



**Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
Prime Minister's Office**

**Media release
1 June 2007**

Prime Minister Da Silva says parliamentary candidates need to focus on policy issues

Timor-Leste's (East Timor) Prime Minister Estanislau Da Silva has said that politicians campaigning for the 30 June Parliamentary elections should base their campaign on policy issues and the measures that they will take to improve the livelihoods of the people of Timor-Leste.

Da Silva said "As leaders of an emerging democracy it is our responsibility to set the example on how to be responsible citizens. We have a constitutional right to freedom of speech, but we must exercise this right in a manner that does not promote hatred or violence or mislead people".

"It should go without saying that what we say and do as politicians should be of educative value to our people and help foster a culture of democracy.

Da Silva added "The focus of the debate and any criticism of a political party must be on policy and should emphasize why a candidate's political party is the best choice to represent them in National Parliament, the supreme law making body of Timor-Leste.

"Some candidates have accused the government that I lead of being corrupt or acting like the Golkar party in Indonesia.

"If candidates have any indication whatsoever of corruption they should bring it to the attention of the relevant authorities so that it can be dealt with appropriately- I and my government, and the previous governments, have zero tolerance for corruption.

"If candidates have any evidence of examples of where the government has acted like the Golkar party in Indonesia, they should also raise it with me as this is the last thing I want as I myself spent 24 years of my life fighting against the Indonesian military occupation."

For more information, please contact:

Zito Gusmao on (+670) 723 0054