happened as a Fretilin convoy left Gleno in Ermera district after a peaceful mass rally in support of presidential candidate Francisco Guterres “Lu’Olo”.

An ADF vehicle attempted to push into the Fretilin convoy but was refused entry. An Australian soldier pointed a gun at the driver of a vehicle while another soldier pulled a passenger, Mr Ramos, from the vehicle, trod on him, and put a gun to his head.

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