



# Vote for FRETILIN!

2007 Parliamentary Elections

“Defending Timor-Leste’s independence”

Media release

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## Fretilin signs community contracts for local development

**FRETILIN has become the only political party in Timor-Leste to enter into written agreements with local communities providing government funding of up to US\$100,000 per year for local development priorities.**

FRETILIN president, Francisco Guterres Lu Olo on Wednesday (20 June) signed agreements with Suco councils in the sub-district of Venilale, Baucau District, in the eastern part of the country. Sucos are an administrative area based on a number of villages, and are run by councils directly elected by the whole population of the area.

The agreements guarantee a FRETILIN government will give priority to development goals stipulated by the communities themselves. The Venilale agreements are being followed by signature of agreements with Suco councils throughout the country.

Lu Olo said today that to achieve balanced and equitable development that benefits all citizens, grassroots initiatives must get priority.

“This is an important pre-condition for eradicating poverty in our view. This is why our election campaigning has focused on local community dialogues at the village and suco level,” he said.

“Our dialogues have been followed by written surveys where the communities themselves stipulate their needs and priorities. FRETILIN will use this feedback as the basis for its development programs, plans and projects for the upcoming term of government.

“After surveys have been completed at the suco level, FRETILIN’s Central Committee will state in writing that, if it gains the trust of the people at the 30 June 2007 elections and is able to form a government, we will insert in the five year national development plan, funding for each suco’s stated development priorities for annual amounts of between USD\$25,000 to USD\$100,000,” Lu Olo said.

He said FRETILIN would undertake to channel funding through the Community Development Fund and other community funds established during the FRETILIN government’s first term.

“These agreements are an important step towards transparent and accountable decentralization of development funding which delivers direct benefits to communities,” Lu Olo said. “The communities themselves will manage and build the projects.”

“These agreements demonstrate that only FRETILIN has been listening to the people and will respond to the people’s aspirations.

“We have already done so by making education and health the priority goals for the government over the last five years, because it was the people who overwhelmingly chose these priorities during the National Development Plan public consultation process.”

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