



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE
FRETILIN

Fretilin warns of new push to topple government

Media Release

Friday November 17 2006

East Timor's ruling party Fretilin has warned of a renewed attempt to provoke more civil strife with the objective of further undermining the government and permitting more extensive foreign intervention.

The warning is contained in an analysis of the crisis by Fretilin's 80-member Central Committee released in English translation today.

Fretilin says the current crisis has all the hallmarks of "a well-designed and well-executed conspiracy" which succeeded in forcing the resignation of Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri but failed in its other aims of overthrowing the government, dissolving parliament, postponing elections and establishing a so-called government of national unity.

"We believe a 'Plan B' could now be set in motion," warns the 2500-word document headed *Situation Analysis and Perspectives*.

Such a plan would involve "more selective terrorist activities" combined with political and other measures to produce "an atmosphere of generalised social and political unrest."

"Under such circumstances, Timor-Leste could be declared a failed state and that would warrant a more forceful and extensive intervention in the name of humanitarian needs and regional and international security."

The document also analyses the report by the United Nations Commission of Inquiry into the violence of April and May this year.

Fretilin declares the report produced “half truths” and made no contribution to solving the crisis.

In particular the UN report:

- Ignored meetings between President Xanana Gusmao and government opponents linked to the violence.
- Ignored similar meetings involving Jose Ramos Horta, then Foreign Minister and now Prime Minister.
- Ignored the role of the Catholic Church hierarchy and Opposition politicians.
- Failed to disclose that its investigations exonerated Fretilin of false allegations of importing and distributing weapons.
- Showed greater lenience towards the police than the army.

The full text of the Central Committee document is attached.

Contact:

Alex Tilman, FRETILIN’s spokesperson in Melbourne (0419 281 175)

Sahe da Silva, FRETILIN’s spokesperson in Sydney (0414 807 824)



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE
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Situation Analysis and Perspectives

FRETILIN's Central Committee convened in Dili on 29 October 2006 to discuss the situation in the country and, particularly, in the capital city of Dili. The Central Committee drew the following conclusions:

I. The crisis, its origins and development

1. The crisis currently affecting Timor-Leste is essentially a political conflict. The disregard for the country's democratic constitutional framework and the ways and means used to bring about a crisis reflect the anti-democratic and coup-like nature of recent events.
2. The moves aimed at disrupting constitutional rule involved both internal and external actors. There were various stages in the process, which took many different forms, viz.:
 - i) the attempt to force the establishment of a Government of National Unity in 2002;
 - ii) the political pressure aimed at bringing about new elections in 2002;
 - iii) the attempt at overthrowing the Government on 4 December 2002;
 - iv) the demonstrations throughout 2003 using various fringe groups within the population;
 - v) the attempt at a political manipulation of the veterans' issue, including the demonstration by former commander L-7 and other veterans in 2004;
 - vi) the demonstration convened by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in 2005 and, finally,
 - vii) the demonstration by the petitioners in April 2006
 - viii) the breakdown of institutional solidarity which is a prerequisite to a smooth collaboration between organs of sovereignty and
 - ix) the current crisis;
3. Over the past four years, a carefully designed counter-intelligence plan was gradually implemented. Actions undertaken included:
 - i) creating a climate of rivalry and mutual suspicion between F-FDTL and PNTL;
 - ii) using the media and rumours to tarnish the Government's image, and particularly that of its Prime Minister;

- iii) stressing the different approaches taken by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister and driving a wedge between the two, thus undermining their institutional relationship,
 - iv) creating a split within FRETILIN and undermining its leadership;
 - v) organizing groups for recurrent demonstrations;
 - vi) creating an atmosphere of chaos and nongovernability;
 - vii) enticing the Armed Forces into staging a coup aimed at “saving the country” and overthrowing a supposedly “unpopular government”;
4. However, the High Command of F-FDTL took a clear stand in support of Timor-Leste’s Constitution and democratically-elected institutions. The mentors of the abovementioned plan had therefore to resort to:
- i) creating a split within F-FDTL to undermine the institution;
 - ii) enticing PNTL so as to ensure its inaction when the time came to defend democratically-elected institutions; as well as creating a split within the Police Forces with a view to ensure the support of part of the forces to the actions aimed at overthrowing the Government;
 - iii) turning the issue engendered within F-FDTL of an alleged “discrimination” Loro Monu/Loro Sa’é into a nationwide issue; and making the Loro Monu/Loro Sa’é issue bear on all State institutions, in particular defense and security institutions;
 - iv) mobilizing and organizing small groups to stage demonstrations and to engage in widespread violence with a view to disrupting daily life and creating an atmosphere of nongovernability;
 - v) denouncing the Government’s “inability and ineptitude” in solving the crisis and thus demanding its dismissal;
 - vi) striking hard at the party holding power, denouncing the illegal status of its leadership so as to create a more favourable setting for the establishment of a new Government;
 - vii) to masquerade as much as possible the overthrow of the Prime Minister, to make it look not as a coup but as a legal act pursuant to the President of the Republic’s constitutional powers;
 - viii) in order to achieve this a) pressuring the Prime Minister and demanding his resignation and b) faking respect for the Constitution in the establishment of a new cabinet by calling it 2nd Constitutional Government.
 - ix) in so doing, creating a feeling of injustice and leaving the new Government under a cloud of suspicion regarding its legitimacy;
 - x) on the whole, causing a crisis amongst leaders at all levels of the State, thus beheading the Nation, causing the breakdown of the State’s authority and putting Timor-Leste’s sovereignty into jeopardy.

The current crisis has resulted from a set of coordinated actions typical of a well-designed and well-executed conspiracy.

The main objective of the conspiracy was to strike at the country’s historical leadership so as to behead the Nation, cause a breakdown of the State’s authority and jeopardize national sovereignty.

The main weapons used were, on the one hand, a disinformation and counter-information campaign that resorted to rumours and allegations of all kinds.

And, on the other hand, acts of violence against citizens and their property with a view to deepen inter-group or inter-regional conflicts, falsely described as being ethnic conflicts.

The main stage in the implementation of this conspiratorial plan required undermining of the country's defense and security institutions and driving a wedge between national leaders, putting them against one another;

In order to create a split within the country's leadership, many different means were used. The struggle for power was depicted as the main cause behind the conflict. When others approaches failed, allegations were produced about crimes that had supposedly been committed. This was aimed at "sowing a seed of mistrust" in an already fertile soil of deep institutional crisis;

As there were no crimes, they had to be concocted by counter-intelligence services using the national and international media. Examples of alleged crimes include the "massacre" in Tasi Tolu, the "death squads", "the illegal import and distribution of weapons by FRETILIN". The alleged crimes made the headlines of several newspapers and were aired on prime-time television and radio networks. The rumours got into people's minds but have now been proved to be completely unfounded;

Once again, the media, and particularly some Australian media, played a crucial role in this orchestrated campaign which was typical of a conspiracy;

However, the objectives the abovementioned actions were not fully achieved. They included:

- i. overthrowing the Government,
- ii. dissolving the National Parliament,
- iii. controlling the judiciary and placing it at the service of the conspirators,
- iv. establishing a "Government of National Unity" and postponing elections,
- v. dismembering F-FDTL,
- vi. "taming" FRETILIN, by replacing its leaders with more individuals more prone to manipulation.

We believe that a "Plan B" could now be set into motion. Such plan would involve, on the one hand, more selective terrorist activities. And, on the other hand, a careful and more extensive use of measures in the realm of politics, administration, the economy and the judiciary with a view to undermining even further the authority of the State, beheading the Nation by getting rid of its historical leadership, stirring up communities to provoke a widespread reaction and to bring about an atmosphere of generalized social and political unrest. Under such circumstances, Timor-Leste could be declared a failed state and that would warrant a more forceful and extensive intervention in the name of humanitarian needs and regional and international security.

II. The Report by the International Commission of Inquiry

In the wake of a request submitted by the Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations set up an Independent Commission of Inquiry to establish some of the facts that occurred at the beginning of the crisis, viz. the incidents on 28-29 April and 23-25 May and other related events or issues, and to recommend measures to ensure accountability.

The Commission completed its work and submitted a report to the National Parliament. Copies were also provided to Timor-Leste's other organs of sovereignty. The report was also submitted to His Excellency the Secretary-General of the UN and to the Chairperson of the UN Committee on Human Rights. The report makes reference to more than 2,000 documents that were examined and to some 200 interviews that were arranged by the Commission. However, no annex was included with documentary proof to support the findings and recommendations included in the report.

The report is lacking in some respects. But in the other areas, it clearly goes beyond the Commission's mandate. For instance, when the report refers to the 4 December 2002 incident. At the time, UNMISSET had sole responsibility for defense and security. Responsibility for dealing with the serious disruption of public order that occurred at the time can in no way be placed with the Government and PNTL, as is stated in the report. The home of the Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri was burned, as were other infrastructures, and the inquiry should have been conducted by the International Police.

The Commission's efforts to provide an historical introduction, in particular of Timor-Leste's last three decades, are commendable and suggest a serious intellectual pursuit of the historical roots for the crisis. However, the Commission overlooks the crisis's proximate causes, by stating facts without relating them to their causes. And it ignores other facts that are just as important as those included in the report.

The Commission carried out an in-depth investigation into some of the most serious allegations, which were shown to be false. However, that has not been made public in the report. One example is the false allegation regarding the existence of three containers with "illegally imported" weapons. The Commission also failed to state very clearly, as was its duty, that the allegation that FRETILIN had distributed weapons was also false. If the Commission was able to determine that there was no illegal import of weapons, and that FRETILIN did not distribute weapons amongst delegates to its party congress nor to any one else, why are such facts omitted from the report?

The Commission makes reference to institutional shortcomings and to the fact that institutional mechanisms were not used or were bypassed, adding that some of those in charge of organs of sovereignty failed to use their firm authority. In so doing, the Commission omits the Prime Minister's endeavours, viz.:

1. A letter to Portuguese Prime Minister José Sócrates (10 May 2006) requesting the deployment of a GNR company:

2. A letter to the President of the Republic Xanana Gusmão (27 May 2006) asking him to convene the Council of State and the Superior Council for Defense and Security;
3. Keeping the Crisis Cabinet operational until his resignation on 26 June 2006, inter alia;
4. Establishing a Commission of Notables;
5. Establishing a co-ordination mechanism between F-FDTL and PNTL;

The Commission dealt with the evidence before it in an unbalanced way. Regarding F-FDTL, it took the mobilization of reservists as being equivalent to “supplying weapons to civilians” and concluded that responsibility for this lay with the Minister of Defense and the key figures in F-FDTL’s High Command who should therefore be prosecuted. However, the Commission was far more lenient with PNTL. It did not recommend that PNTL’s General Commander be prosecuted, preferring to put all the blame on the Minister of the Interior. In so doing, it blatantly ignored the fact that it was the General Commander who was responsible for the breakdown of PNTL, that it was him who evaded his duties before the Government and took orders from other entities;

In the report, the Commission ignored the various meetings held at Palácio das Cinzas and at the President of the Republic Xanana Gusmão’s residence, choosing to pass over the matters discussed at those meetings;

It also ignored the meetings between the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and individuals such as Alfredo, Railos, Tara, etc. which were the object of extensive media coverage at the time.

It also ignored the role played by the SRSG in Timor-Leste, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa

The Commission did not address the Loro Monu/Loro Sa’é issue in depth with a view to assigning responsibilities for this artificial division brought forth in Timor-Leste’s society;

The Commission also chose to ignore the role of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, and made no reference to key individuals from opposition parties who were involved in actions aimed at undermining the State;

However, in its recommendations, the Commission went beyond its mandate by recommending “solutions” purportedly aimed at strengthening the judiciary;

Thus, the Commission failed in completing the task it had set itself. Its report gave us half-truths. Contrary to expectations, it does not contribute to solve the crisis. The report is valued for what it is worth, and it should be assessed in a critical and unambiguous manner.

It is now up to Timor-Leste's organs of sovereignty to boldly take the decisions that the current circumstances require, so as to put an end to the ongoing crisis.

III. The responsibilities of the Timorese leadership

A country like Timor-Leste, which was born out of a long struggle for national liberation, depends upon the resoluteness of its People and upon the ability of its leadership to mobilize and unite the People around the Nation's main goals.

Traditionally, countries like ours have been intentionally set off course by a range of actions including:

- i. creating splits within the leadership and separating it from the Nation,
- ii. undermining institutions and individuals of particular symbolic value from the viewpoint of asserting nationhood,
- iii. dividing the people in order to rule.

We have to acknowledge that the ongoing crisis presents all these features.

And that Timor-Leste's historical leadership fell into a well-set trap, a well-designed conspiracy involving internal and external actors.

Timor-Leste's historical leadership should therefore acknowledge, in a unanimous and straightforward manner:

- i. that we gave leeway to political manipulation;
- ii. that there are collective, as well as individual responsibilities,
- iii. that such responsibilities must be the object of an in-depth analysis and that the origins of the crisis have to be identified,
- iv. that the whole truth has to be made public so that the People may know what has happened.
- v. that justice has to be made and that this should contribute to put an end to the crisis.

At this crucial moment in time, the Timorese Leadership must be able to overcome their differences. Together, we must fight to reassert national dignity, to restore Law and Order, to reaffirm the State's authority in all realms of society, to reassert national sovereignty and independence.

The Government and the National Parliament must take a more resolute stand in defending the sovereignty of the State. More forceful measures must be adopted with a view to normalizing the security situation and reactivating PNTL, so as to allow displaced people to return to their places of origin.

The Government and the National Parliament should undertake all the necessary steps aimed at ensuring that the elections take place on the required dates, pursuant to Timor-Leste's Constitution.

FRETILIN strongly appeals to all its members to contribute to putting an end to violence, by courageously denouncing to the authorities any individuals involved in unlawful acts.

The people of Timor-Leste want this to happen, and they want it to happen now.

Dili, 29 October 2006.

The Central Committee of FRETILIN

Francisco Guterres-Lu'Olo
President

Mari Alkatiri
Secretary-General