



Cabinet of Timor-Leste (2002)

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LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTOR

Dear Delegates,

I'd like to officially welcome you all to Timor-Leste 2002, the birth of a nation surrounded by tension. My name is Ritik Shah, and I will be your crisis director for this year's conference.

A bit about myself: I'm a third year at the University of Chicago majoring in Biological Sciences, and I'm originally from the Jersey Shore. Besides MUNUC, I am also an Under-Secretary General for our college Model United Nations conference, ChoMUN, and compete on our traveling team. Outside of Model UN, my main interests boil down to basketball, rap music, and Avatar the Last Airbender.

A few things to note about this committee. First of all, the history of this committee does contain many sensitive topics. I expect each and every one of you to handle this content maturely. Among other things, this means recognizing the fact that the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste was a genocide. There should be no jokes, inappropriate allusions, or attempts of recreating the events that occurred during that period. Secondly, the committee itself is about determining the identity of a new nation. Crisis breaks will present problems which will give all of you a chance to respond in a way that shapes the future of the nation.

Of course, like every other committee, the most important thing we look for is respect during conference. Inflammatory or derogatory comments whether directed at another person or not will not be tolerated. We do not see this being a problem on this committee and hope that you all engage in debate with respect.

With that being said, Alex and I are super excited to be running this committee and we cannot wait to see you all during this upcoming conference!

Best of luck,

Ritik Shah

ritik@uchicago.edu

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Distinguished Delegates,

Welcome to MUNUC XXXIII! My name is Alex, and I'm excited to be your chair for this committee. I am a third year at the University of Chicago studying mathematics. On campus, I enjoy doing my homework in the library, reading in my room, and watching movies at the student-run movie theater, Doc Films (or I did in The Before Time).

Last year, I was an assistant chair for MUNUC's Cabinet of Japan: 1960 committee, and I also help run UChicago collegiate Model UN conference, ChoMUN. I'm an Iranian-American, and although I may be a math major, I am especially interested in all of the cultures and histories contained in the Middle East.

With Ritik, I look forward to running a committee that is inclusive, substantive, and fun. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to shoot me an email to aghorbani@uchicago.edu!

All the best,

Alex Ghorbani

HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

Geography of Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste or East Timor is an island nation in Southeast Asia. It consists, as the name might suggest, of the eastern portion of the island of Timor, the other half of which is controlled by Indonesia. The nation also controls a small enclave, known as the Oecusse-Ambeno, on the western half of the island; this enclave is one of Timor-Leste's 13 districts. Timor lies in the Indonesian archipelago, just north of Australia and west of Papua New Guinea.¹



The country is quite mountainous, with a steep range running east-to-west through the center of the nation, separating the northern and southern flatlands. This central mountain range makes transporting people and goods from the north side to south side quite difficult. The flatlands in the north and south were originally dominated by forests and woodlands, but due to improper environmental preservation, the ecosystem has degraded severely leaving mostly man-made

¹ Pike, John. "Military." Accessed June 17, 2020. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/timor/geography.htm>.

farmlands and fields. Uncontrolled burning to clear land and cutting wood for fuel wood have been two of the leading sources of deforestation in Timor.²

The island has a tropical climate and generally sees large amounts of rainfall during Winter and Spring months.³ Because of regional climate dynamics, atmospheric changes often lead to periods of drought or powerful tropical cyclones. Due to Timor-Leste's proximity to several fault lines in the Pacific, the nation is prone to tsunamis and earthquakes.⁴ However, the most dangerous natural disasters in Timor-Leste are landslides. Landslides in the mountainous regions of the island are quite dangerous, threatening human lives and buildings alike, and they contribute to the difficult navigability of the mountain range. Because of these factors, Timor-Leste has been ranked the 7th most natural disaster-prone country in the world.⁵

Beyond these challenges, Timor-Leste is rich with natural resources, including minerals like gold, copper, and manganese.⁶ In offshore sites, there have also been indications of large reserves of natural gas and oil. Most of these resources on the island remain untapped, having been untouched by large-scale development.⁷

Pre-Colonial Timor-Leste

The Island of Timor was first settled between 40,000 and 20,000 BCE with a second wave of Melanesians arriving around 3,000 BCE. The original settlers, known as the Vedo-Austroloides, migrated into the mountains when the Melanesians arrived, leading to little intermixing of the groups. This limited interaction explains the large number of languages present today in Timor-Leste.⁸ In 2,500 BCE, another group arrived from Southern China. These settlers helped the early

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "East Timor," November 21, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/place/East-Timor>.

⁵ United States, Department of Defense, Disaster Management. (2016). Timor-Leste Disaster Management Reference Handbook. Retrieved June 18, 2020, from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/disaster-mgmt-ref-hdbk-TimorLeste.pdf>.

⁶ Timor-Leste Natural Resources - What is being done with the oil, gas and the minerals that exist in the country. (2010, March 30). Retrieved June 18, 2020, from <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=2186>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ministry of Communications, T. (2004, August 27). Welcome to the Government of East Timor. Retrieved June 19, 2020, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20081029065300/http://www.timor-leste.gov.tl/AboutTimorleste/history.htm>.

civilization of Timor gain access to Chinese trade routes, leading to greater economic prosperity. Descendants of these Chinese settlers are still alive today.⁹

For several centuries, the Timorese people lived primarily hunter-gatherer lives, sometimes engaging in trade with seafarers who made their way to the island. Tribes and eventually chiefdoms began to solidify. The largest of these was the Wehali Kingdom near the southern coast. These groups did not always live in harmony; there are reports of feuding and war between the chiefdoms over issues of territory.¹⁰ During this time, trade increased, further linking the island with China and India. Timor's biggest exports included honey, wax, and most of all, sandalwood.¹¹ This presence of sandalwood attracted the interest of the Europeans who would eventually colonize the island.

Early European Colonization

In the early 16th century, the Portuguese presence in Timor-Leste began to grow. The process started with the arrival of missionaries there to spread Roman Catholicism to the coastal chiefdoms of the island. In 1566, the Portuguese had set up a fortress on an island just north of Timor known as Solor Island. From this base, the Portuguese were able to launch excursions to collect the valuable sandalwood.¹²

However, the Portuguese were not the only ones interested in taking advantage of the island; the Dutch also sought to take control of the sandalwood trade. In 1613 the Dutch captured the Portuguese base on Solor Island. The Portuguese were forced to relocate to a different island near Timor-Leste. For years, the Dutch and the Portuguese remained heavily involved in the sandalwood trade in Timor, but neither one took full control over the island. Eventually, the descendants of the original Portuguese of Solor Island, known as the Topasses, would make their move.¹³

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Molnar, Andrea K. "Pre-Colonial History." East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia's Youngest Nation. Northern Illinois University Department of Anthropology and Center for Southeast Asian Studies, May 2005. <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/easttimor/precolonial.htm>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Molnar, Andrea K. "Portuguese contact and historical experience." East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia's Youngest Nation. Northern Illinois University Department of Anthropology and Center for Southeast Asian Studies, May 2005. <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/easttimor/portuguese.htm>.

¹³ Ibid.

In 1642, the Topasses invaded Timor-Leste under the auspices of protecting newly converted Christian chiefdoms. They met little resistance. The work of friars and missionaries across the island prepared the Timorese people for the arrival of the Portuguese. Over time the Topasses took control of the Eastern portion of the Island, including the powerful Wehali Kingdom. They eventually based their operations out of the current district of Oecussi-Ambeno.¹⁴

Despite the seeming success of the Portuguese, the Dutch would not go away. In 1656, the Dutch launched their own attempt at a military takeover of the island, winning victories in the west. At this time, Timor was in a state of flux; chiefdoms would revolt against the Topasses but ally with them against the Dutch and vice versa. Over time, the Topasses and Portuguese gradually lost power, and, after centuries of military conflict, legitimate spheres of influences were established. The Dutch maintained control over the western portion of the island while the Portuguese held East Timor.¹⁵

The 1916 Treaty

By the early-20th century, the Portuguese ruled indirectly through local rulers known as Liurai. Though the Timorese people often rose up against the Portuguese, their rebellions were suppressed. The biggest threat to the Portuguese control remained the Dutch. After decades of border disputes and failed diplomatic efforts to establish boundaries, an agreement was finally reached in 1916. In the Hague Treaty, a definitive border was drawn between Dutch and Portuguese Timor. The part of the country under Dutch control would become the Republic of Indonesia while the Portuguese-controlled area would become the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste. Unfortunately, as a result of this split, many Timorese communities were left divided. Groups including the Wehali Kingdom, and those from Northern Tetun, Bunaq, and Kemak can be found on both sides of the border.¹⁶

Portuguese Rule

The Portuguese had a very weak grip over the local population. They did not have direct rule and relied on local chiefs and rulers to influence the population. As a result, there were a number of

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

rebellions against the Portuguese throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The Portuguese soon realized that true political control of the island had nothing to do with their claims but rather was established through indigenous political, economic, and ritual alliances among different chiefs and kingdoms. The Portuguese viewed this as a threat to their rule, so they devised a set of two methods to isolate the natives of East Timor through economic and administrative means. Economically, they forced the Timorese to construct roads and grow cash crops, and they levied a tax on those between the age of 18 and 60 in order to economically suppress rebellion.¹⁷ Administratively, they abolished the local kingdoms and the ruling positions of *Liurai*, replacing them with an administrative hierarchy of *sucos*, *postos*, and *concelhos* (essentially various geographic subdivisions) that were ultimately controlled by the Portuguese.

These policies had varying degrees of effectiveness. While the tax was marginally effective, the forced labor sparked a large number of rebellions against the Portuguese. The most notable of these was organized by Bonaventura, the king of Manufahi, who united several other kingdoms of the island towards a common interest. The united powers of multiple kingdoms proved to be so strong that the Portuguese were only able to defeat them after 16 years by bringing in soldiers from Mozambique. This resulted in the death of 3,000 soldiers and the jailing of thousands more.¹⁸



Timor-Leste in World War II

At the onset of World War II, Timor-Leste remained under Portuguese rule, and their colonial rulers were officially neutral in the conflict. Nonetheless, Timor-Leste was dragged in when Australian troops occupied the island to defend against Japanese expansion. Over time, the allied presence was

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

overrun, and the Japanese took over Timor-Leste. In 1942 the Timorese guerilla forces teamed up with Australian soldiers once again to launch a resistance campaign against the Japanese.¹⁹ They eventually pushed the Japanese off the island, but at a severe cost. Thousands of Timorese civilians were killed, and the Japanese burned villages and seized food, destroying whatever little infrastructure Timor-Leste had.²⁰ After the war, Portugal continued to neglect Timor-Leste. Little progress was made in the country, and there was little investment from Portugal's end. Over time the Timorese people began to grow uneasy.

Portuguese Revolution

Portugal attempted to hold onto Timor-Leste the best they could. However, with growing restlessness at home, maintaining stability in its colonial possessions was not easy. They also faced immense pressure from the UN; the international body imposed certain requirements for having a colony, and Portugal had overextended their resources, spreading them thin between colonies in Southeast Asia and Africa.²¹

A turning point came with the Carnation Revolution. Amid growing discontent within Portugal against the new dictator, Marcelo Caetano, military officer Antonio de Spínola led a coup d'état in 1974 and became president. As president, Spínola began the processes of transitioning Portugal to democracy and decolonizing all of Portugal's territories so that Portugal could bring its resources back to the homeland and improve its economic condition. This included pulling out of Timor-Leste.²²

1975 Timorese Civil War

When Portugal left Timor-Leste in 1975, the leaders of a revolutionary front for Timorese independence (the Fretilin), declared independence. While governments recognized their newfound

¹⁹ "Fighting in Timor, 1942." Australian War Memorial. Accessed September 3, 2020. <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/atwar/timor>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Clark, Roger S. *The "Decolonization" of East Timor and the United Nations Norms on Self-Determination and Aggression*. New York, NY: International League for Human Rights, 1994.

²² "School of Humanities and Social Sciences." UNSW Canberra, January 1, 1970. <https://www.unsw.adfa.edu.au/school-of-humanities-and-social-sciences/timor-companion/carnation>.

independence, unrest within Timor was only beginning. Shortly after the Fretilin's declaration of independence, pro-Indonesian, anti-Fretilin forces pushed back against the militia, and pro-Indonesians took control of the capital of Dili.²³

At this time, the main political party in Timor-Leste was the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT). The UDT had decided that it wanted to merge with the Fretilin due to their ideological similarities. Despite this, within the UDT, there remained two factions. One consisted of the original founders of the UDT and was skeptical of this alliance with the Fretilin, seeing them as radicals. This group also argued that the investment and help of Indonesia would be helpful for Timor-Leste. The other side of the UDT supported the alliance and desired independence as soon as possible.²⁴

Eventually, the UDT-Fretilin alliance ended splitting due to differences. The UDT continued to gain the favor of Indonesia and Australia, while the Fretilin simply did not have the political capital to make allies. In the absence of other successes, the Fretilin began planning a military coup against the UDT. The UDT caught wind of the plan and mobilized their security. On August 11th, Fretilin militia members took over key radio stations in Baccau and Dili. The UDT saw this as an act of aggression and responded by burning the homes of key Fretilin activists. The Fretilin fought back with an army numbering around 3,000. Several skirmishes took place, leading to hundreds of casualties.²⁵

In the aftermath, Timor Leste found itself in need of refugee evacuation as well as medical and food supplies for those who were harmed. The UDT turned towards Indonesia, who helped provide these things and were also prepared to send in troops if necessary. The UDT even asked Indonesia to keep troops ready to keep peace. Sure enough, after more back and forth and attempts by both the Fretilin and the UDT to lobby international powers, the UDT called for Indonesia to enter Timor-Leste. They came to an agreement whereby Timor-Leste would become a part of Indonesia.²⁶

However, in spite of this agreement, declassified documents show that Indonesia had been intent on annexing Timor-Leste—by force, if necessary—ever since the Portuguese left following the

²³ Hoadley, Stephen. "East Timor: Civil War- Causes and Consequences." *Southeast Asian Affairs* 1976, 1976, 409–20. <https://doi.org/10.1355/9789812306661-031>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Carnation Revolution in 1974. U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and President Gerald Ford greenlit Indonesia's invasion, and so began the 24-year Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste.²⁷

1975-1999: Indonesian Occupation and Genocide

The 24-year Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste witnessed brutality, genocide, and the murder of at least 200,000 East Timorese.²⁸ Though the atrocities drew international outrage and condemnation by no fewer than ten UN resolutions, no significant action was taken to protect East Timorese human rights due to Indonesia's economic and strategic importance to global superpowers; Indonesia's dictator, General Suharto, was an important anti-communist ally to the West during the Cold War.²⁹

While brutality and atrocity characterized the whole of this period, it did see many developments that would influence Timor Leste's future. Indonesian was declared the official language, and young Timorese were taught it along with pro-Indonesian propaganda. The local economy was controlled by Indonesians, and some Timorese remained loyal to Indonesia. Roads and other infrastructure were built to develop certain areas in the hopes of quelling potential unrest. While these programs were framed as positive efforts to incorporate the East Timorese into Indonesia, they were in fact part of a systematic, genocidal effort to eliminate Timorese culture, language, and religion. At least 150,000 Indonesians were resettled to Timor-Leste to dilute its native identity and neutralize the independence movement, and the institutionalized rape of Timorese women by Indonesian soldiers was intended to "breed out Timorese blood."³⁰

Falintil (Armed Forces of National Liberation of East Timor), the armed wing of Fretilin, used remote hideouts in the mountainous jungle and hit-and-run guerilla tactics to target occupying Indonesian forces. NGOs, Catholic institutions, and Fretilin living in-exile abroad tried to raise international

²⁷ Simpson, B. (2005, November 28). A Quarter Century of U.S. Support for Occupation. Retrieved December 7, 2020, from <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//NSAEBB/NSAEBB174/index.htm>.

²⁸ Molnar, Andrea K. "Indonesian occupation." East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia's Youngest Nation. Northern Illinois University Department of Anthropology and Center for Southeast Asian Studies, May 2005. <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/easttimor/occupation.htm>.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

awareness for Indonesian atrocities and support for East Timorese independence. Their work was largely met with apathy until the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre in Dili.³¹

On October 28, 1991, Indonesian troops killed an East Timorese student taking shelter in a Dili church, and because the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture was in town, Timorese locals thought the occupying forces would show restraint if they publicly mourned. Tragically, they were wrong. On November 12, several hundred mourners joined the student's family in the funeral procession to the Santa Cruz cemetery. Upon their arrival to the cemetery, Indonesian forces used automatic weapons to mow down hundreds; Timorese residents have put together a list of 271 names of people killed that day, as well as 200 more who disappeared (it's been reported that Indonesian troops stoned or beat injured survivors to death). However, unlike other atrocities, this one was documented; a British journalist filmed it and smuggled the recording out of the country. In 1996, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to José Ramos-Horta and Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo of Timor-Leste, bringing further international attention to Indonesian atrocities.³²

In 1998, Indonesia devolved into turmoil amidst a financial crisis, broader ethnic violence, extensive forest fires, archipelago-wide demonstrations against high prices and increased poverty levels, corruption, and attacks by the pro-democracy movement and trade unions against rampant cronyism. The military ousted General Suharto, and the new Indonesian administration agreed to a deal negotiated with Portugal and the UN that would allow the East Timorese to decide between staying part of Indonesia as a special autonomous area or outright independence. Despite Indonesia's pledge to withdraw its military from the territory prior to the vote, it trained militias who worked with covert security forces to murder and abduct supporters of Timorese independence up until the very day of the vote. This campaign of terror resulted in the referendum being delayed multiple times.³³ Still, on August 30, 1999, 98% of voters turned out.

As the votes were tallied, pro-Indonesia militias as well as official police and military carried out the forced and unwilling evacuation of at least 250,000 East Timorese to Indonesian west Timor. In Indonesian Timor, these refugees lived in over-populated, poorly supplied, disease-ridden camps

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

controlled by militias. When it was announced on September 4th that 78.5% of East Timorese voters voted for independence, Indonesian police, military, and militias began a scorched-earth campaign of destruction that burned down an estimated 70% of buildings in Timor-Leste and destroyed roads, the water supply, and electrical and telecommunications infrastructure. After two weeks of negotiations, an Australian-led UN peacekeeping force landed as Indonesian forces pulled out. On October 25, the UN Security Council created the United Nations Transitional Administration of East Timor (UNTAET) by mandate.³⁴

1999-2002: The United Nations Transitional Administration of East Timor

The short period of UN governance was largely defined by humanitarian aid and reconstruction. During 2000 and 2001, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM) repatriated 190,000 of the 250,000 forcibly evacuated refugees from Indonesian West Timor back to Timor-Leste. A constitution was drafted and plans for elections were made. At long last, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste was born.³⁵

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Molnar, Andrea K. "On the Road to full independence: UNTAET administration." East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia's Youngest Nation. Northern Illinois University Department of Anthropology and Center for Southeast Asian Studies, May 2005.
<http://www.seasite.niu.edu/easttimor/independence.htm>.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A Decimated Workforce

Timor-Leste is not only the second newest country (after South Sudan), it is also among the youngest countries in terms of the average age of its population. Half of the people in Timor-Leste are under the age of 15, with the median age being 14.³⁶ This poses huge problems for the current state of the country. Timor-Leste needs a workforce in order to function, and with most of the country being children, few are available to fill essential jobs. Worse yet, literacy rates in the country are extremely low, and the education system is in shambles. Because of this, not only is the current workforce depleted, but prospects for future skilled workers are in jeopardy.

This is an issue that requires both short-term and long-term solutions. For the short term, the country must deal with a depleted workforce and the many ramifications thereof. First, the lack of agricultural workers means that food is in short supply, an issue made even more dire by the need for many families to provide for a large number of children. Additionally, the absence of an effective healthcare and educational infrastructure compounds the issue of food shortages and leads to a high child mortality rate. Overall, the standard of living in the country is extremely low, and most people are unable to provide for themselves.

Looking toward the future, this is a problem needing systemic change rather than short-term, stopgap solutions. Although the population will eventually age into the workforce, problems with the education system mean that many will remain uneducated. A lack of leadership and innovation in a young country can pose large problems. Timor-Leste cannot afford to simply stagnate in the coming years; it must forge a strong path forward.

³⁶ Hamilton, K. (2017, March 02). East Timor: Old Migration Challenges in the World's Newest Country. Retrieved July 27, 2020, from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/east-timor-old-migration-challenges-worlds-newest-country>.

Immigration

As a new country, Timor-Leste's immigration policies remain largely unformed or in their initial stages. They must balance the need to maintain security with that of mobility. One threat that the country faces is the presence of cross-border illegal activity. With Timor-Leste having a small police force and a young population, child trafficking has become a huge issue within the country. Child trafficking rings from Thailand and Indonesia have extended their presence into Timor-Leste. Timor-Leste's border with Indonesia is a source of many of these issues. The border lies in a mountainous region and the country simply does not have the manpower or resources to properly monitor it. This, combined with the fact that various factors make the border quite expensive to cross legally, have resulted in illegal crossing becoming the norm. It is through this porous border that the trafficking market thrives.³⁷



Timor-Leste's current strict regulations on foreign entry make it difficult for natives displaced during the Indonesian occupation to return to the country. Thousands of families from Timor-Leste ended up in Indonesia, Australia, or Portugal during the occupation. Currently, the cost of visas is very high, and many returning refugees are being thrown out due to illegally crossing the border.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

Timor-Leste needs to strike a balance between necessary restrictions and accommodating immigration policies. The nation has a limited labor force, and immigrants could potentially help fix that issue. However, they must continue to create a safe country, reducing crime and improving quality of life, in order to remain attractive to both immigrants and current Timorese citizens. Only time will tell what Timor-Leste decides to do.

Military Strife

A strong, effective Timorese military is necessary to the well-being of the country. The aforementioned issues of crime, compounded by political instability, mean that the military presents perhaps the best hope of stabilizing Timor-Leste. However, even within the military, there is a great deal of strife.

The military is undersupplied and overworked. Unlike a traditional military, they have been forced to take on the dual role of peacekeepers and law enforcement within the country. They are the servants of a struggling government and attempt in vain to carry out nearly impossible orders. Despite doing so much, the military feels as though it receives little appreciation from those in government, leading to an increasingly tense relationship.

Discrimination is also rampant within the military. There is a great divide between soldiers from the eastern and western districts of Timor-Leste. Despite having no ethnic or linguistic differences, individuals from the two regions have been pitted against one another during the centuries of Portuguese rule. The Portuguese offered better treatment to those from the west, whom they viewed as more assimilated, compared to those from the east, whom they made out to be “backwards.” This wholly artificial distinction and the tension it created remain to this day and manifest in Timorese military culture. Currently, most military leaders are from the east, while the most important political figures are from the west.³⁹ As the military often takes orders from the government, this issue is magnified.⁴⁰

³⁹ Margesson, R., & Vaughn, B. (2007). *CRS Report for Congress- East Timor: Internal Strife, Political Turmoil, and Reconstruction* (Rep.). Congressional Research Service.

⁴⁰ Durand, F. (1970, January 01). Crisis and uncertainties as a sign of a lack of Timorese project of society. Retrieved August 02, 2020, from <https://books.openedition.org/irasec/675?lang=en>.

The military is an extremely important organization for this fragile new country. With unrest brewing, they must keep the peace and look past their differences to back the government. If not, the entire country will fall to shambles. The government must attempt to deal with this tension, or Timor-Leste may once again become a warzone.

Remnants of UN Presence

After years of the United Nations overseeing the development of the country, Timor-Leste has finally been given complete independence. Despite this, there are continued talks over the potential of UN forces remaining on the island.

On one side, it is clear that the nation still needs support, and the United Nations could be a possible source for this. UN peacekeepers and experts can tackle issues of policing and infrastructure development. They can also serve as the eyes and ears of the UN as immigration and border policies are refined, so as to help avoid potential international disputes. This is especially relevant for the current challenge of identifying a maritime border with Australia. On the other hand, there is the question of independence. Timor-Leste must, at some point, forge its own path forward as a sovereign nation. A continued UN presence on the island brings into question when this will happen.

Potential solutions to the UN dilemma do not come without risks. While keeping UN peacekeepers may help with some much-needed support, it risks forcing the country into a position of dependence. Reaching out to superpowers like the United States could potentially provide the fledgling nation with a source of capital and governmental expertise. However, this avenue risks establishing Timor-Leste as nothing more than a strategic pawn, leaving them open to future exploitation. Finally, while the withdrawal of peacekeepers might boost Timor-Leste's capacity to act as an independent nation, it forces the new government to deal with countless monumental issues with little assistance. The government's decision on UN involvement in Timor-Leste's development will have an unimaginable impact on the country's domestic and international policies going forward.

Infrastructure

A well-developed, reliable infrastructure network is essential for any modern nation's success in the global economy. However, the development of such an infrastructure network is contingent on a country's ability to allocate time and resources. Timor-Leste faces a unique challenge in this realm owing to their extremely limited existing infrastructure and natural resources.

Before gaining independence, the vast majority of Timor-Leste's infrastructure was built by the Indonesian government during the period of occupation. However, during the violence and tumult following the 1999 decision for East Timor to split from Indonesia, anti-independence militias destroyed many of these roads, bridges, irrigation systems, and telecommunications networks.⁴¹

In addition to the infrastructure that was damaged or destroyed in 1999, schools, hospitals, and sanitation and drinking water systems are in serious disrepair.⁴² It will take vast amounts of political energy, government coordination, and possibly outside assistance to rebuild what was lost and modernize what little remains.

Because the average age of Timor Leste is so young, successfully schooling and training the workforce of tomorrow will be critical to ensuring successful development of the nation. Schools and vocational training centers will be needed to service the population. However, much of the population lives in rural, hard-to-access areas. Efforts could be made to promote urbanization through public transportation and affordable housing, or schooling and job training could be brought into the countryside either in person or with 21st century technology like the internet.

Large-scale construction projects, like the ones necessary to fully develop Timorese infrastructure, are great opportunities for employing citizens and stimulating the economy, but they come with some down sides. Particularly in a new country like Timor-Leste, massive government programs have the potential to increase corruption, overspending, and delay projects. Government resource allocation must be focused and effective. It will take a herculean effort from the government to

⁴¹ "World | Asia-Pacific | East Timor's Economic Challenge," BBC News (BBC, May 1, 2002), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1961961.stm>.

⁴² Ibid.

develop the infrastructure required to help the country flourish. However, there is no single way to go about this. The government must decide what types of infrastructure and which areas to prioritize, decisions that will shape how the country matures.

International Relations

Timor-Leste has neither a large army nor a booming economy, so it must secure its safety, security, and prosperity by way of diplomacy. It has powerful neighbors such as Australia and China. Both are highly developed nations with strong economies and the geopolitical standing to influence Timor-Leste's foreign affairs. Choosing which country to ally with, or even whether to ally with anyone at all, will have major implications for the future of Timor-Leste.

Allying with China would have many immediate benefits for a small country like Timor-Leste. China has a remarkable ability to build infrastructure cheaply and would no doubt assist in the development of Timor-Leste's crumbling and sometimes nonexistent infrastructure. They would also be able to provide the country with resources like energy, weapons, and household goods for cheap. However, this would come with some sacrifice of autonomy when it comes to Timor-Leste's foreign policy and may make the small country dependent on trade from China. Regardless of whether Timor-Leste seeks formal relations with this superpower, China will surely make its presence known.

On the other hand, Australia's connections with the Western Europe and the United States necessitate a different set of considerations over a potential partnership. Australia would also be able to provide many of the same goods and protections to Timor Leste as China, but they may not be able to as drastically shape the infrastructure development. Access to US banking may, however, provide Timor Leste with the financial backing to modernize and grow.

The people of Timor-Leste may want to forgo strong international ties altogether, instead favoring simple trading relationships. Whatever the case may be, the culture of Timor Leste will be influenced by who the nation chooses to associate with.

Political Identity Moving Forward

The political identity of Timor-Leste is highly flexible on account of the nation having only recently achieved independence. With that flexibility comes a unique set of challenges that the newly formed government must navigate. Timor-Leste emerged from a colonial and conflict-ridden history that has tested the resolve of its leaders. If Timor-Leste is to succeed in the task of effective self-governance, the early government must forge a strong political identity that will guide the leaders of the future.



Leading efforts to establish strong political institutions will require transparency from the political establishment and active participation from the government's constituency. Educating the country on the purposes and functions of the state will help the people trust in the newly formed political institutions. However, the people of Timor Leste are not simply a group of people to be won over with political promises. Truly effective governance will require popular participation. Not only will that allow the people to have their voices heard, but that will also reinforce the nation's trust in its political system.

Just because the country is newly formed does not mean that there is no room for reform. It will be up to the government to address the concerns of the people regarding their grievances on current issues. What values should this nation uphold? Where do its priorities lie? These are the questions that will shape the actions taken by the Timorese government in its quest to develop as a nation.

BIOGRAPHIES

Mari de Lourdes Martins - Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

Mari de Lourdes Martins acts as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. She has the crucial role of working with neighboring countries like Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, and Australia to establish an international presence. Mari was born and raised in the eastern parts of Timor, where she spent time getting acquainted with the local neighborhoods. She would often play soccer and go fishing with her father as a child. As she got older, she knew the obvious choice was to continue supporting the community she loved and thus became mayor of Los Palos. After serving as mayor for several years, she was offered a position in the government. While she was hesitant to leave her community, she decided to join the government bouncing around different positions often being an ambassador to Portugal. When Timor-Leste finally gained its independence, her experience and success in her previous roles made her an obvious candidate for the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

Maria Ricardo da Silva - Minister of Transportation

Maria Ricardo da Silva has taken on the immense responsibility of creating a connected nation with very little to begin with. Her ambitions are big and the blank slate that is her home country to Timor-Leste has provided her the perfect opportunity. Maria has always been very patriotic about Timor-Leste despite not actually being born there. Born in Australia, her parents had to flee due to the presence of dangerous animals in her district in Australia. After moving to Timor-Leste at the age of 3, she took an interest in exploring all parts of the country. Growing up during the Indonesian occupation made for a hostile environment which is why she used biking as a way to detach herself from the chaos. As she grew older, she began to recognize the issues with transportation in the country and studied the transportation systems of other countries to see what she could learn. Eventually she was appointed the Minister of Transportation and is now tasked with forming a proper transportation network. She can still be seen riding her bike around Dili in her free time.

Francisco de Araújo - Minister of Trade and Commerce

Francisco comes from a long line of farmers. Growing up as a farmer in western parts of Timor-Leste, the expectation was that he would continue to operate the farm that had been passed down for generations. However, Francisco had other plans. He saw the plants grown on his farm (including coffee and sandalwood) being shipped off to different countries. Little did he know that these valuable exports were the subject of furious debate and the reason for multiple colonization attempts. When he learned of this, combined with the independence rhetoric of his childhood, he knew that he needed to have a say in deciding where his family's plants went. Thus, he ran off from his home to go to Dili where he would work as an essential government worker for the postal service. He then worked his way up until he was well known in the city, thus he was appointed for the coveted position of Minister of Trade and Commerce. After gaining this position he went back to the farm upon which he grew up and helped take care of it while he simultaneously dealt with international trade agreements and tariff laws.



Norberto Gusmão - Minister of Health and Welfare

Noberto really really wanted to be a doctor growing up. Unfortunately, his parents wanted him to work for the government. Even though his dreams were crushed, he still got a chance to study public health at the University of Lisbon. After completing his studies, he came back to Timor-Leste to find

that it had gained independence. He saw the opportunity to be a public health official in the government and took the role of Minister of Health and Welfare at the young age of 24. Since being appointed, he has done a lot of work in trying to reduce child mortality. The biggest challenge he faces is administering public solutions in a country that lacks experts in the field. In his free time, he enjoys knitting and is actually part of a knitting club that meets every week.

Aliança Guterres - Minister of Culture and Art

Aliança was born near the east coast of Timor-Leste but ran away from home at an early age. At a young age, she got involved with several groups that participated in graffiti exhibitions throughout the country. They competed to create the most elaborate graffiti all over the country. Aliança often did not even meet her peers and would communicate via hidden messages in the graffiti. She then began designing murals and art for the government, using traditional Timorese techniques to keep the artistic culture alive. She was appointed Minister of Culture and Art with a role of maintaining traditional art and showing off the culture of the country. She often communicates with her childhood friends by including secret imagery in her murals. Many of these friends now occupy high places in the Dili art scene.

Aicha Guterres - Minister of Justice

Aicha Guterres grew up in Leiria, just north of Lisbon, Portugal. She came from a long line of lawyers who all worked for big companies, making her family name very wealthy. Aicha similarly pursued law, earning a degree from The University of Coimbra. However, unlike her mother and grandfather, she decided to be a judge. She served on several different courts throughout her career, aiming to serve on the Supreme Court of Justice of Portugal. Unfortunately, she did not get the job despite having several connections to big Portuguese politicians. She then sets her eyes on Timor-Leste, where her distant cousins lived. When she arrived there, the legal system was not nearly as established as in Portugal. She quickly caught the attention of those in power and was appointed to the role of Minister of Justice. She has since been working to solidify the legitimacy of the new government and develop its nearly non-existent legal system.

Carlos dos Reis Lobato - Minister of Housing and Urban Development

Carlos dos Reis Lobato is the Minister of Housing and Urban Development. This is the perfect job for him considering the fact that he loved building things as a child. He was born to a poor family on the eastern coast of the island. As a child, he looked forward to every holiday when his parents would buy him BanBao, a building block company far more affordable than Legos. Inspired by these gifts, he worked as a construction worker in urban areas of the country for years until he managed to work his way up. He eventually became a self-taught civil engineer helping plan a lot of the projects in the more urban areas of Timor-Leste. He was sought out for the job of Minister of Housing and Urban Development and ended up accepting it. He believed this to be the next and best step towards becoming an A-Lister in the world of urban development and architecture. Carlos now owns a sizable stake in BanBao and actually prefers them over Legos.

Madalena da Costa Lopes - Minister of Public Works

Madalena da Costa Lopes was born and educated in Indonesia. However, after moving to Timor Leste at the age of 25, her engineering degree became a lot more useful. She worked two jobs for over a decade, both as a consultant for construction companies and as a government designer for sewage and waste systems. Now as the Minister of Public Works, she still keeps in close contact with her design team and the construction companies she worked with. Her main objectives include improving sewage systems and roads as well as improving access to water and constructing new disposal plants.

Rosa Morais - Minister of Finance and Public Credit

Rosa was born in Jakarta and spent most of her life there until her father, a member of the Indonesian government, needed to move to Timor-Leste. In this new environment, at the age of 12 she found it difficult to make friends but worked hard in school. With her amazing grades and participation in all sorts of extracurriculars like marching band and math club, she got into The University of Hong Kong. She made lots of friends there from all over the world, and, right out of college, she got the offer to be the Minister of Finance and Public Credit in Timor-Leste. While she didn't originally like her stay in Timor-Leste, the opportunity was far too big to turn down for a 23-

year-old. Thus, she took the job and ever since has been trying to make friends and make sure the economy doesn't fall into ruin.

Maria Alkatiri - Minister of Technology and Innovation

Maria is the Minister of Technology and Innovation for Timor-Leste. While Timor-Leste has long been left out of most discussions of technological advancement, Maria hopes to change that in coming years. She was born in the Philippines and had hopes of becoming an engineer. Sure enough, she did just that, training as an electrical engineer. She practiced for a few years until she realized that being stuck with circuit boards for the rest of her life was not very appealing. Seeking a new start and the opportunity to work with more people, she saw the need for technology in Timor-Leste and decided to start her life anew. Now, she works to establish a proper energy grid for the island, trying to bring 21st century technology to the long-struggling nation.

Randy Tractorsmith - Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

Randy grew up in Cassville, Missouri, a son of two engineers. As he grew older there was one thing that he liked very very much: Sour Patch kids. However, he also liked farming a lot. He dropped out of high school halfway through his junior year to buy a farm and begin living the dream. What separated Randy from the rest of the big farmers in the area was his innovative flair. He routinely utilized GMOs and cutting-edge technology, offering him significant advantages over the more-established farms in his area. Over the years, he started his own agriculture company which dominated tractor supply across all of Missouri. Eventually, he realized that Missouri was not a big enough venture pond for a fish as big as he was. Thus, he decided to make a drastic move and reach out to the government of Timor-Leste to offer them tractors. He was flown out to the capital (his first time on a vehicle that wasn't a tricycle or a tractor) to give a presentation about tractors, and after killing the presentation, he was offered a job on the spot. Since then, he has been working to overcome the unique challenge of expanding the infant agriculture industry in Timor-Leste.

Ren Guo - Minister of Social Equity and Inclusion

Ren grew up in Shanghai and was set on becoming a software developer. He did it all right: had amazing test scores, made all the right connections, and did well in school. However, one summer when he was 17, he decided to take a trip to Timor-Leste as a part of a program with the UN. He was amazed to see how different it was from his home city of Shanghai. Ren realized that there were problems and divisions affecting the people of Timor-Leste that he didn't even have to worry about growing up. Thus, after attending Tongji University for two years, he dropped out and decided to go to Timor-Leste. He applied for the job, and, while he was inexperienced, his heart and motives really shined, landing him the position of Minister of Social Equity and Inclusion. Now Ren works to resolve the divisions in the country including the east/west divide, cultural differences, and issues regarding migration.

Rosária Do Amaral - Minister of Mining and Energy

Rosaria was born and raised in Timor-Leste near the center of the island. Her parents had hopes that she would go to the United States to give herself a new opportunity for a career. She ended up attending the Colorado School of Mines where she majored in mining management. She had a job lined up at a big mine in Alaska where she started to make plenty of friends. However, she had an urge to give back to her motherland and thus decided to return to Timor-Leste. She got a job trying to develop offshore oil rigs in the Pacific but struggled to make ends meet. She then saw the role of Minister of Mining and Energy as the perfect opportunity to give back to Timor-Leste. Now she tries her best to create a reliable energy source for the country whether it is renewable or not.

Sikota Finau- Minister of Labor and Industry

Sikota was actually born and raised in Tonga. Due to the small size of the country, she got to know a lot of people from all over the country as she grew up. She ended up getting a government job which focused on creating a Tongan software development industry. serving other countries through online connections. She succeeded in creating hundreds of jobs, and her reputation got her an invitation to lead a workshop in Tuvalu. This kicked off a series of workshops that she would hold in different island nations in Oceania. Eventually, she was invited to Timor-Leste. However, Timor-

Leste was in a much worse state in terms of employment compared to other countries. Thus, she had to give advice on how to build up different industries in the country to create jobs. She served as a part time advisor to the government while continuing to serve as the Minister of Labor in Tonga. Eventually she realized that Timor Leste's issues needed more direct attention, and she took the job as Minister of Labor and Industry of Timor Leste. She has since been working with the private sector to build up industries and investment while also trying to do direct outreach to communities to find jobs for families.

Alberto Bassarewan - Minister of National Education

Alberto Bassarewan grew up in Australia and became a biology professor at Murdoch University in Perth. He spent time teaching courses of plant biology and conducting research on plant response to disease. As he gained more experience and built a reputation, he moved up in the ranks, becoming the head of the department and eventually the dean of the college. He spent several years developing the university until the Timorese government reached out to him for advice on developing education in the country. After working with the government during the UN occupation, Alberto was eventually invited to be the Minister of National Education for Timor-Leste. While it was difficult to leave the university he dedicated so much time to, he believed that developing education in Timor-Leste was a noble cause. He now spends time trying to develop curriculum and infrastructure for all levels of education in Timor-Leste while still advising Murdoch University.

Simon Khumali - Minister of the Environment

Simon was born and educated in South Africa, but after graduating college with a degree in biology, he got a job at the UN as a consulate for nations trying to improve their clean energy grid. He did this for years, moving from country to country for over a decade. He did significant work in Indonesia to not only improve their energy grid, but to improve their environmental sector as a whole. This included creating laws for national parks and effectively introducing policies like carbon taxes. After his work in Indonesia, he was recommended to Timor-Leste to help establish an environmental sector. Once the new country got its independence, he continued his work, and when the UN ended his project there, the government offered him a job. He decided to settle as he was starting to get

tired of the travelling lifestyle. Since then, he has been working as the Minister of the Environment trying to create a greener country from scratch.

Xanana Boavida - Minister of Communications

Xanana Boavida is the Minister of Communications. His parents were involved with the Timorese government for years and he followed in their path. He bounced around from department to department but has served in the government for over 30 years uninterrupted. He has had roles in departments ranging from foreign affairs to public works, and just about everything in between. When Timor-Leste got its independence, he was actually on sabbatical and after the new government came into play, he lost his previous position as a "senior delegate to the UN". Now jobless, he reached out to the government offering to serve as the Minister of Communications. While the position itself was ambiguous, mostly dealing with postage and broadcasting, his experience was invaluable to the young government. Now, he continues to offer advice to different branches of the government while trying to improve delivery and communication within the country.

Eurico Bonaparte - General of the Armed Forces

Eurico Bonaparte wasn't the perfect child. He would constantly get involved in fights on the east side of Timor-Leste and ended up in jail several times before he was even 18 years old. As he grew older, his father, a soldier back in the day, got him a job in the army. Eurico was hesitant, but he decided to take the opportunity. For the first few years, he did not want to be there. However, the brotherhood of the army grew on him. He worked his way up until he became the General of the Armed Forces. Since he has had this role, his persona has changed completely. He has now put his past behind him and does what is necessary to help the country. Even if he is sometimes at odds with the government, he shares with them the common goal of making Timor-Leste a better place to live.

Francisco Angela Carrascalão - Minister of Youth and Sports

Francisco Angela Carrascalao was born in Australia but spent time moving all around Oceania as her mother was a professional basketball player who would often need to move around due to changing teams. She grew up to become a material scientist designing extreme adventure gear like hiking

equipment and skydiving suits. Even though she loved doing this she was also passionate about helping refugees therefore she helped create youth development centers for displaced children all around Oceania. When the Timorese government saw her work, they reached out to her to become their Minister of Youth and Sports. Now she still designs gear and creates youth development centers as well as trying to make lives for children in Timor-Leste more enjoyable and safer.

Jesse Lahui - Minister of Tourism

Jesse, a native of Papua New Guinea, worked as a manager of a travel advisory in Papua New Guinea. The tourism in the country was ok but not nearly as much as a country like Australia or Fiji. She quickly realized that the government was not willing to invest to make the country an attractive location. When Timor-Leste got its independence, Jesse thought that she could make an impact there, so she moved to become the Minister of Tourism. Since doing so, she has directly been approached by high end clients like Trafalgar and Exodus Travels to set up programs in the country. On top of that, other governments have also directly reached out in favor of investing and having leaders visit. All the attention may have overwhelmed her at first, but now she looks to capitalize on those opportunities to make Timor-Leste a desirable destination.

Martinho Conceição - UN Representative

Martinho Conceição was born and raised in Lisbon and studied architecture in college. After graduating, he worked with the Portuguese government, playing a large role in the decolonization efforts in Timor-Leste and Mozambique. He eventually saw that his efforts would be more productive if he worked with the UN, so he moved to Timor-Leste during the UN occupational period. There, he worked as a liaison between the UN and government of Timor-Leste. Since the official independence of Timor-Leste, he has continued to relay advice from the UN but acts more like an independent member of the government trying to do what's best for the new country.

Olinda Corte-Real - Representative of Catholic Church

Olinda Corte-Real has been living in Timor-Leste her entire life. In fact, her lineage can be traced all the way back to when the Portuguese initially came to the island. Her ancestors were missionaries

who came to the country. While they had a different motive in mind, Olinda has taken after her lineage and has worked to connect churches and communities around the country. She created a coalition of the churches and often is responsible for helping plan events in the country's capital of Dili. When this committee was formed to help solve the problems of the country, Olinda was promptly invited as the only collective representative of the Catholic church. Since then, she has been working to get closer connections with the rest of the Catholic churches around the country.

Basilio Sword Gusmão - Leader of the ASDT Party

While the ASDT party is a fairly small part of the country, Basilio tries his best to increase their presence. Not only is he the campaign leader for the party, but he also acts as a primary policy maker, creating much of the social policy in the country. His biggest priorities include trying to get as many benefits for the lower class as possible. He took charge of the party as other members continued to drop out, leaving Basilio with more power but fewer allies. Growing up, he was a champion swimmer and had aspirations of going to the Olympics, however a fractured jaw prevented him from going further. He still keeps in touch with his swimming friends, most of whom migrated to Korea and are regarded as celebrities there.

Anna Sylvan - Coffee Mogul

Let's just call it like it is. Anna is rich and loves coffee. She made a living selling mattresses in Indonesia and was so successful that she decided she needed something new. Being the workaholic she is, Anna drinks 11 cups of coffee every day. For that reason, she figured that coffee is something about which she knows. Therefore, she left her mattress empire to invest in coffee in Timor-Leste. She owns several farms all over the country and is the largest independent owner of coffee farms on the island. Most of the other farms are owned by local networks of farmers or the government. She is now trying her best to grow her business despite complications with the government and imperfect conditions for farming. Luckily, she still is in contact with her partners from her mattress empire in case things end up going sour in Timor-Leste.

José do Nascimento - Energy Mogul

Jose do Nascimento calls himself an oil man and most will agree. He finds sites that have potential for oil and builds rigs to turn a profit. Even though his tactics are brutal and oftentimes deceptive, he (sometimes) makes money for his investors and always makes money for himself. Jose was interested in tapping into the offshore drilling market in East Asia to get a jump on his competition, who had not explored the region. He saw the new country of Timor-Leste as the perfect place to begin doing offshore drilling without attracting much attention from his competitors. Thus, he bought himself the largest plot of land he could on the island and built a mansion in the mountains. He now has built several offshore rigs and is currently building more.

Arvin Singh - Telecommunications Mogul

Arvin Singh was born and raised in London by his parents, both of whom had high expectations of Arvin. Arvin, the smart lad he was, followed through and ended up becoming a regional manager of Hutchinson Telecom, a telecommunications company based in Hong Kong. He spent time travelling through India and parts of Africa for business and ultimately wound up in Timor Leste, the site of Hutchinson's latest desired expansion. Arvin was assigned to the project and began living in Timor-Leste. Now, he is trying to expand Hutchinson's network, working to find affordable telecommunications options for the population of Timor-Leste.

Taur Ramos-Horta - Politician and Attorney

Taur Ramos-Horta has been interested in politics his entire life. He was so good at Model United Nations (MUN) that he was able to compete internationally. His biggest accomplishment was winning Outstanding Delegate in his committee at MUNUC IV. When it came time to choose a career path, going into the government seemed like an obvious decision. He went to law school at the University of Virginia and now works to improve Timor-Leste's criminal justice and anti-corruption policy. Because of this, he has been working very hard to prevent crime and often coordinates with wardens throughout the country. However, his MUN background has not gone away; he served as a keynote speaker for MUNUC VII. He hopes to someday establish a MUN conference in Timor-Leste.

Kirsty De Jong - Politician

Kirsty's ancestors settled on Timor-Leste many many years ago, when the Dutch were still fighting to take control of the island. Since then, generations of her family have stayed in Timor-Leste, always maintaining some role in the government. Kirsty is no different. She grew up during the Indonesian occupation and saw the horrors of a mishandled government swearing to make things different. As a kid she was very involved with local volunteer centers and food banks. Now she lobbies with international powers to get investment and advice for the country. Of course, her relatives from the Netherlands give her some connections with Dutch government.

Fernando Matan Ruak - Politician

Fernando is a member of the ASDT party who mostly worked to create policy for healthcare programs. While not always the biggest proponent of his party, he is undoubtedly a valuable member as he is leading the policy creation for a proper healthcare program for Timor-Leste. Fernando went to college in Australia where he did is undergraduate studies as well as his PhD in bacterial physiology. He worked in the biotech industry for several years until coming back to his home country of Timor-Leste and spent his later years working in the government.

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