

## Francisco Guterres Lu Olo for President

“I shall be a President of all and for all”

### *Media release*

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## Lu Olo Demands Action on Petitioners

“Democracy and justice for all requires truth and healing” says FRETILIN Presidential candidate Francisco Guetteres Lu Olo. “This is the first lesson of building sustainable peace in a nation recovering from violent conflict.”

On the anniversary of the demonstration by the so-called Petitioners of April 28 2006, which plunged Timor-Leste into violent chaos, Lu Olo called on all parties not to play politics with the issue. Attending a rally in Aileu, he told journalists to be careful to examine what was being said by PM Horta on the issue of compensation for the Petitioners.

The Petitioners refers to the group of 591 F-FDTL soldiers who were dismissed from the army in March 2006 after they abandoned their barracks following claims of discrimination.

Lu Olo stressed the critical importance of the three Organs of State, namely the President of the Republic, the National Parliament and the Government working in unity to find a just and definitive outcome to their grievances.

“We need to deal with the Petitioners concerns responsibly and institutionally. There is a report with recommendations from the Commission of Notables. This report was delivered to the PM Horta in the first week of February 2007. Though I have received a copy of the report the National Parliament is still waiting for PM Horta to make recommendations to it. The National Parliament can not act to resolve this issue until his

proposals is received. I understand that the PM Horta has not yet even distributed or discussed the report yet with the Council of Ministers, and certainly not any proposals for resolving this issue. What is the delay? The public has a right to know what the Commission discovered.”

The Commission of Notables, chaired by Minister Ana Pessoa, was appointed by former PM Alkatiri in April 2006. It undertook a detailed investigation of the allegations made by the Petitioners over several months.

“We should be careful not to make a new wound to heal another” he cautioned. “If we decide to compensate the Petitioners, what will be the impact on the other soldiers?” he asked. “Firstly, to solve a problem we must understand the root causes. Was there substance to their allegations?”

He added: “We need to hear from the Commission so we know the truth. There is a need to be transparent and not to exploit an issue for political gain. Our duty is to prevent further conflict so we can heal the divisions that the events of the past twelve months have fostered.”

Lu Olo, a former guerilla fighter in FALANTIL for 24 years has followed the Petitioners’ case closely since February 2006. “F-FDTL is a key institution, established under Article 146 of our Constitution. I will continue to work with and support all the organs of sovereignty to find just and definitive solution which ensures that the integrity of F-FDTL is maintained.”

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