



**UNIVERSIDADE DILI
TIMOR-LESTE**

A SECURE FUTURE

A focus group report on public attitudes
regarding the Defence and Security of East Timor.

by

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TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE REPORT

Chefe de Aldeia	Sub-village chief [POR]
Chefe de Suco	Village chief [POR]
CNRT	National Council for Timorese Resistance
CPD-RDTL	The Committee for the Popular Defense of the RDTL
FALINTIL	Armed Forces for the Liberation of East Timor [POR]
F-FDTL	FALINTIL-East Timor Defense Force
FRETILIN	Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of East Timor
PKF	United Nations Peace Keeping Force
PNTL	National Police of East Timor (otherwise known as TLPS)
RDTL	The Democratic Republic of East Timor
Suco	Village [POR]
TNI	National Armed Forces of Indonesia
TROPAS	East Timorese Military during the Portuguese era.
UN	United Nations
UNAMET	United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNDIL	The University of Dili
UNMISSET	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
UNPOL	United Nations Police (previously known as CivPol)
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

PREFACE

This report is based upon analysis from Focus Group Discussion research conducted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in May - June 2002, but integrated with an analysis of the current defence and security situation in East Timor. The research findings were provided to Mr. Julio Tomas Pinto, MA, of the University of Dili to foster increased scholarship and public debate into the increasingly critical defence and security environment that East Timor finds itself within. This is the work of Mr. Pinto who takes full responsibility for the analysis.

The opinions are the opinions of ordinary East Timorese from across the country. NDI has exerted no editorial control over this report. However, NDI did make its research available to the author and has provided funds to translate and publish the document.

In the coming 16 months East Timor will experience its final transition to independence with the executive and operational responsibilities for the country's external defence and internal security being handed over from the United Nations to the Democratic Republic of East Timor. The Peacekeeping Force (PKF) will hand over complete authority in June 2004 and the UN Police in January 2004. However the transition is already underway with five districts being handed over to the PNTL, and with F-FDTL having assumed responsibility for Los Palos and Ermera during the recent Astabe action. The rapidly evolving security situation demands that this transition be accorded increasing significance in the national debate.

We hope that this report and the research upon which it is based can be a useful contribution to this policy debate and encourage policy makers to undertake a much wider consultation process in the coming months. It is not meant to be definitive, rather it is hoped that it will be a catalyst for further discussion and debate.

This report has been published in four languages in order that its findings can be shared widely with East Timorese and the international community in East Timor. Those who participated in this research did so willingly knowing that their views would be conveyed to East Timorese policy makers at all levels. A full description of the methodology of this report can be found in Appendixes.

**CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND STRATEGIC STUDIES and the
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE (EAST TIMOR)**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After East Timor gained its independence on 20th May 2002, East Timor felt the importance of being ready to receive the transfer, which was being and would be given by the United Nations to the people of East Timor. One area of responsibility that would be transferred to the people East Timor is defense and security. Since the deployment of Interfet to East Timor four years ago until the 30th of June 2004, the national defense and security system of East Timor has and will still involve the United Nations (UN) in providing a guarantee of security to the people of East Timor. However with the presence of a number of agreements signed by the Government of East Timor and United Nations Mission Support for East Timor (UNMISSET) it follows that in a de facto manner on the 30th June 2004 - all elements of the UN will be withdrawn from the country including the United Nations Police (UNPOL) - only leaving a minimum of 100 advisers posted in certain places requiring assistance. In such conditions this means that all components of the nation would thus bear important responsibilities to create security and stability in the region.

The research conducted through focus group methodology further indicates that the people of East Timor are willing to contribute their opinion when asked and desire the creation of defense and security stability in all areas across the whole of East Timor's territory.

- The respondents who participated in the May 2002 research stated that they feel safe. It is unlike previously where they felt they were under constant physical and psychological threats. Security for them is the freedom to come and go as they please without fear of terror and intimidation carried out by other groups or persons.
- Respondents felt that the security they currently enjoy has only been attained due to the presence of international security institutions. It is feared that security would disappear with the withdrawal of such international security organisations from East Timor.
- Respondents perceived that the future of national defense and security is in the hands of F-FDTL and PNTL. They felt that both institutions are capable of delivering such a security guarantee.
- Potential security threats, according to the respondents - are focused on the border areas, therefore what is required is a security guarantee in the areas that border Indonesian territory. The potential threats to the security of East Timor include the continuing presence of refugees in East Nusa Tenggara.
- In general the people wanted the creation of security at both the district and national level, they even hoped that the head of villages and other

bodies at the village level to be given authority to resolve security problems at the village level, hence such resolution may not require the police presence.

- The respondents stated that the biggest threat in the future, which might endanger the people, are internal threats. There is an abundance of uniformed groups continually disturbing national security. The case of former Falintil members, which to this point has not been resolved by the government; may be a problem which could colour the future of East Timor over the next five years.
- Respondents saw that one of the major threats endangering the nation is the division amongst the political elite. The political elite must achieve a common vision and mission in unity and solidarity to develop the nation.
- The people also desired a bigger role to be played by PNTL and F-FDTL to safeguard RDTL, but they wanted both to be free from any political affiliations and they expected the military to remain neutral and independent.
- Respondents provided a solution to address the vulnerability in the regions by granting authority to *Chefe de Suco* to resolve cases at the institutional level with the most people at the village level. This is required due to the limited number of police officers, who have difficulty in reaching remote villages.
- In general the respondents saw the importance of PNTL and F-FDTL not involving themselves in politics and business. If they were involved in other areas other than their duties and their status, then they would abandon their main duties; i.e. creating internal security for PNTL and defending the nation against external threats for F-FDTL.

Data gathered in this report indicates that the people of East Timor generally wish for the establishment of a defense and security system, which has the capacity to maintain the existence of The Democratic Republic of East Timor. With this report, UNDIL hopes that all parties such as NGOs, educational institutions, political parties, and civil society could contribute by participating in debates, in particular through legislative bodies or parliament to provide constructive inputs, significant to the prospect of national defense and security issues.

MAIN FINDINGS

NATIONAL SITUATION

The development of the Democratic Republic of East Timor (RDTE) in security matters has shown a certain degree of success; as the people's security has been created to a certain extent, even though progress has been achieved at a slow rate. The people of East Timor hope that their daily lives will be safe and stable, in order to enable them to attain better lives. They desired for security to be created not only during the presence of the United Nations in East Timor, but also when they leave the country.

“As the people of *Timor Lorosae* at the moment we feel safe due to the presence of UN, we have PKF, CIVPOL cooperating with F-FDTL and PNTL. However, what concerns us for the future is when the UN forces are withdrawn from *Timor Lorosae*, since at the moment in certain areas there are groups conducting military training and hoisting the flag of *Timor Lorosae* without the consent of the local government”, (teacher, 40, Quelicai).

The creation of national stability is a factor, which is the responsibility of government and security elements and in the event of an external threat then the resources of F-FDTL can be utilised as mandated by the East Timorese Constitution. International assistance in creating security and defense is bit by bit being reduced to allow F-FDTL which has started to be deployed beginning with Lospalos and ultimately to the border between Indonesia and East Timor in 2004. The stability created by the UN in East Timor has made the people dependent upon the assistance of international organisations such as CIVPOL and TLPS, hence the people are hoping that one day they could rely on their own forces.

“We feel safe, unlike before, due to the presence of CIVPOL and PNTL, we are now feeling safe”, community member, 38, Salele.

The people's trust towards UNPol and PNTL is a direct expression of what they have felt, and they are hoping for improvement of security services for the people. The people still put their high hopes in these defense and security units which in their turn will form positive perceptions and image, for institutions such as UNPol and PNTL. In order to achieve a better future the people do not want their lives to be disturbed whether by internal or external security pressures. The Security guarantee is expected to be delivered by institutions directly related to these factors, in order to create a sense of safety.

“The meaning of being safe for me is being able to travel anywhere. No more terrors, intimidation, and such like since our security is guaranteed by PKF, CIVPOL, FDTL and PNTL”, Student, 21, Dili

Maximum service from the present infrastructure for the people has been delivered by the transitional and East Timor administration, even as deficiencies still occur in the re-development process. Therefore all parties have a shared responsibility to overcome inadequacies including in the security sector.

“Now I feel safe, however in general there are lapses, which are experienced in the daily lives of the people; such as electricity not working- sometimes it is on as little as twice a week; and agricultural products such as rice, corn, and cassava which are unsaleable; which have made the people suffer”, farmer, 40, Bobonaro.

However for those residing in the border areas; they still feel concerned about security guarantees because of the existence of militia group activities entering territorial borders of East Timor freely, as they have disturbed the East Timorese people’s security system in the border areas.

“We have not felt safe since refugees are allowed to enter and leave the territory of East Timor freely, thus as ordinary people living in border areas we have not been able to sleep well, and also have not been able to carry out our daily activities safely”, farmer, 60, Bobonaro

THREATS

There are many perceptions of threats. If we take into account Aristotle’s view, he stated that the state’s existence is like that of a human being. A state is born, grows, and matures until it grows old, dies and fades out. We should apply this concept to the state of East Timor. One of the factors influencing the diminishing presence of the State is when the State faces threats. Threats may take numerous forms, but in principle threats comprise of internal and external threats. In facing internal threats, an economic approach should be taken to provide welfare to the citizens as the ultimate aim of the State’s establishment.

“Internal threat have been manifested in a group calling themselves Isolado and unemployed youth while external threat comes from pro-Jakarta militias”, female university student, 23, Dili.

Most of the people no longer perceive external threats – for instance the threat of invasions from Australia and Indonesia – as the biggest threat. Instead the people are concerned with the presence of military training apart from the official institutional training. The local communities need the presence of the defense force F-FDTL and PNTL.

“The largest threat is the internal threat, i.e. conflicts among East Timorese themselves which could invite outsiders to enter Timor Lorosae”, teacher, 28, Quelicai.

At the current moment, after the scorched earth tragedy, the people’s awareness has been engendered to safeguard the security of their own surroundings by increasing their own active participation. The increasing awareness of neighbourhood security maintenance has been based on the perception that the people should actively participate for the interest of the nation, as the nation’s armed forces lack resources and in the event of civil disturbance might have difficulties.

“For us, internal security has been good, since if anything happens in our village, the people would directly report to Chefe Aldeia. They would meet us at the location and we have witnessed the East Timorese Police Force performed their job without hesitating”, citizen, 38, Salele.

Political differences and lengthy debates amongst the political elite are feared to pose internal threats to national security. The people’s fears are the expression of East Timor’s previous experience. East Timor’s history has proven that in 1974 the emergence of political parties had been accompanied by the widening of political differences. The consequence of these political differences was a civil war, which erupted amongst the various political parties’ supporters. Such experience incites a sense of fear among the people regarding the ongoing lengthy debates between the political elite. The past civil war had taken innocent lives; citizens became victims of war and Indonesian military invasion. The presence of refugees is a threat in itself for the people of East Timor since some they are adjacent to West Timor with a different citizenship status. The presence of refugees poses a threat against East Timor’s territory. Therefore the government is responsible for building military bases in border areas and to foster reconciliation among East Timorese and with the Indonesian people.

“Internal threats, since there has been no unity amongst the political elite in East Timor, they compete for status, putting the nation into an unsafe situation. On the other hand, external factors from foreign countries may be caused by the flow of East Timorese refugees from West Timor”, farmer, 48, Lospalos.

Apart from internal threats, which could endanger the Nation’s existence, frictions of interest between the political elite as they vie for power, could be another threat. East Timor has its own experience witnessing political parties in conflict in 1974. The escalation of political party’s conflict has been caused by the lack of understanding by the political elite, as they preferred to prioritise political power and power.

“The biggest threat against security could emerge from internal groups.... Perhaps the threats emerge due to social discord and competition for power” farmer, 32, Ossu.

The government has the responsibility to guarantee the security of its citizens. With such a guarantee the citizens of East Timor would be able to develop democracy for the nation, and rehabilitate their regions from the destruction, which occurred. Violence which had been part of their daily lives during Indonesian occupation should be eradicated, in order for peace to be attained for a better future. A better future would be achieved when poverty is alleviated and the people’s self worth and dignity are upheld.

“We – as the people – we are currently pleased, unlike during Indonesian occupation, when we were faced with murders, rapes, and we want to end all those in the era of independence”, farmer, 56, Cailaco.

The creation of security in border areas has been a topic widely discussed by the people, as they are relying on those directly related to security situation in the border areas. Geographical conditions in the direct border with Indonesia have become a distinct problem for the attainment of stability in regions adjacent to East Nusa Tenggara such as Suai, Bobonaro and others. The people are concerned since TNI has been suspected of appointing militia agents who have good knowledge of the area to disturb the people’s tranquility. Therefore, it is government’s responsibility to create a safe situation for the people.

“We should understand that our border areas are not bordered by waters but land instead. If we want to visit Indonesia we need less than 2 hours, and the same goes for enemies trying to enter our borders. This has been a problem for us. Do not let our enemy enter and carry bombs or weapons without the knowledge of the security apparatus, since we could end up being victims”, Farmer, 40, Bobonaro.

LOCAL SECURITY RESPONSIBILITY

At any state, in general - security is created with consideration of the respective region’s aspirations. East Timor’s constitution stipulated that internal security is the responsibility of the police force and thus creating a sense of safety is part of their duties. Therefore, in handling security matters the police force has to remain independent. An independent police force is a force not politicized by external forces, a police force carrying out duties not taking sides and enforcing the law for all concerned. In order to address local security needs in the respective areas, the police force should be able to assign members to coordinate and work with the people in the region. For the same purpose, East Timor could apply a participatory security model, in which the people could participate in creating security by involving customary

organisations and governments. People sometimes feel unsure of the government's and village institution's capacity in maintaining security of villages.

"If violence occurred in our village, we would notify our customary leader, if still unresolved we would notify the *Chefe Aldeia*. If the problem could be resolved, police assistance may not be required since we are able to handle it,"citizen", 38, Salele.

Active participation in creating security in East Timor's villages is the hope of all parties, as government structures have not yet been fully effective. Active participation has been recognised since the Indonesian era. At that time we were familiar with the concept of a home guard, , demanding direct people's participation. But of course in the post independence era, East Timor should not totally imitate this model, but rather modify the model to adjust with the current situation. A transition from the Indonesian culture of repression should be made, in the direction of an effective humanitarian approach, upholding the principles of human rights.

"Security in sub villages or villages should also be dependent upon the residents themselves, as they have to maintain security, even as the police force and F-FDTL are now present, and we have to participate in security groups to maintain our sub villages or villages. If a threat emerges, we could resolve it, as contrary to the Indonesian times where police officers stay in villages, because now they are mostly staying in districts", male nurse, 30, Manufahi.

The people of East Timor should be prepared for the transfer of security responsibility from UN Police and PKF since it is estimated that by mid 2004 we would rely on our own capabilities in terms of defending ourselves from both foreign threats and maintaining internal security.

NATIONAL AND DISTRICT SECURITY RESPONSIBILITY

Observing the development of national security is apparently a homework task for the government and civil society in East Timor . This does not end at the national level, but also at sub district and district level. The government needs to address a mechanism for national and district security. The people have begun to be aware of the importance of shared responsibility in creating national security in East Timor. Just as independence has been achieved through collective struggle, not merely by the efforts of certain groups or individuals. As spelt out in East Timor's constitution, national security is the responsibility of the police force, and F-FDTL has the responsibility to defend the nation against external threats. The people seemed to be uninformed about the way constitution distinguishes between external and internal threats. The constitution has not been well communicated, due to the weakness of the government, and insufficiencies

in terms of facilities and infrastructure. The people therefore might mistake the functions and roles of the police force and F-FDTL. Threats to East Timor have currently taken on the form of domestic or internal threats in East Timor such as armed conflicts which occurred in Atsabe-Ermera on the 4th January 2003, taking the lives of the local people. The incident is still under PNTL's responsibility since functionally this responsibility has been transferred from UNPol to PNTL on 1 December 2002, with a force of 150 members of PNTL and one UNPol member. It is time for PNTL to reform itself to face internal security disturbances since the people are putting their hopes in this institution.

“District security is the responsibility of PNTL while national security is the responsibility of F-FDTL in cooperation with PNTL”, refugee, former military, 45, Quelicai.

In order to create stable security the police force has to act as the best role model in order to achieve a credible image. Thus the police force should be clean from the past dangerous weaknesses. Current security disturbances are the result of wrong policies in the past, i.e. allowing “the former person” to work in the police force. Security vulnerability has been a result of CNRT's policy, allowing former Indonesian police force to work. Police force recruitment which comprises former FALINTIL and clandestine members is the best alternative to create a police force loyal to the Democratic Republic of East Timor. Law enforcement will be in danger if the people start losing trust in the police as a result of the above policy.

“District security is the responsibility of the police force, however controversies still arise since some members of the police force are former Indonesian police officers”, farmer, 35, Ossu.

Doubt against national security has also been conveyed by the people, since there are two elements in the official military institution i.e. FALINTIL and FDTL. FALINTIL's formation was a combination of two major forces i.e. TROPAS (Portuguese armed forces comprising East Timorese) and FRETILIN militants in 1975 when Union Democratica Timor (UDT) staged a coup. These two major forces aimed to liberate East Timor. This common goal had united the two forces into FALINTIL. FALINTIL's conception had been aimed at liberating East Timor from Indonesian colonialism as stated from the name FALINTIL. The word *libertasaun* within the name FALINTIL illustrates this intention. However, one major impediment to FALINTIL becoming a professional armed force was the affiliation with FRETILIN, a political party striving for independence. A long struggle by a persistent FALINTIL managed to free East Timor from colonisation. On the other hand, in other parts of the world including in Indonesia the name military often leads to multi interpretation. Similarly *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI or The Indonesia's National Military), the name does not contain a clear definite meaning, leading to the Indonesian Armed Forces' dual function at that time.

Whereas in East Timor, an official defense institution initially called F-FDTL has been formed, containing the meaning of defense, closing any opportunities of military intervention in politics since its literal meaning has the word defense. After the Constitution was promulgated in 20 May 2002, the name FALINTIL had been added to FDTL thus East Timor's official defense institution is now called FALINTIL-FDTL. The institution is tasked with defending the country of East Timor against external invasion. Cooperation between PNTL and F-FDTL is expected to take place and both institutions are expected to form coordination in order to avoid misperceptions between the two institutions. The fighting incident that occurred between PNTL and F-FDTL in Mercado Lama Dili on 8 November 2002 very much contradicts people's expectations in general.

“F-FDTL should be the one responsible for security in East Timor. F-FDTL should hold the command in Timor Lorosae as Falintil has been merged into F-FDTL. We heard that apart from the existing Falintil, F-FDTL also exists. Is FALINTIL not the same as FDTL? For that reason, our military institution should only bear one name. We do not want to see Falintil and FDTL going against each other”, farmer, 40, Bobonaro.

The people seem to realise that external threat is a factor that should be taken into account in maintaining the Democratic Republic of East Timor's national integrity. Even in its planning, FDTL's development should not focus only on quantity, instead as a small force FDTL should focus on defending the country while awaiting international military assistance required. However the people expected that the creation of competent and capable armed forces within F-FDTL could take place by increasing the numbers of F-FDTL members.

“After all responsibilities are transferred to *Timor Lorosae*, F-FDTL should be strengthened, have its size increased, to guard the borders and in order to perform patrols between the borders of *Timor Lorosae* and Indonesia, refugee, former military, 45.

A professional military is a military free from engagement in politics. Doubt about F-FDTL's independence is still rooted in the heart of society. This is due to the fact that F-FDTL now includes people previously involved in the national liberation struggle or FALINTIL, which was also an armed wing of Fretilin. F-FDTL's lack of neutrality may trigger serious repercussions for civil military relations in East Timor. Because of this, F-FDTL's neutrality is paramount for the development of democracy in East Timor. Such independence should be inculcated by strong military discipline, in particular pertaining to F-FDTL members' perceptions of their diversity, in terms of race, ethnicity, religious and political party beliefs. F-FDTL should be an organ putting independence as a priority and staying away from political practices, to maintain its professionalism.

“After all responsibilities are transferred on 20th May we would like to ask F-FDTL to maintain its independence. They should not be affiliated to any organisations or political parties, due to the presence of conflicts among our political leaders. If F-FDTL loses its independence and siding with an organisation or a political party, that would bring about the death of East Timor’s future”, teacher, 28, Quelicai.

PNTL AND F-FDTL's FUNCTIONS

In creating a strong defense institution and in respect of human rights, at this point the government should create a normative rule to protect and regulate the scope of F-FDTL; to avoid backlash. The people put their hopes in F-FDTL, but on the other hand their armament and equipment is inadequate, so their hopes may be beyond the capacity of F-FDTL. The importance of a law regulating and protecting the working performance of F-FDTL and PNTL; is aimed at protecting FDTL and the Police members while subjecting them to avoid violating human rights at the same time.

In general the people of East Timor have understood the duties and functions of F-FDTL. However they hope that such duties and functions should not only be stated but also regulated in laws agreed to by the people and the government. Based on the generally understood plan, F-FDTL's establishment plan started from a company in Lospalos currently led by Lieut. Colonel Falur Rate Laek, which would then probably, be deployed in Baucau, Viqueque, Maliana, Suai (Zumalai). This means that F-FDTL would really deliver protection to the people and maintains RDTL's national integrity even with limited facilities and infrastructures.

“The duty of F-FDTL is to act as a guard for East Timor, teacher, 28, Quelicai.

In relation to the duties of F-FDTL, people still get F-FDTL and Police's duties mixed up. Many desire F-FDTL acting as a defense force, defending the state against external threats, but also delivering internal security - which is the mission of PNTL. Perhaps the contradictory aspirations from participants of the Focus Group has resulted from a lack of understanding of the constitutional mandates, and the highly rooted Indonesian military culture, whereby the military was believed to act as both stabilising agent and dynamising agent during the Indonesian colonisation of East Timor.

“In my opinion the main task of F-FDTL is to provide security for the people East Timor from the Eastern to Western end of the country, apart from helping the people when they are in trouble. F-FDTL should be responsible to counter internal and external threats. External defense to defend against foreign threats - aimed at disturbing the nation's stability, while internally they have to be alert of potential enemies lurking among the people, and this demands cooperation with CIVPOL”, farmer, 40 Bobonaro.

The process of F-FDTL's exercise of duties should be able to be watched by the people as well as other institutions responsible to oversee them. Such oversight could be conducted through two means i.e. direct supervision by the people or by forming a military oversight body within the military itself which has superior authority in continued coordination with the

government acting as the legal civil government institution. With such oversight, the military could carry out their duties and roles effectively in accordance to the enacted laws and regulations.

“ Those who monitor F-FDTL need to have formed a special military intelligence body; having special skills in monitoring the behavior of –F-FDTL. A military tribunal should also be set up, in order for perpetrators of violations of the law within F-FDTL to be punished under the enacted laws”, refugee, former-TNI, 45, Quelicai.

The monitoring body should be responsible for F-FDTL itself by paying attention to internal disciplines of F-FDTL. Military discipline could be said to be enforced when laws regulating the military are set up. With such laws, the military leaders would be able to measure the extent of disciplinary violation of F-FDTL members. Discipline is essential, as reported by King’s College London, in 2000 UNTAET officials began to worry about the declining level of discipline among FALINTIL members, this started to be apparent from January 2000. The concerns increased day by day. In May-June 2000, there had been concerns arising from the increasing number of FALINTIL members involved in incidents of violence.

“The military should abide by military laws, thus if violations occur, the military tribunal would be able to decide upon the case. The military should listen and comply with the President’s order, expressed through the parliament, the Minister of Defense, and so on”, farmer, 41 Lospalos.

Similar restrictions should be imposed on the police. The police’s existence should be regulated under a police law so that the police-working pattern complies with policing procedures. With such laws, the police’s working functions could be held accountable in a normative manner.

“The main duty of the police force is to maintain security within the country, such as regulating the traffic and provide reasonable clarifications upon incidents. The police force should not be trapped in ethnic chauvinism, fanaticism, but should act according to the enacted laws”, farmer, 40, Bobonaro.

MILITARY AND POLICE REMUNERATION

F-FDTL in its report indicated that a minimum defense budget is maintained while assistance of donor countries is expected. A donor conference held in Dili on 28th August 2002 was attended by countries promising assistance for the establishment of F-FDTL to attain professionalism. Inside the King’s College Independent Analysis of Armed Forces Options for East Timor report, it was stated that in order to establish professional armed forces, the armed forces should be granted certain

allocation from the RDTL government. As observed, since the inauguration of F-FDTL, it has received funding from UNTAET's defense budget, then UNMISSET's. During the period of 2001-2002 F-FDTL received USD 4.214 million; 2002-2003 increased to USD 4.429 million; in 2003-2004 it will have amounted to USD 6.755 million; in 2004-2005 USD 6.835 million; and until 2005-2006 the force will receive USD 6.835 million. The number indicates that every year there is an increase of military budget as part of government's support to the military establishment of F-FDTL.

"The president, minister for defense and security, parliament has to work together in allocating the amount of the military budget. The types of armaments procured would be largely be influenced by the condition of the state's finances", teacher, 26, Quelicai.

The allocation of budget for military establishment in East Timor is a shared responsibility of all institutions having the interest to maintain national stability. With the existence of a military generally supported., East Timor could avoid external threats, which might occur in the future. The budget could determine the extent or lack thereof of F-FDTL professionalism.

"Although East Timor is a poor country when it becomes a state in itself, military budget should be considered seriously, because with the presence of a military the state's existence is largely guaranteed. The President and Minister of Defense and Security are responsible for for allocating budget for the military", unemployed female, 32, Baucau.

In many countries the military actively participates in other areas such as business. The reason behind their engagement in business varies, one would be to fulfill military requirements - as defense budget allocation is inadequate and the military is interested in going into business to fulfil military needs and the member's welfare. However, in general, the military budget should come from the government and thus the military is expected not to be involved in business nor political practices.

"The military should not be allowed to engage in business in the guise of improving the members' welfare, since if they are engaged in business, their main duty as the military would not be carried out fully or properly." teacher, 35, Quelicai.

Not only within F-FDTL, as an institution having a similar nature to F-FDTL, the Police Force should be allocated budget fulfilling the facilities and infrastructure requirements of the police force, and the welfare needs of its members. The police force bears a highly important responsibility, i.e. to create an atmosphere of stability and enforce laws; consequently the police force should be allocated sufficient budget from the government.

"For us – the people, the police must not engage in business. Please convey this to the government that after 20 May 2002, we do not want

to see and hear F-FDTL and the Police's engagement in business. We do not want the history of New Order Regime created by Soeharto to repeat itself", citizen 38, Salale.

THE MILITARY, POLICE FORCE, AND POLITICS

Apart from business, the military is not supposed to be actively involved in political practices, such as nominating a presidential candidate or when entering any political party's membership. FALINTIL in its history in 1975 had close ties with FRETILIN but now they have to position themselves as a neutral military, not siding with any political party or group. In the future the military should not participate in the general election, in order to avoid partisanship to one political party.

"The military should not be allowed to cast a political vote in general and to side with one of the existing political parties in East Timor, as the military should act as the state's guard", refugee, former-TNI, 45 Quelicai.

The police force is assigned with almost identical duties to that of the military. The Constitution stipulates that the military is assigned to defend the nation against external threats while the police force is responsible to create internal order or domestic security. For that reason the police force should also be prohibited from engaging in political practices.

"The police act as guards of our national security and law enforcers, thus police officers should be inhibited to be affiliated to one of the political parties, as they have to stay independent and neutral", former village chief, 50, Quelicai.

Military and police participation in politics would create the impression to the people and to the world that our military and political professionalism is very low. The low level of professionalism will impact on the creation of our nation's national stability.

IMPLICATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

The Focus Group discussion findings pose significant implications for individuals, groups, or institutions participating in the creation and maintenance of East Timorese stability, in particular when the UN is leaving the country. Below are summaries of consequences or implications and observations. The implications stated are derived from the Focus Group discussion analysis.

Implications for the Government

- Even as there has been deep understanding of the efforts made by the government - to create a sound defense and security system, in the future the government has to develop facilities and infrastructures required to establish a professional military and police force.
- For the people of East Timor, the biggest threat is internal threat, i.e. problems among East Timorese themselves; as a result the government has the responsibility to raise awareness on the importance of laws to the public at large.
- It is apparent that the people have high hopes in the government; to initiate cooperation between the police force and the military; in an effective working mechanism; in order to avoid differences in opinion between military and police institutions in the future.
- There are hopes for security decentralization by the central government to be practiced; in order for security responsibilities of localities to be in accordance with the government structure in all districts. An effective local government will open the path for more effective cooperation pattern for the creation of security in the districts and sub districts.
- The government is expected not to use the military and the police in a similar manner to authoritarian countries in oppressing their people. The government has to establish an objective oversight mechanism for institutions in charge of defense and security.

Implications for RDTL Police Force

- There is a high expectation coming from the people towards PNTL. The people regard the police force as being responsible for the creation of internal stability; hence the police force should be prepared to uphold discipline and humanitarian principles for the people.
- The police force should also establish a sound doctrine; in order to minimize dichotomy in the paradigm of PNTL members; due to the

presence of different political interests. PNTL members should avoid discrimination based on ethnicity and religious belief within the force. The police force should develop rational ways of thinking, with regards to national integrity, upholding national interest above group or personal interest.

- The people of East Timor demanded that the police force should cooperate with the people for the sake for East Timorese internal security's future. The constitution mandated security responsibilities to the police force therefore the police force has to serve as a good role model in performing their duties.
- The state police force should not be involved in political practices or in business since this would only make them neglect their main duties. The state police have to be open to the public evaluation.

Implications for F-FDTL

- The people of East Timor had the view that F-FDTL has to be regulated, to prevent them engaging in politics. In order for F-FDTL not to engage in politics, the institution has to act professional manner and indicate its neutrality.
- The people thought that the military should be monitored by forming an authorised body; to ensure that F-FDTL does not deviate beyond its mandate. With such control, military engagement in business and politics could be avoided.
- Facilities and infrastructures of F-FDTL should be fully established in order to establish a professional military; and members of F-FDTL must uphold corps discipline and should remain in the barracks.
- F-FDTL should have sufficient strength to patrol border areas; since the people of East Timor perceived that threats to East Timor's territory could manifest themselves in the form of militias and smuggling activities on the border of Indonesia and East Timor.
- F-FDTL should not engage in business and politics, since such rights would only impede efforts to create a professional military.

Implications for the People's Representatives

- The people hope that a law regulating the status of F-FDTL and PNTL would be issued in the near future as both institutions responsible for defense and security. The East Timorese Defense and Security Law

should be prepared to further define stipulations in the constitution regarding defense and security matters.

- The commission addressing Foreign Security Affairs in the national parliament has to control military and police force's presence, in order for them to comply to the mandate stipulated in the RDTL constitution to perform their functions.
- The people hope that the National Parliament would start deliberating state budget to fulfill state defense and security budget needs. In the future the parliament has to provide special attention to the defense budget of both F-FDTL and PNTL.

Implications for Defense and Security

- The people hope for national stability to be created by granting more responsibility to F-FDTL and the police force. At this moment numerous security disturbance cases have occurred, but none have been resolved, thus it is the time for the people to strive for better defense and security.
- The people see that border areas are still vulnerable due to the presence of refugees and militias capable of infiltrating and posing a threat to internal security. Border security should be exercised.

Implications for PKF and UNPoI

- As international organisations PKF and UNPoI (UNMISSET) currently are equipped sufficiently to overcome some chaotic situations and external attacks. Therefore before their expiration period falls on 30th June 2004, PKF and UNPoI must perform their duties well; as a proof or their participation as mandated by the UN.
- Coordination between PNTL, UNPoI, F-FDTL and PKF has not gone well since some operational practices have not worked well and been effective. For operations falling under Operational Areas; F-FDTL and PKF should be combined in order to attain effective work results.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Notes on methodology

Focus groups

Focus group discussions are semi-structured discussions on specific topics conducted by a trained moderator with a group of approximately of between six and 15 participants. The discussions generally last around two hours.

NDI's focus group research in Timor Leste

Since January 2001 NDI has used focus group research techniques to gather information about the attitudes of ordinary East Timorese. NDI has published three focus group reports. The first report, *Timor Lorosae Is Our Nation*, was published in February 2001 in conjunction with the East Timor NGO Forum. The second, *Carrying the People's Aspirations*, co-written by Alacrico Da Costa Ximenes, was published in February 2002. The most recent report was *Government within Reach* published in February 2003.

This report

This report was written in Bahasa Indonesia from Bahasa Indonesia transcripts and based upon 11 focus group discussions conducted in various local languages and in 8 Districts between 2 May 2002 and 4 June 2002.

The profile of participants in these focus groups is summarized in table form in Appendix B.

The type of participants is meant only as a general description. Without conducting detailed interviews of all participants, it is difficult to properly classify their occupations as a number of terms could apply to the same person. For example, while a person may join in a focus group discussion as part of a church youth group, they would also conduct some agricultural work growing crops to support themselves and their family. The same person might also regard him or herself as being unemployed and would seek regular paid employment if it were available.

Transcripts

Each focus group was recorded on audiotape and a verbatim transcript produced by the facilitators. There are 154 pages of transcript in Indonesian for the 11 focus group discussions held as part of this research.

The Facilitators

Eight teams of facilitators conducted the focus groups. In alphabetical order, the facilitators were Santiago Freitas Belo, Deolindo Borges, Carolina Do Ceu Brito, Palmira Da. C. Guterres, Manuel da Silva Guterres, Marcelina Liu, Carmensita R. Machado, Antonio C.B. Mota, Maria Lindalva Parada, Adao Pires, Juliana Do Rego, Cesaltina Ligia Reis Do Rosario, Manuel da Silva, Angelmo Soares and Cesar Ximenes.

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Appendix B – Participant profile

Date	District	Group	Participants	Male	Female	Age Range
<i>2 May 2002</i>	<i>Suai</i>	<i>Villagers</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>18-38</i>
<i>5 May 2002</i>	<i>Bobonaro</i>	<i>Villagers</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>31-60</i>
<i>5 May 2002</i>	<i>Manufahi</i>	<i>Health civil Servants</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>27-36</i>
<i>15 May 2002</i>	<i>Ermera</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>17-20</i>
<i>5 May 2002</i>	<i>Bobonaro</i>	<i>Farmers</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>35-60</i>
<i>2 May 2002</i>	<i>Baucau</i>	<i>Civil Servants</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>28-50</i>
<i>4 June 2002</i>	<i>Los Palos</i>	<i>Farmers and Housewives</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>29-48</i>
<i>3 May 2002</i>	<i>Baucau</i>	<i>Unemployed</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>17-54</i>
<i>9 May 2002</i>	<i>Viqueque</i>	<i>Farmers</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>29-49</i>
<i>14 May 2002</i>	<i>Dili</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>21-25</i>
<i>23 May 2002</i>	<i>Dili</i>	<i>Women's Group</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>23-47</i>