



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE

FRETILIN

---

## **Media Release**

*27 February 2007*

### **Reinado attacks aimed at stopping elections**

Timor-Leste (East Timor) army mutineers led by Major Alfredo Reinado have attacked police stations in order to spread panic and stop elections from going ahead, a spokesperson for Timor-Leste's governing party Fretilin said today.

Fretilin spokesperson in Sydney Sahe Da Silva said Reinado's attacks on the police posts appeared to be part of an orchestrated attempt to create an atmosphere of instability and terror, in order to prevent the holding of elections.

"The longer Reinado and his men remain free, the more instability and fear they will create," Mr Da Silva said.

"With Reinado roaming around the countryside creating havoc, some opponents of Fretilin will seize on this as an excuse to argue that elections should be postponed.

"Our opponents are worried that we still command majority support in the countryside, as shown by a series of highly successful election rallies in several districts over the last few weeks."

The presidential election is due on April 9 and parliamentary elections around mid-year.

Mr Da Silva said it is critical that United Nations and Australian forces, who have taken responsibility for security in Timor-Leste, provide adequate protection for leaders and activists of Fretilin, particularly in areas west of Dili.

"The lives of Fretilin leaders and activists are now under serious threat from Reinado and his gang," Mr Da Silva said.

Speaking in Dili today, Fretilin General Secretary Mari Alkatiri called for the immediate recapture of Reinado and welcomed President Xanana Gusmao's televised statement last night also calling on the Australian military to arrest Reinado.

"This decision to push for Reinado's recapture should have been taken a long time ago, but at least it has finally been taken," Dr Alkatiri said.

Dr Alkatiri said Reinado's arrest would not only improve the security situation but also help to reveal the true causes of the crisis in Timor-Leste and identify the people behind the crisis.

Reinado and his heavily armed group attacked two police stations and stole more than 25 weapons in the western districts of Timor-Leste on Sunday 25 February.

Mr Da Silva, a Sydney-based lawyer, said his sources in Dili report the Reinado group's attack on the police station at Tunubibi in the Maliana district was launched at midday and involved between 8-9 men, whilst the attack on the police station at Salele in Cova Lima district took place in the evening and involved up to 18 men.

"Despite the presence of more than 1000 UN police and approximately 800 Australian and other military personnel in Timor-Leste, Reinado was allowed to escape from his cantonment area in Ermera where Australian forces were supposed to have set up road blocks to control his movements," Mr Da Silva said.

"This is the second time in six months that the Australian-trained Reinado has been allowed to escape from under the noses of Australian troops."

Reinado is a former military police chief who spent several years in Australia and trained at the Australian Defence Academy in Canberra in 2005.

He is wanted for murder after leading an attack on troops loyal to the government in which several people were killed and injured on May 23 last year. This attack led to further violence which resulted in the dispatch of Australian troops to Timor-Leste and the overthrow of then Prime Minister Alkatiri.

Reinado was arrested on July 27 last year after Portuguese police discovered he and his men were occupying houses across the street from Australian military headquarters in Dili.

"Reinado led a mass breakout from prison in Dili last August but despite his fugitive status he has been in close and friendly contact with Australian troops ever since," Mr Da Silva said.

He pointed out that Reinado was even photographed with a rocket launcher of the same type as those stolen from the Australian Army.

"As some Australian newspaper reports indicated, the photograph was taken last November, about the time Reinado attended a seminar in the presence of Australian troops.

"This charade has gone on for too long, and Reinado must now be recaptured and brought to trial," Mr Da Silva said.

## **Contact:**

**Sahe Da Silva on 0414 807 824 (Sydney)**

**Mari Alkatiri on +670 723 0010 (Dili)**