



FRENTE REVOLUCIONÁRIA DO TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE FRETILIN

1 August 2007

FRETILIN chronology up to the Restoration of Independence

Set out below is a brief chronology of FRETILIN's history in the period up to the Restoration of Independence on 20 May 2002.

January 1970- A few young East Timorese begin discussing plans on how to achieve independence from Portugal. This group included Mari Alkatiri, Nicolau Lobato, Justino Mota and Jose Ramos Horta. They initiate a movement to advocate Timorese nationalism.

25 April 1974- Coup d'état (Carnation Revolution) in Portugal signifies the beginning of the process of decolonisation for the Portuguese Empire.

20 May 1974- Associação Social-Democrata Timorense or Association of Timorese Social Democrats (ASDT) was established to defend the right to immediate independence for the East Timorese people.

11 September 1974- ASDT is transformed into FRETILIN to unify all East Timorese. The concept of national unity is introduced.

11 August 1975- UDT initiates a "Coup d'état" with the Police Commander, Maggiolo Gouveia's support. UDT militants killed, threatened and burned the homes of Fretilin members and supporters. Nicolau Lobato lost his younger brother, José Lobato, during the UDT coup.

11 August 1975- The FRETILIN leadership declares the General Armed Insurrection at Aisirimou – Aileu south of Dili.

20 August 1975- East Timorese troops decide to defend FRETILIN against the UDT coup. FALINTIL established as FRETILIN's armed wing. A civil war was fought between FRETILIN and UDT. Many people were killed and injured on both sides.

27 August 1975- Portuguese Governor Lemos Pires and his committee are evacuated from Dili by boat to the island of Ataúro just north of the capital. Timor-Leste was void of any administrative power.

October 1975- Indonesian Troops begin assault on the East Timorese border in preparation for a full scale invasion.

28 November 1975- FRETILIN unilaterally declares Timor-Leste as an independent nation with the name "República Democrática Timor-Leste" (Democratic Republic of Timor Leste). The decision to declare independence was taken by FRETILIN because they believed they would be more effective in getting international support against the expected Indonesian invasion and occupation if Timor-Leste was an independent nation (as opposed to a former Portuguese colony).

Also, many East Timorese said they would prefer to fight and die for an independent homeland as opposed to a Portuguese colony.

30 November 1975- FRETILIN forms first government. Xavier Amaral is chosen President and Nicolau Lobato Prime Minister. Mari Alkatiri is Minister for Political Affairs.

4 December 1975- FRETILIN Central Committee delegation who were also members of the RDTL Government leave Timor-Leste to carry out a diplomatic mission: Mari Alkatiri, José Ramos Horta and Rogério Lobato. Mari Alkatiri is appointed as head of the diplomatic mission.

7 December 1975- Indonesian military invasion of Timor Leste. FRETILIN evacuates Dili and retreats to the mountainous areas around Dili. Preparations for defending against a full scale invasion are well advanced with FRETILIN storing supplies of food and weapons in Timor-Leste's mountains for the life and death battle that was to come.

15 May 1976 to 2 June 1976- CCF Plenary Session II at Soibada to decide about the strategy for resistance against the Indonesian military occupation.

14 September 1977- Xavier do Amaral expelled from FRETILIN.

October 1977- Nicolau Lobato appointed President of FRETILIN, President of RDTL and commander-in-chief of FALINTIL. Mau Lear became Vice-President and Prime-Minister; Vicente dos Reis Sa'he was appointed National Political Commissar.

20 May 1978- President Nicolau makes his last national address to Timor-Leste.

31 December 1978- Indonesian Military shoot dead Nicolau Lobato in the central mountainous region of Maubisse.

March 1981- First Conference of Cadres to re-organise FRETILIN and define a new strategy to the resistance. FRETILIN creates CRRN – Conselho Revolucionário da Resistência Nacional (Revolutionary Council of National Resistance).

1983- José Ramos Horta leaves FRETILIN.

December 1987- FRETILIN leadership establishes CNRM - Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere (National Council of Maubere Resistance). The organs that direct CNRM are the FALINTIL Command and the FRETILIN Directive Commission. CNRM consists of three executive councils known as the Armed Front, the Clandestine Front and the Political/Diplomatic Front.

FRETILIN leadership decides that Xanana Gusmão is to leave FRETILIN and become the leader of East Timorese resistance to the Indonesian military occupation.

1991- Diplomatic Front Coordinating Commission is established outside of Timor-Leste to co-ordinate the activities of the resistance movement living abroad.

12 November 1991- Massacre at Santa Cruz. The international community condemns the Indonesian military for the killing of East Timorese protesters.

20 November 1992- Indonesian Military captures Xanana Gusmão. Ma' Huno takes place of Xanana Gusmão as leader of the resistance.

March 1993- Indonesian Military captures Ma' Huno. Konis Santana becomes the leader of the resistance.

1993- Ramos Horta and Xanana Gusmão propose to the international community a peace plan (Plan for Timor-Leste Autonomy). This plan proposes autonomy with Indonesia for 10 years with the possible extension of the autonomy period before a referendum on whether Timor-Leste becomes independent is held. FRETILIN external delegation reject Peace Plan because the proposal is contrary to FRETILIN's principle "**Mate ka Moris, Ukun rasik a'an**" (literal: Dead or Alive, Independence) and also because the FRETILIN leadership was aware of the risk of the Indonesian military buying off the East Timorese independence movement during the autonomy period. The FRETILIN leadership, particularly the FRETILIN external delegation led by Mari Alkatiri in Africa and Estanislau Da Silva in Australia, firmly believed that if Timor-Leste was to become an autonomous region of Indonesia it would never gain

independence. Also, the autonomy plan does not proceed because Timorese youth activists both within Timor-Leste and outside Timor-Leste disagree with the proposal.

11 March 1998- Konis Santana dies in Ermera district, west of Dili.

25 April to 27 April 1998- National Timorese Convention at Portugal. CNRM becomes CNRT because UDT did not accept the word “Maubere” as the East Timorese national identity. The Convention approves the “Magna Carta” which reinforces the concept of national unity as the means to liberate Timor-Leste.

15 to 20 August 1998- FRETILIN National Extraordinary Conference at Sydney-Australia. Lu Olo elected General Coordinator of the Presidential Council of FRETILIN, Mari Alkatiri elected First Vice-Coordinator and Ma’ Huno elected Second Vice-Coordinator. Ma’ Hodu Ran Kadalak is chosen Secretary to Political Secretariat of FRETILIN.

30 August 1999- Independence Referendum in Timor-Leste.

4 September 1999- Election results are announced with the majority of the Maubere people voting for independence.

Indonesian military and its militia terrorise the people of Timor-Leste. They kill many people and burn down the country’s infrastructure.

20 September 1999- INTERFET arrives in Timor– Leste.

October 1999- Mari Alkatiri and Lu Olo meet each other in Timor-Leste. They discuss the re-organisation of FRETILIN.

15 May to 20 May 2000- General Conference of Cadres at Dili with 1250 representatives: FRETILIN from all districts and the diáspora (Timorese from various countries - Austrália, United Kingdom, Portugal, Mozambique and Italy) attend the General Conference of Cadres.

10 July to 15 July 2000- First FRETILIN Extraordinary Congress at Dili. Lu Olo elected President and Mari Alkatiri Secretary General.

30 August 2001- Elections for the Constitutional Assembly with 88 seats. FRETILIN wins 55 seats.

September 2001- Lu Olo elected as President of the Constitutional Assembly.

20 May 2002- Restoration of Timor-Leste’s independence. Mari Alkatiri sworn in as Prime Minister of RDTL. The FRETILIN government commences its period in power as the first constitutional government.

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www.timortruth.com, www.fretilin-rdtl.blogspot.com