

Some Facts and Comments on the East Timor 2001 Constituent Assembly Election*

The signing of the New York Agreement between Indonesia and Portugal marked a turning point in East Timor's History. On 5th May 1999, by this agreement, Indonesia and Portugal entrusted the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the organisation and conduction of a popular consultation, aiming at asking the East Timorese people if they would accept or reject a status of special autonomy for East Timor within the unitary republic of Indonesia. To carry out this consultation, the Security Council established the United Nations Mission in East Timor (Unamet) on 11 June 1999.

A Brief Panorama of the Involvement of the United Nations in East Timor since 1999

Unamet registered 451 792 voters amongst a population of over 800 000 in East Timor and abroad. Voting day took place on 30th August, and some 98 % of the registered voters went to the polls, expressing by a margin of 78.5 % the rejection of the status of the proposed autonomy and thus deciding to begin a process towards independence¹.

On 19th October 1999, the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly formally recognised the result of the consultation and on 25th October by resolution 1272 (1999) of the Security Council, the United Nations

* This is an abbreviated version of the original text from *Nation-building in East Timor, Proceedings of the international seminar* organised by the Portuguese Center for the Study of Southeast Asia (Cepesa) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Lisbon, 21-23 June 2001, Edition of the Portuguese Center for the Study of Southeast Asia, to be published. All data presented regarding election figures has been collected from the Independent Electoral Commission official data.

1. The results were as follows : 344 580 (78.5 %) against the Indonesian proposal and 94 388 (21.5 %) for the proposal.

Transitional Authority in East Timor (Untaet) was established. Its mandate as a multidimensional peacekeeping operation fully responsible for the administration of the territory during the transition to independence consisted in a wide range of elements including: to provide security and maintain law and order; to establish an effective administration; to assist in the development of civil society; to ensure the co-ordination of humanitarian assistance; to support capacity-building for self-government; to assist in the establishment of sustainable development. It also had the most important tasks of assisting in the development of legal and political infrastructures needed to support to the transition to independence. For this purpose the East Timor Transitional Administration (ETTA) was created.

According to the principle of public sovereignty as the basis for State action, the need to establish a democratic constitutional basis for the new nation was accepted. To be accepted as legitimate, the process of developing the nation's constitution will begin with the popular election of a Constituent Assembly. This election took place on 30th August 2001 and was conducted by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) established by Untaet.

East Timor Constituent Assembly Election of 30th August 2001 : Some Key Figures and Facts

The purpose of the elections of 30th August 2001 was to elect a Constituent Assembly composed of 88 members² which will write up a constitution for an independent East Timor. The 88 members of the Constituent Assembly have been divided into one Representative for each of East Timor's 13 districts³, elected on a majority basis⁴, and 75 Representatives elected on a nation-wide proportional representation system⁵. Once elected the Constituent Assembly is to adopt a constitution within ninety days of its first meeting. The Constitution is adopted if 60 of the 88 members have approved it. If required by the Constitution, the Constituent Assembly will become the Legislative Assembly of East Timor. The Constitution will go into effect on the date of East Timor's independence⁶.

Persons aged seventeen years or above by the end of the Civil Registration Campaign on 20 June were eligible to vote in the election if they met one of the following criteria: persons born in East Timor; persons born out of East Timor, but with at least one parent born in East Timor; persons whose spouse met either one of the two previous criteria. Any person eligible to vote was eligible to be a candidate for election with the condition

2. The legal framework of the Election is to be found in Regulation 2001/2 of Untaet of 16 March 2001 [Untaet/Reg/2001/2].
3. Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Bobonaro, Cova Lima, Dili, Ermera, Lautem, Liquiça, Manatuto, Manufahi, Oecussi and Viqueque.
4. The candidate with the highest number of votes is the district representative.
5. Parties win seats in the Assembly in proportion to the share of votes they receive in the election for National Representative.
6. With the consent of the Special Representative of the Secretary general in East Timor, the Constitution or provisions in it may go into effect prior to independence.

of not being candidate in two or more constituencies. Candidates for District Representative must be residents of the District they are running for. A political party nominates only individuals affiliated in that party.

Persons not affiliated with a party would stand as independent candidates. In order to do so, applications for a district independent candidacy had to contain one hundred signatures of support from people who are eligible to vote and applications for a National Independent Candidacy had to contain five hundred signatures of support from people who are eligible to vote.

Political parties had to apply in writing to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) for registration and only political parties registered with the IEC were eligible to nominate candidates for elections. All political party registration applications were accompanied by five hundred signatures of eligible voters supporting the application and who had not endorsed any other party registration application. The IEC made public each registration application for a period of fourteen days from the date of filing the application, a period during which any eligible voter could file an objection. The IEC had itself the same time limit to deny the application. No registration application was accepted later than twenty-one days prior to the beginning of the official campaign.

The IEC has registered sixteen political parties : 968 Party Candidates and 5 National Independent Candidates competed for the 75 national seats ; 84 Party District Candidates and 11 Independent Candidates campaigned for the 13 District seats in the Constituent Assembly.

Voting took place *only* in East Timor at approximately 248 polling centres (with a total of 818 Polling Stations).

The UN Civil Registration Unit had concluded on 23rd June its nationwide registration process, which puts the East Timor population at 737 811.

*The Sixteen Political Parties*⁷

Following is a list of the sixteen Political Parties registered for the election of the 2001 Constituent Assembly.

| <i>Names, Leaderships and Candidates</i> | <i>Historical Accounts</i> | <i>Programs</i> |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Apodeti Pro. Referendum [Associação Popular Democrática de Timor Pro Referendo] [Popular Democratic Association of Timor Pro Referendum] | | |
| Established in 1974. Party President : Frederico Almeida Santos da Costa. 15 Candidates, 1 District Candidate. | This is one of the Historical Parties of East Timor. In 1974 APODETI advocated for the integration into the Republic of Indonesia but it made public declaration at the | Some points of the Party's program include : - Timorisation of the current administration - Dialogue and reconciliation - Free market economy |

7. Most of the data presented on political parties is based upon *Untaet Division of Political Affairs report* of July 2001 and on the report of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid of April 2001 as integrated in the *Short Term Observer's Booklet* of the European Union Electoral Observation Mission in East Timor. The author has not had access to the original documents upon which those reports were made.

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| | CNRT congress of August 2000 accepting the result of the Popular Consultation of 30 August 1999 referendum, thus adding « Pro Referendum » to the party's name. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal Education, Free as far as possible - Universal Health System, Free as possible - Privilege diplomatic relations with Indonesia and Australia and with Lusophone countries - Support programs for war victims and those deprived of opportunities due to their clandestine activities - Provisional use of Portuguese as the official language while Tetum is being developed. |
| 2. ASDT [Associação Social-Democrata Timorese] | | |
| Established April 2001. Party President : Francisco Xavier do Amaral. 73 National Candidates, 3 District Candidates | Although proclaimed on April 2001 by FRETILIN first President, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, the Party takes its name from the Association that gave birth to Fretilin in 1974. As described in John G. Taylor book ⁸ , in 1974 it « comprised mostly of the newly recruited members of the urban elites, most of ASDT founders lived in Dili, although they retained ties with their rural areas of origin, and several of them were from liurai families [...] ASDT was social democratic, with the emphasis on democratic. It was formed to defend the idea of independence ». | In 2001, Xavier do Amaral would like to see a restoration of the 1975 RDTL government ⁹ . The Party registered its own flag with the IEC, following plans to compete with Fretilin for their flag. |
| 3. Fretilin [Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente] [Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor] | | |
| Established September 1974. Party President : Francisco Guterres (Lú Olo). 75 National Candidates, 12 District Candidates. | This is one of the historical parties of East Timor. Fretilin was born out of ASDT, in September 1974, when « radical -Maoist-influenced - East Timorese students started returning to Dili from Lisbon and the ASDT party took a sharp turn to the left changing its name into Fretilin and embarking on a revolutionary social and economic reform programme [...] which owes much to the example of the successful liberation movements in Africa...» ¹⁰ . Most of the well known names of East Timor nationalism, such as Nicolau Lobato (†), Xanana | Fretilin is, as its name expresses, a liberation movement. In order to turn it into a clear political formation, the movement held two major conferences to forge a program of action and to define itself as a Political Party for the 2001 elections. In August 1998, the Party held a major conference in Sydney where it defined a program of principles and a political manual on common Fretilin expressions and symbols. In May 2000, it held a national conference in Dili attended by the delegates of all 13 districts of East Timor to prepare for the 2001 elections. |

8. J.G. TAYLOR, *Indonesia's forgotten war - the hidden history of East Timor*, London, Zed Books, 1991 : 27.

9. The *República Democrática de Timor Leste* (RDTL) was proclaimed on 28 November 1975.

10. P. CAREY, « East Timor : Third World Colonialism and the Struggle for National Identity », *Conflict Studies* (London, Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism), 293/294, October-November 1996 : 3.

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| | Gusmão, José Ramos Horta, Mari Alkatiri, Nino Konis Santana (†) to name a few, have been or still are Fretilin members. The history of Fretilin is still to be written. From the earliest times and as a nationalist movement, it opted in 1974 for a strong indigenous component in the idea of nation-building and « rather than attempting to incorporate aspects of East Timorese culture, politics and society within the framework of Portuguese metropolitan culture, it directed its policies toward what it regarded as important areas of indigenous society, taking them as the basis for its organization strategies » ¹¹ . | Fretilin's program includes : - Support of Democracy, Pluralism, Culture of dialogue, Tolerance and Peace - Establishment of a Commission on Tolerance and Unity to investigate Fretilin errors in the last two decades - Support to East Timor application as member of the United Nations - Support for joining the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries), Asean, South Pacific Forum - Development of a trilateral cooperation between East Timor, Australia and Indonesia |
| 4. Kota [Klibur Oan Timor Asuawin] [Sons of the Mountain Warriors or Association of Timorese Heroes] | | |
| Established in 1974. Party President : Leão Pedro dos Reis Amaral. 75 National Candidates, 8 District Candidates. | Kota has been described as an incipient party ¹² when it was formed in November 1974 by Leão Amaral and José Martins (†). It was previously known as the Popular Association of Monarchists of East Timor and was composed of several Liurais ¹³ . | Kota was reorganised in 2000 and, although it is oriented towards a strong power of the Liurais, it denies supporting the establishment of a Monarchic System and as expressed support to a multi-party system. It advocates that economical policies should be used to eradicate poverty, namely through the development of agriculture, fishing, tourism and coffee production. The teaching of Portuguese, Indonesian and English should be implemented in schools, it also favours the establishment of a commission for the development of Tetum language. |
| 5. Parentil [Partido Republika Nacional de Timor Leste] [National Republican Party of East Timor] | | |
| Established in February 2001. Party President : Flaviano Pereira Lopez. 52 National Candidates, no District Candidates. | Parentil is composed of young East Timorese and was established in February 2001. | The Party is set up with the aim of counterbalancing the influence of the older generation of political leaders. It was one of the two parties that refused to sign the Pact of National Unity ¹⁴ . |

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11. J.G. TAYLOR, « The Emergence of a Nationalist Movement in East Timor » in P. CAREY & G. CARTER BENTLEY (eds), *East Timor at the Crossroads : the Forging of a Nation*, London, Cassell, 1995 : 33.

12. As described by M. Lemos PIRES in *Descolonização de Timor, Missão impossível ?*, Lisbon, Publicações Dom Quixote, 1994 : 42 (3^e ed.).

13. Traditional chief or kings.

14. The church-organised Pact of National Unity is a fourteen point pact of tolerance signed by 14 of the 16 Political Parties in 8 July 2001.

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| 6. PD [Partido Democrático] [Democratic Party] | | |
| Established June 2001. Party President : Fernando de Araújo. 73 National Candidates, 12 District Candidates. | This very young party includes most of the members of the youth resistance organisation Renetil, although Renetil remains an independent NGO and is not affiliated in the party. | |
| 7.PDC [Partido Democrata Cristão] [Christian Democratic Party] | | |
| Established August 2000. Party President : António Ximenes. 73 National Candidates, 1 District Candidate. | This is one of the two Christian Parties of East Timor. Although both PDC and UDC/PDC [see below] based on Christian social justice values, PDC is said to be seen more as a leftist party with some sympathy to Fretilin. It appears to be a mix of both Protestant and Catholic in its leadership. | |
| 8. PDM [Partai Demokratik Maubere] [Maubere Democratic Party] | | |
| Established October 2000. Party President : Paulo Sarmiento Pinto. | PDM is said to be a minor party using the terminology of <i>Maubere</i> , a term popularised in the 70s by Fretilin to appeal to the idea of the rural poor and subsequently to appeal to nationalist sentiment. | |
| 9. PL [Partai Liberal] [Liberal Party] | | |
| Established May 2001. Party President : Armando da Silva. 32 National candidates, 5 District Candidates. | A minor party established appealing mostly to the younger generation who were active on the resistance against Indonesia. | |
| 10. PNT [Partido Nasionalista Timorende] [National Party of Timor] | | |
| Established in 1999. Party Acting President : Aliança Araújo. 48 National Candidates, no District Candidate. | PNT is headed by Abílio de Araújo, a former Fretilin member and representative in Lisbon who was expelled due to his pro-Indonesian positions. He was Minister for Economic and Social Affairs in the 1975 RDTL government and he is seen as a very controversial figure due to his alliance with the Suharto family. PNT was established in 1999 before the referendum ballot to promote an alternative to CNRT. | PNT was the second party that refused to sign the Pact of National Unity. |

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| 11. PPT [Partido do Povo de Timor] [Peoples Party of Timor] | | |
| Established in November 2000. Party President : Jacob Xavier. 71 National Candidates, 9 District Candidates. | The President, Jacob Xavier, claims he is the direct descendant of the King of Portugal. The party has some support among traditional chiefs (liurai) particularly in the Districts of Manufahi and Ainaro. | |
| 12. PSD [Partido Social Democrata] [Social Democratic Party] | | |
| Established September 2000. Party President : Mário Viegas Carrascalão. 74 National Candidates, 11 District Candidates. | When PSD was established on 20th September 2000 at CNRT headquarters it counted with the participation of Xanana Gusmão as a guest speaker. Mário Carrascalão was former Indonesian Governor of East Timor between 1982-1992. In our western political terminology, the Party could be defined as a right wing party. Many former UDT and Fretilin members have joined PSD. Although Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos Horta have denied support to the new party, it is said that they are both in favour of it. | The Party program supports multi-party system defending the role of government in economic management. Priority is given to Education, Culture, Health, Housing and good governance. The party opposes the Death Penalty and Abortion. In Foreign Policy it supports the membership within the Asean and CPLP. It also supports the use of Portuguese as national language with a strong development of Tetum. |
| 13. PST [Partido Socialista de Timor] [Socialist Party of Timor] | | |
| Established in 1991. Party President : Pedro dos Mártires da Costa. 75 National Candidates, 2 District Candidates. | Founded in the 1990's, it has a pronounced Marxist-Leninist ideology. It merged out of students and labour groups based in Jakarta and other Indonesian cities where East Timorese students were active. It has branches in many Districts while focussing its activities on traditional Fretilin areas, such as Liquiça, Los Palos, Aileu and Dili. It has established a number of cooperative farms of coffee production. | The party supports the multi-party system. It advocates a universal, free and compulsory education. It pledges the adoption of Portuguese and English as official languages during a transition period while Tetum is being developed. It advocates the rights of workers including free trade unions. It has an extended social program based on the right to housing, a free and universal health system and equal distribution of arable land and expropriation of large landholdings. It is against the death penalty. |
| 14. PTT [Partido trabalhista timorense] [Timor Workers Party] | | |
| Established in 1974. Party President : Paulo Freitas da Silva. 33 National Candidates, 5 District Candidates. | When launched in 1974, the PPT saw itself as an alternative to a communist Fretilin but was considered a minor party at that time. The party signed the 1975 <i>Declaration for</i> | The party has quire a significant social program with the emphasis on social justice and equal rights of opportunities for women. It is very much committed to human |

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| | <i>Integration in Indonesia</i> and Paulo Freitas represented Megawati Soekarnoputri PDI at the Provincial Level Parliament during the Indonesian inter-regna. | rights and issues such as child labour. |
| 15. UDC/PDC [Partido Democrata Cristão de Timor] [Christian Democratic Party] | | |
| Established in 1998. Party President : Vincente da Silva Guterres. 74 National Candidates, 3 District Candidates. | UDC/PDC was launched in March 1998 in Lisbon. It is based on a Christian humanism and on the social doctrine of the Church. | It favours a market economy. The party promotes the idea of basic education and health services as free and universal and stands for the promotion of local dialects and languages as East Timor heritage. |
| 16. UDT [União Democrática Timorense] [Timorese Democratic Union] | | |
| Established in 1974. Party President : João Viegas Carrascalão. 71 National Candidates, 9 District Candidates. | UDT was the first Political Party to be established. In 1974 « What was initially the most popular party titled itself the Timorese Democratic Union (UDI). Its programme called for democratisation, income redistribution, human rights, but above all, for self-determination for the Timorese people oriented towards a federation with Portugal [...]. The union's organizing members illustrated its leadership. Its President, Mario Carrascalão was a forestry engineer and a coffee-plantation owner » ¹⁵ . In a national congress held in 1997, UDT Statutes were revised and updated. However the Party lost some of its supporters to the PSD when it was established. | UDT's program includes : - Presidential system - A centralised system of government - Role for the elder to solve village level problems according to customary law - Pensions for ex-Portuguese and Indonesian Public Servants - Pensions for retired Falintil members and their widows and orphans |
| National Independent Candidates : - Domingos Alves - Daniel da Silva Ramalho - Teresa Maria de Carvalho - Olandina Caeiro - Maria Domingas Fernandes | | |
| District Independent Candidates Lautem : Justino Valentim, Carolino da Silva, Aurelio Freitas Ribeiro, Agapito Ramos Manatuto : Manuel Cárceres da Costa Dili : Marcolino Ribeiro Afonso Oecussi : Apolónia de Fátima da Costa, António da Costa Lelan, Etefvina da Costa Ermera : Eduardo de Deus Barreto Bobonaro : Domingos dos Santos | | |

15. J.G. TAYLOR, *op. ci.* : 26.

Some Comments on the East Timor 2001 Constituent Assembly Election : the Pasts into the Present ?

When it comes to analysing electoral processes and their result, comparative studies are often relevant to provide a certain understanding of electoral results. For the East Timor Constituent Assembly, this is not possible, because this election is precisely the first democratic election. However it seems possible to list a few preliminary remarks :

First remark, each of the registered political parties presented candidates in the 13 Districts.

Second remark, only four parties out of the sixteen political parties running for the elections succeeded in getting a voting above 5 %.

Third remark, All the « Historical Parties », and by this we mean the parties which have been established since 1974, ran for the elections.

Fourth remark, one political formation is the clear winner in this election, with over 50 % of the national votes and with a majority in 12 of the 13 districts for the National Representation election and with the election of 12 of the 13 district representatives, and this Political Party is Fretilin.

Fifth remark, the runner-up Party (PD) was established two month prior to the elections.

Sixth remark, unlike the 1999 Referendum Election, the vote was limited to the territory of East Timor, thus excluding all East Timorese in the Diaspora from the voting.

Finally, The election was declared free and fair.

Tabl. I. – ELECTORAL RESULTS NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE ELECTION

| <i>Party or Candidate</i> | <i>Total Votes</i> | <i>Votes as a % of Total Valid Votes</i> | <i>Seats</i> |
|---|--------------------|--|--------------|
| Total Valid Votes | 363 501 | 100.00 % | |
| Total Valid Vote Casts (% of Total Casts) | 363 501 | 94.60 % | |
| Invalid Votes | 20 747 | 5.40 % | |
| Total Votes Casts | 384 248 | 100.00 % | |
| Total Seats | | | 75 |
| Fretilin | 208 531 | 57.37 % | 43 |
| PD | 31 680 | 8.72 % | 7 |
| PSD | 29 726 | 8.18 % | 6 |
| ASDT | 28 495 | 7.84 % | 6 |
| UDT | 8 581 | 2.36 % | 2 |
| PNT | 8 035 | 2.21 % | 2 |
| Kota | 7 735 | 2.13 % | 2 |
| PPT | 7 322 | 2.01 % | 2 |
| PDC | 7 181 | 1.98 % | 2 |
| PST | 6 483 | 1.78 % | 1 |
| PL | 4 013 | 1.10 % | 1 |
| UDC/PDC | 2 413 | 0.66 % | 1 |
| Apodeti Pro Ref. | 2 181 | 0.60 % | 0 |
| PTT | 2 026 | 0.56 % | 0 |
| PDM | 1 788 | 0.49 % | 0 |
| Domingos Alves | 1 492 | 0.41 % | 0 |
| Daniel da Silva | 1 412 | 0.39 % | 0 |
| Maria Domingas Fernandes | 947 | 0.26 % | 0 |
| Olinda Caeiro | 779 | 0.21 % | 0 |
| Teresa Maria de Carvalho | 711 | 0.20 % | 0 |

Tabl. II. – NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE ELECTION RESULT
IN THE DISTRICT OF DILI

| <i>Party</i> | <i>Votes as a % of Total Valid Votes</i> |
|--------------|--|
| Fretilin | 66.05 |
| ASDT | 10.73 |
| PSD | 4.76 |
| PD | 5.88 |
| UDT | 2.30 |
| Others | 10.28 |

Tabl. III. – PARTY ELECTED DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

| <i>District</i> | <i>Party</i> | <i>Total Votes Received</i> | <i>% of Valid Votes Received</i> |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Aileu | Fretilin | 5 118 | 57.47 % |
| Ainaro | Fretilin | 6 050 | 34.63 % |
| Bacau | Fretilin | 38 525 | 85.97 % |
| Bobonaro | Fretilin | 18 743 | 60.34 % |
| Covalima | Fretilin | 13 961 | 65.74 % |
| Dili | Fretilin | 47 855 | 72.49 % |
| Ermera | Fretilin | 14 724 | 39.79 % |
| Lautem | Fretilin | 12 766 | 54.93 % |
| Liquiça | Fretilin | 16 247 | 78.43 % |
| Manatuto | Fretilin | 8 501 | 55.04 % |
| Manufahi | Fretilin | 10 235 | 75.12 % |
| Oecussi | Independent | 8 207 | 36.06 % |
| Viqueque | Fretilin | 22 721 | 81.62 % |

Usually, political analysts tend to «read» elections results with a panoply of predefined factors such as historical factors, geographical, demographical, socio-professional, religious, etc... In the case of East Timor the task is made quite difficult by the fact that there is no precise data regarding socio-professional categories, demography (population distribution, age pyramid of the population, gender...) and so on.

For the only, yet inaccurate comparison, there were 421 018 eligible voters in the 2001 Constituent Assembly Elections while there were 451 792 in the 1999 Referendum Election. In 1999, some 98 % of registered voters went to the polls while in 2001 the turnout rate was 91.3 %. Despite this slight decrease, this remains a very high turnout rate in the voting process.

If many of the predefined factors are not of any help in this case study, it is either because of data defection or more simply because the usual categories that analysts normally use, like socio-professional dichotomy (white/blue collar ; urban/rural workers, gender...), are irrelevant in East Timor : urban centre are almost inexistent, as are the secondary or tertiary sectors. Yet there may be some factors which could be quite elucidative for the purpose of this study, such as the historical factor (both of the Party itself and the territory) or the religious factor (even though there is no official data, it is widely known that around 90 per cent of the East Timorese are of Catholic faith).

Without much of a factor analysis, some quite striking conclusions can be drawn from the elections results :

1) Fretilin is the clear winner of the elections. Is anyone to be surprised by these results ? The party's victory was announced before the election and the election came as a tribute from the people of East Timor to the liberation movement, to the political formation that has best embodied the face of the resistance, the mirror of East Timor national heroes, the Party whose flag best represents the East Timor nationalist movement, and, *last but not least*, to the Party that declared East Timor independence in 1975. Undoubtedly Fretilin has for better or for worse embodied the concept, the idea of East Timor nationalism. The figures speak for themselves : 57.37 % of the total National Representative Election, with a lead over the second largest of almost 50 % and 12 out of the 13 District Candidates elected by Fretilin. In fact the rate of District Elected Candidates is 100 % if we consider on one hand that Fretilin did not present a candidate in the Oecussi district, where an independent candidate was elected, and on the other hand if we recall that this independent elected candidate was himself supported by Fretilin.

Tabl. IV. – FRETILIN RESULTS IN THE NATIONAL REPRESENTATION VOTE
PER DISTRICT AS % OF VALID VOTES

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| Aileu | 21,15% |
| Ainaro | 27,56% |
| Baucau | 81,98% |
| Bobonaro | 57,42% |
| Cova Lima | 61,42% |
| Dili | 66,05% |
| Ermera | 31,94% |
| Lautem | 62,76% |
| Liquiça | 72,44% |
| Manatuto | 47,57% |
| Manufahi | 54,56% |
| Oecussi | 38,60% |
| Viqueque | 74,95% |

What is also very interesting, as commented very accurately in a Portuguese newspaper¹⁶ as the first results were coming out, is that Fretilin's victory or what we would like to call « the Fretilin family », has gone far beyond this 57.37 %. What we denominate here in this concept of *family* is in fact no more and no less than the splitting, the ramifications of Fretilin (namely the nationalist idea and the resistance movement), that are to be found for example in the ASDT and the PD. ASDT was itself the party from which Fretilin originated in 1974 and the PD represents the urban young, mostly students, that have undertaken Fretilin resistance, in Indonesia and abroad and of course mostly on the territory. As Adelino Gomes puts it, what are ASDT and PD, other than two branches of the same independentist

16. A. GOMES, « A força da bandeira e os desafios da vitória », *Público* (Lisbon), 7th September 2001.

family¹⁷? If we take this seriously into account, which in this analyse we will, then Fretilin (taken not a party but as an ideology as a movement) the vote would go beyond 70 %... With this figure we approach the expected 80 % that Mari Alkatiri himself had foreseen on the eve of the election. If this was a campaign strategy, as he himself seemed to confess soon after the voting, the polemic was there in the campaign. Maybe Alkatiri was in fact opting for a strategy or maybe he and his entourage underestimated the mobilising capacity of both ASDT and PD. ASDT and its president Xavier do Amaral, have a long lasting presence on East Timor's political scene, more in the rural grassroots of East Timor, particularly in the Aileu District, where ASDT gained 52.13 % of the votes, leaving 21.15 % to Fretilin. But more than the unexpected performance, by the ASDT, there is the PD which, as a newly formed party (two month prior to the elections...!), succeeded in transforming itself into the runner-up in this election.

What this article concludes first is quite simple. When trying to explain the voters motivation as he/she enters the polling station, one is forced to admit that what the overwhelming majority of the East Timorese in that precise moment choose to reward, to pay tribute to, to honour, is fundamentally the anonymous, younger generation and evidently the Fretilin guerrilla fighters, their commanders who have for past decades expressed, transported and shaped the idea of East Timor nationalism. In others words, the East Timorese voted for the people or, put better, for the faces, that they have trusted as being on their side for many years.

2) From the above, another fact will take us to our second conclusion. By opposition to the *Fretilin' family* victory stands the quite severe defeat of (and to use the same terminology) the *Carrascalão family*, i.e. the poor results of the PSD and UDT parties. Respectively third and fifth on the national level, when the forecasts had credited the PSD as the most promising party after Fretilin. While it is too early to understand the reasons for this defeat, commentators have argued that the image of a wealthy, well-established family and a certain alliance with the Indonesian authorities (Mário Carrascalão, head of PSD was former Indonesian Governor of East Timor) may help to understand these poor results. It is quite unclear, as we write these comments, since some background reasons have yet to be studied. This fact will lead us to our third conclusion.

3) When we think of the personalities who have shown (openly or not) their sympathy to the newly created PSD, such as Xanana Gusmão (leader of the East Timorese resistance), José Ramos Horta (Nobel Peace Prize winner), Leandro Isaac (one of the leading figure of the 1999 referendum, anti-autonomy option) to name a few, we are faced with the understanding that their political credit as figures of East Timorese nationalism has not transformed itself into electoral support for their political options in this election.

17. « *Ontem em Díli, Mari Alkatiri disse ao Público que « se por alguma razão os outros partidos acabarem, a Fretilin divide-se em duas ou três para garantir o multipartismo ». A ironia sarcástica do novo homem forte de Díli é desnecessária porque a realidade já se encarrega de o traduzir : o que são o PD e a ASDT se não as diferentes divisões da mesma família independentista, cada uma a sua maneira ? in « A força da bandeira... », op. cit.*

4) The fourth conclusion will take us to the widely discussed role of the Church in East Timor (the Church seen as an institution). If we take a look at the performance of the two Christian Parties (PDC and UDC/PDC), it does not appear that the fact that a person is truly a Christian, as we assume that the majority of the East Timorese are (i.e. that this same person has a strong link to religion other than the simple routine of Sunday mess, child baptism etc...), leads him/her to vote for a political party that embodies a certain conception of society and life in general. Some East Timorese parties in their program raised issues such as the death penalty and abortion, which are issues that normally tend to gather together more conservative or less conservative trends of society or more religious, less religious for example. The religious factor was not a predominant factor in the voter's choice. This can also be explained by the fact that the Church has been so closely linked with the resistance that the religious element probably combined itself with the nationalist factor in favour, of course, of the Fretilin.

5) In this election, and let us underline it once again, the first ever democratic free elections in East Timor's history, it appears that historical/personal symbols have had more weight than other factors such as party programs or Sociological backgrounds. Assuming this as a fact, we are brought to our last conclusion which explains best the *Fretilin family* success: the Historical element. More precisely one particular historical moment, back to 1974-75. In East Timor, the memory of 1975 and a self-proclaimed independence is still very much alive.

This election very much proves this.

Lisbon, June and October 2001

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