



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE FRETILIN

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Government administrators in hiding after attacks by Ramos Horta associates

Supporters of new Timor-Leste (East Timor) President Jose Ramos Horta have burned the homes of two government administrators and members of the Fretilin party and forced them and their families to flee into hiding.

The attacks in Liquica district west of Dili were organised by renegade former army sergeant Vicente de Conceicao (aka Railos). A United Nations investigation recommended Railos be prosecuted over multiple killings during a Railos-led attack on an army barracks in May last year.

A European Union election observer mission on 11 May 2007 confirmed that Railos served as “Liquica district coordinator for Jose Ramos Horta’s campaign” for the presidency.

Fretilin Central Committee member Ms Adalgiza Magno said today the attacks on the homes of the chiefs of Suco Leorema and Suco Lisadila took place on 10 May. “The suco chiefs and their families have gone into hiding because they fear for their lives,” Magno said. (A suco is a grouping of villages – the fourth tier of government administration below the national, district and sub-district levels).

“It is quite clear that Railos and his group who support Ramos Horta are intimidating Fretilin members in the lead-up to the parliamentary elections on June 30,” Ms Magno said.

Ms Magno said one of the men involved in the attack in Suco Lisadila has been identified as Adelino Maia, a National Police Rapid Intervention Unit officer.

She said the two suco chiefs and a Fretilin member of parliament complained in person to the UN Police commander Rodolfo Tor in Dili on 11 May and UN police took written statements from each of the suco chiefs.

“UN Police then accompanied the two chiefs and the parliamentarian to Liquica district where photos of the destroyed homes were taken,” she said.

“However UN Police have yet to do follow up interviews with the suco chiefs as promised and no further action has been taken.”

Ms Magno said four other suco chiefs in Liquica district have also gone into hiding with their families after Ramos Horta supporters attacked their homes.

“The Railos group has been operating in the Liquica district with absolute impunity since the start of Ramos Horta’s presidential campaign,’ she said.

She pointed to the European Union Election Observation Mission statement on the second round of the Presidential election dated 11 May 2007 which stated that: “In Liquica, Vicente da Conceicao, alias ‘Railos’, despite being recommended for prosecution in the report of the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry for Timor-Leste of October 2006 was the district coordinator for Jose Ramos Horta’s campaign.” (<http://www.eueomtimorleste.org/xxdefault.asp?id=1&show=59&m=0>)

Ms Magno said: "The Railos group's violence and intimidation is a deliberate attempt to intimidate Fretilin supporters in the run-up to the parliamentary election. It happened during the presidential election and it continues now."

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The life and times of Railos

- 2004: Railos is dismissed from the F-FDTL (East Timorese army) for misappropriating funds.
- 24 May 2006: Railos takes part in armed attacks on F-FDTL barracks at Taci Tolu/Tibar as part of the attempt to remove the democratically elected Fretilin government. The UN Special Commission reported that as many as nine people were killed in the attack.
- June 2006: Railos makes allegations on ABC TV Program 4 Corners that former PM Mari Alkatiri had armed civilians to kill his political opponents. East Timor's Prosecutor General confirmed in January 2007 that there was no evidence to support Railos' allegations against Dr Alkatiri.
- October 2006: Railos illegally enters the house of the administrator of the sub-district of Maubara with a pistol, assaults the wife of the administrator and threatens to rape her.
- October 2006: The UN Special Commission of Inquiry recommends that Railos be prosecuted for his role in leading an attack on an F-FDTL barracks at Taci Tolu/Tibar on 24 May 2006 in which as many as nine people were killed, and for "the illegal possession, use and movement" of weapons.
- April-May 2007: Railos is the principal campaigner for Jose Ramos Horta in Liquica and Ermera districts west of Dili during the first and second round of the presidential elections. Railos and his men are involved in a number of incidents of violence and intimidation against Fretilin members and supporters throughout the Liquica and Ermera districts.