External Democracy Promotion in Post-Conflict Zones: Evidence from Case Studies

East Timor

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This report has been commissioned by Freie Universität Berlin for a comparative project on the international factors shaping transitions to democracy in post-conflict countries. See http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/frieden/ib/projekte/democracypromotion/index.html.
External Democracy Promotion in Post-Conflict Zones: Evidence from Case Studies

An Introduction To The Project

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The Research Question

Can countries emerge from civil wars as democracies? And if they can - to what extent and by what means can external actors support such a transition? While much research effort has been devoted to the question of how warring societies break the conflict trap and return to peace, much less effort has so far been spent on investigating under what circumstances warring societies not only end violence, but succeed in creating a stable and democratic polity. Political theorists, from Machiavelli to Huntington, are in general very skeptical with regard to the possibility of democratic regimes arising out of civil war. Instead, many see an intermediate stage of autocratic rule as unavoidable in order to overcome societal divisions and rebuild the fundamental political institutions of the polity. The empirical evidence seems indeed to suggest that countries rarely emerge from war as democracies. When we look at the overall population of countries that experienced a civil war after WWII (regardless of whether there was a peacebuilding mission or not), we find little reason for optimism. Only 10% of the countries that experienced civil wars reached a polity score of +7 or higher (approximately like Kenya, Moldova or Mali) two years after war ended. 53 % all war-affected countries show a polity score of -5 or lower two years after the end of civil war, that is, a regime type similar to Gambia or Iran. 37% have a polity score of -7 or lower, similar to Belarus or Uzbekistan (all data is from Sambanis, Nicholas, with Michael Doyle, 2000: International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and
Quantitative Analysis, in: American Political Science Review 94: 4, 779 - 801). The picture looks similarly gloomy five years after the end of civil war: 52% have a polity score of -5 or lower; 39.4% have a score of -7 or lower; and only 10.6% have a score of +7 or higher. Yet, there are historical examples of countries that did emerge from war as democracies: Germany and Japan in the aftermath of World War II, and Mozambique, Namibia or Macedonia in the post cold war period, to name only a few. What made these cases of post-war democratization successful, and what, if any, role was played by external actors? This is, in a nutshell, the puzzle that this research project investigates.

The study of post-war democratization is a relatively new field, and there is surprisingly little empirical scholarly work devoted to the factors that allow a post-war country to become both stable and democratic. This can partly be explained by the fact that the two bodies of literatures, which are relevant for such an endeavor, are concerned with only one half of the problem. The democratic transition literature is predominantly interested in the democratic outcome of a political transition in countries which were authoritarian, but at peace. The literature on peace building is interested in transitions from civil war to peace. Whether this peace is accompanied by a measure of democracy or not is typically not of interest to this body of literature. This division of labor may explain why there is only a very small literature that is explicitly interested in outcomes which are both peaceful and democratic. But is this division warranted, or is it perhaps a consequence of academic inertia? The answer to this question depends on whether we think that post-war countries are in essence a sub-class of transition cases, or whether we think that post-conflict countries are cases sui generis.

The researchers involved in this project think that post-conflict cases are fundamentally different from transition cases, and they assume that these differences may have an impact on the factors which affect peace and democracy. If this is true, then it is necessary to account for the possibility that the factors which affect a transition to democracy are not necessarily the same, or do not necessarily have the same impact, in a post-conflict setting. We must also account for the possibility that the factors which affect peace and democracy respectively do not necessarily simply add up, but that they may cancel each other out. One
implication of this is then that we have to disaggregate the concept of “success” into sub-concepts. One way of doing this is to individually look at “absence of war”, “democratic quality of the regime” and “state capacities”. While these three concepts may merge in the case of fully established democracies, we argue that for countries emerging from war we need to disaggregate them in order to be able to empirically explore which sequences and combinations are most conducive to the normatively desirable outcome: stable democracies at peace.

The Research Design

Given these challenges, we opted for a case study oriented research design. Case studies allow for process-tracing, which is indispensable for discovering causal mechanisms. Case studies allow researchers to treat cases a whole, which facilitates the identification of multiple causation and which may lead to the identification of typological sub-classes. Case studies can be arranged into different sets of structured comparisons; and finally, small-n research designs are not dependent on the few available global data sets, because the small number of cases allows researchers to collect the specific original data which they think may be relevant for the explanation of the observed phenomenon.

We collaborated with an international team of country experts, who prepared ten structured cases studies between October 2008 and December 2009. Our sample covers cases on Macedonia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, East Timor and Haiti. We deliberately chose cases from the post cold-war period only, because our main interest is the contribution of external actors to post-war democratization, and democracy promotion and massive peace building missions became fashionable and feasible after the end of the cold war in the late 1980s.

The Universe of Cases

The universe of cases consists, theoretically, of all civil wars that came to an end after 1989. We count 52 cases (Data from Doyle/Sambanis 2000). Our main interests is the
question of whether and how countries that were affected by large-scale violence can emerge as stable and democratic polities, and we are particularly interested in the impact of external support to this outcome. Other outcomes are possible and indeed more probable. Post-conflict countries can relapse into war; post-conflict countries can emerge as stable, yet undemocratic polities; and post-conflict countries could emerge as democratic, yet unstable polities. For comparative purposes, we wanted to include all of these outcomes in our sample. Furthermore, we also want to have variation on the main independent variable, that is, the amount of external support for democracy. Hence, we have four different outcomes, and two different values on our main independent variable. This can be depicted in a table with 2 x 4 cells. In order to group the cases into the cells, we have to define measures for stability, democracy and external support. Because this is not for analytical-descriptive purpose, but for sampling, we do this in a fairly rough and ready way. We classify countries that are still at peace five years after the war ended as stable. We classify countries as democratic when they reach a polity IV score of 10 or higher five years after the war ended. We proxy the amount of external support by the type of UN mission. Countries in which a complex peace building mission, or a peace enforcement mission, took place are coded as having received high external support. For all coding we rely on a data set compiled by Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis (Sambanis 2000).

The next table groups all cases in the eight cells. Case in bold were included in our sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stable democratic and Stable undemocratic</th>
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<th>Stable democratic and Stable undemocratic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
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<td>El Salvador</td>
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<td>Yugoslavia-Croatia</td>
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<td>Macedonia</td>
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<td>High external support</td>
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<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>Yugoslavia-Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low or no external support</td>
<td>Bangladesh--Hill</td>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>India-Kashmir</td>
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<td>Eritrean</td>
<td>Burma</td>
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<td>Ethiopia-ideol</td>
<td>Burma</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Georgia-Abkhazia</td>
<td>Burma</td>
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<td>Georgia-Ossetia</td>
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<td>Haiti</td>
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IV
In order to generate fine-grained data, we developed a structured research template that consists of 101 questions, divided into four sections. Country experts answered these questions, thereby generating rigidly structured case studies with a tremendous amount of data, which we used for comparative analysis. Only then did the authors shorten the studies turning them into condensed analytical narratives. The original versions of the reports are accessible at the project’s webpage.

The first section is devoted to a description of the outcome. We disaggregate the concepts “security”, “democracy” and “state capacities” into sub-concepts: With regard to democracy, we inquire about various dimensions of democracy. These dimensions are rule of law, participation, competition, and accountability. We also ask how the majority of the population perceives democracy. Is there any cultural bias in favor or against democracy? For example, is it seen as a Western export that suits outsiders more than the local population? By security, we refer to whether the state is able to provide physical security to its population by ensuring the absence of war and providing protection from other forms of

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1 The Template is available here: http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/frieden/ib/projekte/democracypromotion/index.html

2 http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/frieden/ib/projekte/democracypromotion/index.html
organized violence (e.g. criminal violence). By state capacity, we refer to the capacity of
the state administration to autonomously make decisions and effectively implement them.
In general terms, this implies that stronger states with more capacities can rely on well-
developed bureaucratic apparatuses which are staffed by cohesive cohorts of civil servants
and steered by flexible elites who have an incentive to hold in check rent-seekers and re-
deploy available resources in pursuit of strategic policy objectives. Finally, this section asks
whether the regime is seen as legitimate, and we differentiate between procedural input
legitimacy (the regime is legitimate because its procedures ensure that society can voice its
preferences and feed them into the decision-making process) and output legitimacy (the
regime is legitimate because it provides public goods).

The second section asks about long-term structural factors (such as long-term economic
development, the structure of the economy, or previous experiences with democracy), about
war-related factors (such as duration and type of war, numbers of fractions, level of war-
related destruction, and quality of any peace agreement) which may have had an impact on
the countries’ capacities for a democratic peace.

The third section inquires about neighborhood effects on democracy such as linkages and
integration; it then asks about the scope and characteristics of the external intervention
focusing on both military and non-military aspects. We are interested in state-
reconstructing and democracy-promoting measures, and in the question of how intrusive
these measures were. We also ask whether and how diplomacy, normative pressure and/or
persuasion contributed to the democratization process. Another set of questions explores
the interaction between the local elites and the interveners, their respective preferences and
constraints. These questions allow us to reconstruct the strategic interaction and bargaining
which we assume contributed to the outcome.

The fourth and final section covers development aid. Development aid is a specific form of
external intervention; we investigate it separately in order to be able to detect its distinct
effects. This section is intended to map the resource flows in the conflict country and to
assess how they contributed to democratization and stabilization. This section inquires
about the most important donors and about the prevailing modalities of delivery. We also asked country experts to collect disaggregated data on the sectoral distribution of aid where available. Experts provided annual figures for: elections and political processes; rule of law, accountability, anti-corruption, human rights and minority rights; institutional infrastructure (parliamentary and public administration, decentralization, administrative capacity); civil society, media, civic education, empowerment; civil-military relations, DDR, security sector reform. Please note that these are our generic categories which may differ from those used by donors or by the OECD-DAC, and that this data should be treated as illustrative rather than complete for most case studies due to a lack of availability of such information. Finally, we asked our experts to indentify instances of applied aid conditionality and to assess the impacts.

The Case Studies

The case studies are available from our website. We think that they provide a valuable source of fine-grained data which help us to better understand the processes which lead to a much desired, yet rare outcome: A successful transition from war to peace and democracy.
Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development

– Timor Leste Case Study

DRAFT 2

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e-mail: henrimyrttinen@gmail.com
List of Abbreviations used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Indonesian Armed Forces before 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>African, Caribbean and Pacific signatories of the Cotonou Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADF</td>
<td>Australian Defence Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Australian Federal Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMP</td>
<td>Aliança com Maioria Parlamentar (Government coalition 2007 onwards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brimob</td>
<td>Brigade Mobil (Paramilitary wing of the Indonesian police)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAFF</td>
<td>Children Associated with Fighting Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CivPol</td>
<td>Civilian Police (later: UN Police or UNPOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPLP</td>
<td>Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>Economic Partnership Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETTA</td>
<td>East Timor Transitional Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Falintil</td>
<td>Forças Armadas de Libertaçao Nacional de Timor Leste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-FDTL</td>
<td>Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPU</td>
<td>Formed Police Units</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fretilin</td>
<td>Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNR</td>
<td>Guarda Nacional Republicana (Portuguese FPU)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFI</td>
<td>International Financial Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International NGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interfet</td>
<td>International Force for East Timor</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISF</td>
<td>International Stabilisation Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLO</td>
<td>Military Liaison Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Military observer</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>PKF</td>
<td>Peacekeeping forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
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<td>PNTL</td>
<td>Policia Nacional de Timor Leste</td>
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<td>POLRI</td>
<td>Kepolisiaan Republik Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Private Security Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAG</td>
<td>ritual arts group</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDTL</td>
<td>Republica Democratica de Timor Leste</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALW</td>
<td>Small Arms and Light Weapons</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRSG</td>
<td>Special Representative of the Secretary-General</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSI</td>
<td>Security-sector Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSR</td>
<td>Security Sector Reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TCC – Troop-contributing countries
TNI – Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian Armed Forces after 1999)
UDT – União Democrática Timorense
UNAMET – United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNMISET – United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
UNMIT – United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor Leste
UNOTIL – United Nations Office in Timor-Leste
UNPOL – United Nations Police (also sometimes called CivPol, Civilian Police)
UNTAET – United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNV – United Nations Volunteer
WAFF – Women Associated with Fighting Forces
SECTION 1: DEFINING INTERVENTIONAL SUCCESS OR FAILURE

A Democracy: How democratic is the regime that has emerged after the intervention?

1 Please describe the regime according to the following five dimensions of domestic democratic change on a national and on a sub-national/local level:

For the purposes of this paper, I shall consider ‘The Conflict’ as being East Timor’s war for independence which lasted from 1975 until 1999, with the post-conflict period beginning with the withdrawal of Indonesian occupation forces and the arrival of international peacekeepers in September 1999. In the post-conflict period I will look at a slightly longer time period, effectively from September 1999 until the time of writing. I have chosen to do this as April/May 2006 saw Timor Leste descending into a major political crisis, a major chapter of which ended on April 30, 2008, with the surrender of the last of the soldiers whose mutiny had triggered the crisis in 2006. The crisis saw Timor Leste from being demoted within weeks from its previous status of being the ‘poster child’ of internationally supported nation-building efforts to that of a ‘failed state,’ ‘basket case’ or, interestingly, ‘Australia’s Haiti.’

The independent Democratic Republic of Timor Leste (RDTL) which emerged in the post-conflict period is, in and of itself, a completely new political entity, emerging from 450 years of Portuguese, 3 years of Japanese and 24 years of Indonesian occupation. Legally speaking, from the East Timorese point of view, the territory became independent with the unilateral declaration of independence on November 28, 1975, 10 days before the Indonesian invasion. While Indonesia and later Australia considered the territory to have subsequently become an integrated part of Indonesia, the general international consensus was that East Timor was still a ‘non-self-ruling territory’

1 I will use Portuguese Timor to refer to the territory during the Portuguese colonial period until the Carnation Revolution, East Timor for the time during the 1974-75 interregnum and under Indonesian occupation (when it was ‘integrated’ as the Province of East Timor – Propinsi Timor Timur) and Timor Leste for the post-conflict period.
theoretically under Portuguese administration until the UN-organised referendum of 1999.

While the independent nation-state is a new construct, on the sub-national level many of the administrative structures of the Indonesian administration have been retained (which in turn were in part based on Portuguese and Japanese administrative structures). Also, many of the structures and office-holders are referred to by their Indonesian or Portuguese titles, or a mix thereof (e.g. the head of a the highest sub-national subdivision, the district (distrito, using the Portuguese term) is often referred to by the Indonesian title of bupati as the districts match the old kabupaten of Indonesian rule. Similarly, village heads are referred to both as kepala desa (Indonesian) and chefe de suco (Portuguese), both terms being acceptable in the local Tetum vernacular).

I The rule of law:

Currently, the judiciary in Timor Leste could be described as fairly independent in most cases but extremely weak. A key problem continuing to hamper the judiciary is the fact that court proceedings are to take place in the official language, Portuguese, which only a small minority of the population speak. Given the language problem, poor communications infrastructure and high levels of illiteracy, public knowledge of formal laws (as opposed to ‘traditional laws’) is low, especially in the rural areas.

Many outlying areas (especially the exclave of Oecussi) are effectively cut off from the formal judicial system due to the long distances to and understaffing of the rural police stations and courts. Given the lack of formal judicial infrastructure, many cases are settled out of court through ‘traditional’ methods. Though this has proven successful in many cases, including in smoothing the reintegration of former combatants, it tends to be highly problematic in cases involving gender-based violence or accusations of sorcery and witchcraft (which are also often directed against women). However, even when cases
of GBV are brought into the formal system, the male-dominated judiciary often tends to discriminate against the women bringing in charges.

International efforts have aimed at training a local judiciary from scratch as well as teaching judges, lawyers and other judicial officers Portuguese. At times, court proceedings have been run by Portuguese-speaking judges from CPLP countries in lieu of local judges. Also, it is not uncommon for laws to be drafted in their final, Portuguese version by outside consultants as the Portuguese skills of civil servants and MPs are not at a sufficient level.

A particular problem in Timor Leste is impunity and amnesty for high profile cases, be it on the international level for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against the East Timorese during the Indonesian occupation or on a national level for high-level East Timorese involved in the April/May 2006 crisis and its aftermath. There is a sense amongst many in the public that high profile cases are not addressed and only ‘the small fish’ are caught.

**ii Participation:**

Since the 1999 independence referendum with its somewhat spectacular voter turn-out (especially given the circumstances) of 98.6%, Timor Leste has had two presidential, two national parliamentary elections as well as local elections. Electoral participation has been consistently high (above 80% of the registered electorate) and the electorate has shown its independence in spite of manipulatory tactics employed by practically all political parties.

Participation in policy dialogues and civil society organisations is, however, very much restricted to the educated elites in the urban areas, mainly in the capital Dili. Though lively political debate is very much a part of everyday life (especially for men), very few East Timorese are willing to express their views outside of a ‘safe’ sphere of friends,
neighbours or relatives due to a widespread, deep yet diffuse fear of possible (though highly unlikely) repercussions.

Especially in the country-side, relations between the *ema boot* (lit.: ‘big people’), i.e. the political, traditional, social or economic elite and the ‘commoners’ tend to be characterised by patron-client relationships. These can be (and often are) used for political patronage. Some minor political parties are based almost exclusively on localised networks in support of a particular leader.

Women’s participation in politics remains limited, although Timor Leste’s two elected parliaments have had some of the highest percentages of female parliamentarians in the Asia-Pacific region. Often, women parliamentarians are expected to submit to party discipline rather than advance issues which are of importance to women. At the local level and in traditional power structures, women tend to be even more marginalised (Cristalis and Scott, 2005; Koyama and Myrttinen, 2007).

Some observers (e.g. Hohe, 2002) have been highly critical of the way in which the international community have assumed that the mere act of participating in elections is proof of the existence of a democratic system in Timor Leste. According to this strand of argumentation, elections have been used to sustain and legitimise the power of existing elites through voting processes which were manipulated by undemocratic means and involved a populace unaware of democratic procedures. I would personally argue that while there is an element of truth to this (e.g. awareness of the mechanics of the state apparatus and the functions of its various components is low, especially in rural areas), people do tend to have rather clear political views and have proven to vote accordingly at the polls, at times with unexpected results for the political elite.

East Timorese media tend to be independent but not free of political bias. A further problem has been the wilful or accidental spreading of rumours by the media, which has at times inflamed tensions. The reach of the media is, however, quite limited, with
newspapers seldom finding their way beyond the main urban centres while the reception of radio and TV broadcasts is often limited by frequent power outages.

Amongst the educated elite, foreign media, especially Australian and to a lesser extent Portuguese media, also play an important role as an outlet for political debate. For this group as well as for the influential expatriate community in Timor Leste (and crucially for those making Timor-relevant decisions in Brussels, Canberra or Lisbon), internet mailing lists and blogs have also become influential debate forums.

Rumour, often transmitted via SMS, plays a central role in everyday East Timorese political discourse. Often it is immaterial whether a particular rumour or conspiracy theory has any objective truth to it, as people will act as if it were true, thus often turning the rumour into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Thus, while the freedoms of expression and forming/joining organisations exist, they are rarely put to use in the public arena except by members of the educated elite. The current phenomenon of youth gangs could possibly be interpreted as an exception, though these groups are also very much linked to existent or emerging elites.

**iii Competition:**

Though not free from a degree of intimidation, manipulation attempts and the odd faux pas, the elections have been more or less free and fair as well as free of violence, especially when comparing with neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, PNG or the Philippines. Post-electoral violence was an issue in some areas following the parliamentary elections in August 2007, though in many cases this seemed to be ‘opportunistic’ violence, i.e. older scores were being settled under the guise of a political conflict.

The constitutional order has in itself, due to its vagueness in some key points, become highly contested between various political actors. What is important, though, is that no
political players have questioned the constitutional order _per se_ but rather squabbled over the correct interpretation of the relevant constitutional passages.

iv Vertical accountability:

By the time of the crisis in mid-2006, the state apparatus itself was seen by many East Timorese as having been hijacked by an unaccountable clique (‘the Maputo clique’) within the Fretilin party, the detractors of which saw themselves as the more democratic ‘opposition’ and gave at least tacit approval to the mutiny of the military petitioners in 2006.

Given the fact that the current national government is only the second one since independence, it is difficult to extrapolate at this point as to whether or not a culture of vertical democratic accountability has in fact become rooted in East Timorese society. The fact that both the 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections were seen as (and meant as) dealing a blow to the previous Fretilin government for not fulfilling its promises can be taken as a first sign of a manifestation of this kind of demand for accountability to the electorate.

v Horizontal accountability:

As the state institutions are still rather young, it is again difficult to gauge based on the first six years of independence how much of an institutional culture has developed in the state bureaucratic and in its dealings with the government. I would however venture to say that during the first six years there have been numerous instances in which ‘_Staatsraison_’ has been over-ridden for the sake of satisfying the needs of and constraints posed by other networks of loyalty, such as family/clan membership, political affiliation or the like. The change in government from Fretilin to AMP has apparently not led to a change in this respect, with lucrative deals at least seemingly going to individuals with good connections to the government.
According to the above criteria, do you consider the country under study to be a full democracy? Which of the above areas lack full democratization on the national and on the subnational/local level respectively?

Aside from the larger semantic and philosophical problem of defining a full democracy, I would argue that Timor Leste is at a stage at the moment at which all key elite players and the vast majority of the population accept the ground rules set by the current legal and constitutional order. A key problem is however a lack of common understanding about what exactly this order means in practice. The only potential credible ‘spoiler,’ Major Alfredo Reinado, died when he (apparently) tried to violently challenge this order by mounting a coup d’état on February 11, 2008.

A particular area of concern in Timor Leste has been the security sector, where the various different interpretations of their legal mandates have, quite literally, led to violent ‘turf battles’ between the various security sector institutions. The ‘checks and balances’ posed by the judiciary, media, civil society and the electorate remain independent but rather weak. There is a definite gap between the capital Dili, other urban centres and outlying areas as far as access to information or to services is concerned.

In sum, democracy in Timor-Leste is ‘work in progress.’ Freedom House has listed the country consistently as ‘partly free’ (see Table 1) while the Economist Intelligence Unit has listed Timor-Leste as a ‘flawed democracy’ on par with Indonesia rather than as a ‘hybrid regime’ (EIU, 2007).

Table 1: Freedom House Ratings for Timor-Leste, 2002-2008

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<td>Political Rights</td>
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The fluctuations in the Freedom House ratings reflect on the one hand the built-in bias, if you will, against foreign intervention, with the political rights rating going up two points as soon as the UNTAET mission came to an end. The worsening of the civil liberties in the 2007 and 2008 ratings reflects the impacts of the 2006 crisis.

The classification of Timor-Leste as being ‘partly free’ and a ‘flawed democracy’ reflects in my mind rather accurately the current state of democratisation in the country. In the elite, democracy is seen as ‘the only game in town’ but many of the players seem to be quite willing to bend or tweak the rules of the game a bit here and there for the benefit of their own group. This is facilitated by unclear provisions in the constitution and the laws as well as lack of a clear knowledge of the legal situation.

A key reason for the older members of the elite to embrace democracy can be found in the history of the political parties and the personal history of the leaders, most of whom embraced western-imported ideals (be it socialist, social-democratic or Christian-democratic ideals) and western-imported models of political organisation (e.g. parties, trade unions, NGOs) during their political socialisation in 1974/75. Regardless of their political outlook, they eventually came to share a vision of Timor-Leste becoming a self-governing republic (with the exception of marginal, but important pro-Indonesian Apodeti party and the even more marginal monarchists).

Younger members of the elite, on the other hand, were socialised in the underground pro-independence and pro-democracy movements during the Indonesian occupation. Many of these also maintained active links to the student-led Indonesian pro-democracy movement. For many members of these groups, both Indonesians and East Timorese alike, the demands for a ‘Free East Timor’ and ‘Demokrasi’ went hand-in-hand. Returning elites, on the other hand, had spent much of their lives in more or less functioning democracies such as Australia, Portugal and New Zealand. Interestingly, the
returnees from Mozambique (such as Alkatiri) have been repeatedly suspected of anti-democratic sentiments and have had their time in Mozambique held against them. While in our overall study Mozambique is seen almost as a shining example of the success of external democratisation processes, in Timor-Leste it is used as a cipher for creeping autocratic tendencies (or even, God forbid, ‘communism’).

Amongst the broader population, there is often a rather large degree of lack of information regarding democratic processes and the various functions of the state, and local-level elites can and often do manipulate (though at times unwittingly) processes for their own or their group’s benefit. Nonetheless, there is a strong will to participate in democratic processes and voter levels remain high. Increasingly, however, there is disillusionment with the perceived political games played by and the corruption of the dominant political elites in Dili. Also, the lack of ‘justice’ (i.e. impunity for high-level political figures) and slow socio-economic progress contribute to this sense of disillusionment, regardless of whether one is more Fretilin or AMP-inclined.

Though there is surprisingly little animosity felt toward Indonesia and Indonesian cultural products are consumed at high levels, re-integration with Indonesia has not been propagated by any political grouping. The long and bloody struggle for independence plays a central role in the national identity narrative.

In the transfer process from the international community (i.e. UNTAET) to East Timorese elites, outside players have played varying roles. In some cases the approach was intrusive, in others more hands-off, in some fields there was an imposition of one view and in others co-operation between international and East Timorese actors. Many of the key processes, such as the drafting of the constitution, were run by East Timorese elites themselves, albeit with input from outside advisors. Some legislation, however, was promulgated by UNTAET with little or no local input and has since passed into East Timorese legislation.
The criticism of ‘UNTAET’s kingdom’ by, inter alia, Chopra, Gunn and Hood, does have its legitimacy and certainly many East Timorese have felt (and still do feel) disempowered by international actors who are perceived as taking decisions on their behalf, leading to bitterness. The UN system has often been surprisingly oblivious to this, literally not seeing the writing on the wall (e.g. in the form of anti-UN graffiti). I would, however, claim that the situation is more complex than merely one of haughty, neo-colonialist internationalists imposing their will upon the East Timorese. The interplay between local players and international players is far more complex, with positions being renegotiated often literally on a daily basis in a number of inter-related arenas. Mistakes have been made by both sides, often boiling down to seemingly mundane issues such as incompatible personalities or misunderstandings, which then become multiplied and amplified through the duration of the process.

**Answering the ‘what if…?’- question**

‘Doing the counter-factual’ is relatively easy in the case of Timor Leste as the western half of the island, West Timor, has been a part of the Dutch East Indies and subsequently Indonesia for the duration of the eastern half’s more turbulent history, thus giving an example of what Timor Leste could be like had the population opted in 1999 for integration with Indonesia rather than independence and an externally supported nation-building process.

Had the independence vote not won, it is relatively safe to presume that the Indonesian military and its militia proxies would not have gone on the violent rampage which they did, thus not leading to hundreds of deaths and mass deportations of around a third of the population. Furthermore, it can be assumed that both the physical and political infrastructure would have remained more or less untouched. This would have meant a similar political, social and economic trajectory for East Timor as for West Timor (and other parts of Eastern Indonesia, for that matter).
Democratisation would have proceeded, as it has in West Timor and elsewhere in Indonesia, but it would be highly likely that local power elites from the Suharto-era (including members of the security forces) would have retained key positions of power. Socio-economic development would probably have been at the same level as West Timor, i.e. rather modest. Javanese and other non-Timorese migrants would probably be playing a major role in the economy, as they did during the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. Foreign aid would have continued flowing, but at much lower rates than currently, as eastern Indonesia as a whole tends to be neglected by both the central government and foreign donors and INGOs. As the ‘special autonomy’-package offered as an alternative to independence in 1999 was never fleshed out properly, it is difficult to say how much actual autonomy an Indonesian Autonomous Region of East Timor would have gained in reality. If other ‘special autonomy’ packages implemented by Jakarta in Aceh and Papua are anything to go by, however, the impact would again have been rather modest.

In brief, had Timor-Leste not become independent, it would in all probability be similar to the western part of the island – a provincial backwater with a low level of socio-economic development (though arguably higher than Timor-Leste currently has), a slowly democratising political elite consisting often to a large part of immigrants from other parts of Indonesia, and a relatively unaccountable judiciary and security sector. Corruption levels can be assumed to have remained high and media freedom dependent on the whims of local mayors and governors.

B Security

1 I Please assess the security situation.

While Timor-Leste has not relapsed into full-scale war, armed violence has been a major problem for the young nation-state. Tensions had been building up in the post-referendum years, discharging themselves in the violent anti-UN protests of December 2002 and in
subsequent smaller-scale instances of violence, including pitched battles between the newly formed police and armed forces.

A full-scale crisis erupted in April/May 2006 triggered by the sacking of almost half of the armed forces. The crisis saw the implosion of almost all state institutions, above all in the security sector, the death of at least 37 people, led to approximately 100 000 IDPs, and precipitated the arrival of a new international peacekeeping force. For the next two years, tensions remained high with street fighting between armed gangs and supporters of various political groups a daily occurrence. A further cause for concern have been the approximately 600 soldiers, called the ‘petitioners,’ whose dismissal from the armed forces had triggered the 2006 crisis. The most militant of these joined renegade Major Alfredo Reinado, who on February 11, 2008, apparently mounted an assassination/coup d’état attempt against both the President and Prime Minister and was shot. On April 30, 2008, the last of Reinado’s supporters surrendered to the East Timorese authorities. At the time of writing, the crisis has cost the lives of approximately 100 people, while tens of thousands of Timorese continue to live in IDP camps.

Using the UNMIT’s UN-speak, the situation in Timor Leste at the time of writing (May 2008) has gone from ‘calm but tense’ to ‘stable but fragile.’ The semantic shift is due to the events of February 11, 2008. While the period between April/May 2006 had seen widespread, continual, low-level violence in the country best described as gang warfare, the coup attempt of February 11 was the first time that there seemed to be a direct and open armed challenge to the established political order. Whether this actually was a challenge or not is a matter of much debate and the source for multiple conspiracy theories at the moment.

Paradoxically, the coup attempt, while taking politically-motivated violence to a new level, has led to an improvement as far as the overall security situation is concerned, as the country was placed under a state of siege/emergency until the end of April 2008. The increased presence of security forces, the strict curfew and a general societal sense of having been ‘a bit too close to the precipice for comfort’ have led to a calming-down of
the security situation. The fissures and pressures which led to the crisis in 2006 and the coup attempt in 2008 remain however, with the exception of the persona of Major Alfredo Reinado, unresolved. Thus violent instability may reappear, though its political and social legitimacy might be diminished since the coup attempt.

The public tend to be very wary of the security situation, with around 10% of the population remaining in IDP camps since the eruption of the crisis two years ago for fear of communal violence. Trust in the security sector institutions, including in many of the peacekeeping contingents, tends to be low. Of the UNPOL FPUs, it is the heavy-handed Portuguese GNR which tend to be held in the highest esteem by the local political elite (and ironically by the gangs they are sent out to combat).

Gangs\(^2\), often with backers in the economic and political elite, have greatly expanded their influence since the outbreak of the 2006 crisis, controlling many of the capital’s neighbourhoods and infiltrating both the police and PSCs.

C State capacity, legitimacy, service provision

1 I Please assess the state’s capacity to autonomously make decisions and effectively implement them. Is there a well-developed bureaucratic apparatus, solid enough for governance?

The state’s capacity to deliver services has been low. Both the Fretilin government and the current AMP government have had difficulties in spending their allocated budgets, in part due to the political crises which have hampered any progress in the country since 2006. Socio-economic development has been minimal. At independence in 2002, the UNDP ranked Timor Leste as the Asia-Pacific region’s poorest country and on the eve of the crisis of 2006 the UNDP reported little progress on most HDI indicators, with some

\(^2\) For lack of a better term, I use the word ‘gangs’ to denote neighbourhood-based gangs, martial arts groups (MAGs) and ritual arts groups (RAGs)
even deteriorating during the independence period. The 2006 crisis was highly detrimental to the already fragile economy, though there has been some economic growth in 2007 and more is forecast for 2008, barring unforeseen circumstances. These predictions need to treated with a certain degree of caution though, as growth in 2007 is in a large part due to recovery after the 2006 economic losses and the fact that the increased international presence is leading, as during the UNTAET years, to a ‘bubble economy’ in Dili. Little, if any, of the economic development visible in Dili trickles to the more peripheral areas where subsistence farming tends to be the norm.

The security sector has been one of Timor Leste’s main problems ever since independence. There has been no clear delineation of the respective duties of the armed forces and the police, leading to the above-mentioned ‘turf battles,’ the crisis of 2006 and the coup attempt of 2008 (ICG, 2008).

Timor Leste’s state apparatus tends to be highly centralised, both in terms of a concentration of decision-making power in the capital and in terms of a very hierarchical approach to decision-making within the bureaucratic apparatus. There tends to be a lack of delegation of power to lower levels, leading to a situation where even minor requests (such as getting the – theoretically – publicly-available data on external support for this particular project) need to be dealt with on a ministerial or cabinet level, which in turn leads to very slow implementation of decisions.

Furthermore, there also often seems to be a tendency for legislation which may have been highly contested and debated before being passed only to ‘vanish off the radar screen’ as soon as it has been passed, with practically no follow-up. This has happened for example in the case of an amnesty law, legislation on decentralisation and on conscription.

Allegations of favouritism, corruption, collusion and nepotism abound in Timor Leste. While many of these allegations are undoubtedly politically motivated or reflect a jaded and cynical view of the elite’s dealings by large parts of the populace, there does seem to be some degree of truth to the allegations. There have been few actual official inquiries
into these allegations but several watchdog organisations, both nationally and internationally, have raised these issues.

Informal, clientilist networks of loyalty and patronage play an important role in East Timorese society, especially in areas where state presence is limited to non-existent. These networks have become increasingly problematic in the security sector as allegiance to political parties, gangs, veterans’ groups or the like take precedence over loyalty to state institutions and disinterested provision of services to the population.

Timor-Leste in mid-2008 remains highly dependent on external actors and foreign aid. The country hosts a UN mission (UNMIT) and has a large foreign security force presence consisting of Australian-led ISF combat troops and UN Police, most notably Portuguese, Malaysian and Pakistani Formed Police Units.

D The interdependence between democracy, security and state capacities

1 I Please elaborate on the interdependencies between democracy, state capacities and security.

The 2006 crisis and its aftermath clearly demonstrated, in multiple ways, the various inter-linkages between democracy, security and the capacity of the state apparatus in Timor Leste. The most obvious example in this respect is the security sector itself, which lacked democratic control and was, in part, imbued with an undemocratic esprit de corps and open to outside manipulation, was incapable of providing the basic service it was designed to provide (i.e. security) and instead became the major source of insecurity in the nation (ICG, 2008; Myrttinen, 2007; Rees, 2004; UN, 2006).
SECTION 2: PRE-WAR AND WAR VARIABLES MOST IMPORTANT IN EXPLAINING EXTERNAL DEMOCRATIZATION

A Long-term, structural factors

I I-II What type of regime existed before the war?

The answer depends on where one draws the line. Until April 25, 1974, when the Armed Forces Movement ousted the Salazar/Caetano dictatorship in Portugal, the territory which now makes up Timor Leste had been a Portuguese colony for four and a half centuries. For nineteen and a half months, there was a brief window of opportunity which indeed did see several political parties appear – but also led to a brief but bloody civil war between the two main parties, Fretilin and UDT. Though there were aspirations to set up a democratic republic after the unilateral declaration of independence on November 28, 1975, these became *de facto* irrelevant once the first Indonesian Air Force planes became visible in the early dawn sky over East Timor on the morning of December 7, 1975.

During the first years of the independence struggle, much of the East Timorese population had remained in areas controlled by the Fretilin/Falintil. In the territories under its control, Fretilin carried out, as far as it was possible, political and social reforms which were aimed at reforming the old feudalist and patriarchal models of society, including promoting the position of women in society. This initial period also saw several purges within the Fretilin movement, including the ouster of the first president, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, who had been seeking cease-fire negotiations with the Indonesian government (Cristalis and Scott, 2005; Hill, 2002; Pinto and Jardine, 1996).

After the back of Falintil’s military resistance had been broken in 1979, a majority of the population was resettled in ‘strategic hamlets’ under ABRI control, and only slowly were the civilians allowed to return to their homes. Control of the population by the Indonesian occupation forces remained at a high level until the downfall of Soeharto.
The very limited democratisation process which happened in Timor Leste between 1998 - 99 following the fall of Soeharto was mostly due to events in the urban centres of Indonesia. Timor Leste had become a *cause célèbre* for Indonesian democracy activists struggling against the Soeharto dictatorship. East Timorese students in Indonesia were thus, and due to their personal experiences, far more likely to come in contact with progressive, pro-democracy activists in the metropole than students from other islands in the peripheral region of Eastern Indonesia, be they from neighbouring Sumbawa, Flores or even West Timor.

*iii-lv What was the level of economic development? Structure of the economy?*

Previous to the ‘Carnation Revolution,’ Portuguese Timor was arguably the most neglected colony of what by then was Europe’s poorest country. Overall economic development was very low, most people lived as subsistence farmers and the only export crop of major significance was coffee.

Indonesian occupation, after the brutally pacifying most of the territory by the early 1980s, brought with it a degree of economic and social development which eventually set East Timor roughly on par with the neighbouring Indonesian provinces. The majority of the population remained, however, in the rural areas as subsistence farmers, as they did (and do) in much of eastern Indonesia. Coffee remained the most important export of the territory. No major industrial projects were initiated during the Indonesian occupation, though there was a marked increase in the degree of urbanisation. A further legacy of the Indonesian occupation was an increase in literacy rates and the fact that for the first time in history, with Indonesian, the various ethno-linguistic groups of Timor Leste had a common *lingua franca*.

While officially a corporatist free market economy, many of the companies in Soeharto’s Indonesia, and especially in conflict zones such as Aceh, East Timor and West Papua, were owned by high-ranking military officials or military-linked foundations. Military
and police involvement in illegal economic activities, ranging from illegal logging to prostitution and gambling rackets, was also routine (McCulloch, 2003).

During Soeharto’s regime, Indonesia was a major recipient of western aid and loans but due to the purposely Byzantine nature of Indonesian state budgeting at the time, it is difficult if not impossible to ascertain how much aid money flowed into East Timor during these years.

Like other parts of Indonesia, the economy of occupied East Timor was negatively affected by the 1997 Asian economic crisis. A far more severe blow came in 1999, however, when Indonesian troops and their militia proxies destroyed around 80% of the country’s infrastructure as they pulled out following the pro-independence victory in the referendum.

The UN interregnum and independence has seen slow growth (with a major setback in 2006), but the nation remains Asia’s poorest. Much hope is being placed into off-shore oil and gas fields which are already bringing in dividends into the national Petroleum Fund.

V- Vi Were there sharp elite cleavage structures before the war? What is the ethnic structure of the country? Did the country have a specific ethnic or religious structure that put it at risk?

Previous to the Indonesian invasion, the main cleavage line which emerged was the split between the more conservative UDT and the more left-leaning Fretilin, which led to a brief civil war precipitated by a UDT coup attempt. Fretilin emerged victorious and the remnants of the UDT, together with several smaller parties, fled to Indonesian West Timor. These parties signed the ‘Balibo Declaration’ which ‘requested’ Indonesian help against Fretilin, giving the Indonesian government a suitable excuse to invade the
territory. The signatories later rescinded and claimed Indonesian pressure had forced them to sign the declaration.

Political and personal fissures in the East Timorese resistance both at home and abroad were seemingly mended during the long years of the struggle, or at least it seemed so at the time. In hindsight, keeping the events since 2006 in mind, they seem to have been mostly papered over, neither fully forgiven nor fully forgotten, coming to the fore in the crisis of 2006 and afterwards.

Timor Leste is ethnically diverse, with around 16 distinct ethno-linguistic groups. Though fighting between these groups has not been unheard of in the past, most of the conflicts tend to be localised ones over access to particular resources (land and water access, livestock).

The 2006 crisis did, however, bring a ‘regional’ fault line to the fore, a pitting of ‘easterners’ against ‘westerners.’ These categories are ill-defined and can not be considered to be ethnic (members of any one ethno-linguistic group could find themselves on either side of the divide), but did prove to be a potent rallying point for communal identities which previously had not been defined in such a way, at least not publicly. However, the speed with which these categorisations were mobilised points to pre-existing categories (see also Hill, 2002; Myrttinen, 2007; Prüller, 2008). Interestingly, they were also ‘de-mobilised’ very quickly and within months of their appearance on the political stage, the categorisations had disappeared as quickly as it had appeared.

There are, however, no clear ethnic or religious cleavages within the elite. With the exception of a few minor, regionally rooted parties, all political parties are ethnically mixed and, in the aftermath of the ‘east/west’ split have sought to highlight their commitment to national unity and diversity. Of the generation who became politicised in 1974/75, many, including President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão, were what the Portuguese classified as *mestiços*, and had thus, in the racially stratified colonial
system, had the opportunity to get a higher education than most of their ‘native’ compatriots.

Nonetheless, there has been a preconception (often played up by international media) of the eastern part of Timor-Leste as being a Fretilin stronghold and the western part being anti-Fretilin. A more detailed reading of the 2007 presidential and parliamentary election results does, however, not justify these claims.

The country is overwhelmingly Catholic with small Protestant, Muslim and Buddhist minorities, though animism/traditional beliefs are still very widely spread. The Catholic Church played an active role in the resistance to Indonesian occupation and has continued to play a political role during the independence years, with several high-profile members of the clergy taking openly anti-Fretilin stances. These included demonising the Prime Minister at the time, Mari Alkatiri, including the use of racial slurs as he is a member of the Muslim minority.

The East Timorese war for independence has at times been cast in ethnic or religious terms, especially abroad, with Catholic Timorese struggling (valiantly) against (evil) Muslim Javanese. This interpretation does not stand up to scrutiny, as the Indonesian armed forces are and were multi-ethnic and multi-religious (the East Timor invasion was overseen by a Catholic general). In fact, somewhat ironically given the support given by the Catholic Church to the independence movement, it was in fact the Indonesian government which turned the previously mostly animist East Timorese into Catholics, at least on paper. This was due to the Indonesian requirement that all Indonesian subjects join an officially recognised religious organisation – animism was not recognised.

Vii-Ix Please assess the state’s pre-war capacity to autonomously make decisions and effectively implement them, for policing, security and providing other services.

In terms of the very short-lived Democratic Republic of East Timor declared in 1975, its capacities were almost none in all respects, though the Falintil guerrilla force in the initial
years of the Indonesian invasion was able to provide a very limited degree of informal governance in the parts of eastern East Timor under its military control.

Both the Portuguese colonial and Indonesian state structures, and, for that matter the Japanese military occupation force during World War II, were fully capable of autonomous action within the constraints of the respective overall regimes. All of these apparatuses employed mostly non-Timorese bureaucrats, with the exception of the latter phase of the Indonesian occupation when East Timorese who were considered to be ‘reliable’ enough were hoisted into administrative positions, including the post of governor of the province of East Timor.

B War-related factors / Factors referring to the peace process
1 Type of war and warring Parties

I What was the type of war? Was it an international war or a civil war? If the latter, was it fought along ethnic /tribal / religious / identity lines?

De jure the type of war is a question of definition, depending on if one takes the official Indonesian/Australian line of East Timor being an integral part of Indonesia which would have made the conflict purely an internal insurrection (or, as the Indonesian authorities and media would have it at the time, a series of unfortunate incidents). As East Timor was however internationally recognised as a non-self-governing territory until 2002, the other interpretation was that of an international conflict within a larger decolonisation framework.

The Indonesian military campaign was run as a ‘classic’ counter-insurgency campaign, with a very intense phase of fighting in the initial years until the early 1980s and low-intensity guerrilla war until 1999. In 1999, before, during and after the independence referendum, the Indonesian armed forces used partially-Timorese militia forces as proxies.
The two fighting parties were the Indonesian armed forces and police (ABRI – later renamed TNI and POLRI once police and armed forces were divided in 1998) and the Falintil guerrilla. Neither combatant party was formed along ethnic or religious lines.

The war only spilled over international borders in the sense that the neighbouring country of Indonesia invaded Portuguese Timor/recently independent East Timor in 1975; there was no spill-over of an intra-Indonesian conflict to Timor Leste. Australia, somewhat reluctantly at first, later became the lead nation in the post-referendum peacekeeping force in 1999.

The recruiting mechanisms were both professional and non-professional. On the Indonesian side of things, the armed forces (which until the very final days of Indonesian presence also included the police forces in the same structure), were professional in the sense that the ABRI (and later TNI/POLRI) was a recruited force of paid volunteers. However, then as now, only about a third of the Indonesian security forces’ budget is covered by the national defence budget with the other two-thirds coming from business activities. These may be legal or, especially during the Soeharto years, illegal. This increased the importance of ‘entrepreneurs of violence’ and the necessity to maintain war economies which were not subject to external scrutiny in order to carry out various business activities. The last stage of Indonesian military occupation saw an ‘outsourcing’ of violence to militia proxies who were armed, trained and paid for by the Indonesian security forces (CAVR, 2006; McCulloch, 2003, Myrttinen, 2003).

On the side of the East Timorese resistance, the Fretilin party had managed to gain the support of most East Timorese members of the Portuguese colonial forces, a fact that proved invaluable in the 1975 civil war (Hill, 2002). Apart from these professional soldiers, most of the Falintil forces consisted of volunteers. As is the case with other guerrilla forces, the Falintil forces survived thanks to the support of the civilian

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3 According to a common Indonesian joke, the Indonesian military enters war zones carrying M-16s and comes out carrying 16 M (M = milyar, i.e. billion rupiah)
population. Whether the support given to them was always completely voluntary is, at least in my mind, somewhat debatable.

2 War variables

The sustained period of violent conflict in Timor Leste from 1975-1999 can be said to have started with a coup attempt by the conservative UDT party on August 11, 1975. The coup attempt was relatively quickly put down by the more left-leaning Fretilin and its armed forces Falintil and a brief civil war ensued. The UDT along with other, marginal political parties fled to Indonesia, which had already started preparations for an invasion and was engaged in small-scale military operations in the territory.

Fearing an impending Indonesian invasion, the Fretilin government announced independence on November 28, 1975. The Indonesian invasion was mounted on December 7, 1975, hours after U.S. President Ford had given the nod to Soeharto during a state visit to Indonesia.

The Indonesian campaign was marked by brutality from the outset, with hundreds if not thousands reported dead in Dili after the initial days of fighting. Heavy fighting continued for several years with the eastern Mt. Matebian range increasingly becoming the focal point of the fighting. Continuing aerial and naval bombardment combined with ground operations broke the back of the resistance in 1979, especially after the death of Falintil commander Nicolau Lobato on Dec. 31, 1978. Small-scale guerrilla operations by Falintil continued however until 1999, as did Indonesian counter-insurgency operations.

By 1979, much of the population had been forcibly displaced and the number of victims of this initial stage of the war is estimated at around 100 000 – 200 000, mostly civilians, many of whom died of starvation and disease. The East Timorese Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) makes the conservative estimate of 102 800 East Timorese deaths, of which 18 600 were considered to be ‘direct killings’ and the
other 84 200 due to disease and starvation. Combat casualties for the invading Indonesian armed forces for this stage are estimated at around 1 000 while there are no separate figures available for Falintil fighters.

The lower intensity fighting which continued for the following 20 years as well as the Indonesian occupation forces’ routine use of rape, torture and disappearances cost several more thousand East Timorese deaths, mostly civilians, as well as 1 000 Indonesian combat deaths.

Internationally, the almost-forgotten conflict in East Timor gained unexpected prominence when on November 12, 1991, Indonesian military forces opened fire on a funeral procession in the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, killing an estimated 250 – 400 civilians. Unlike previous massacres, this one was caught on film by international journalists and led to an international outcry, at least amongst the solidarity movement if not amongst Soeharto’s western backers.

A further spike in violence came with the military and militia rampage linked to the independence referendum in 1999, which led to an estimated 1 500 – 2 000 deaths, practically all of whom were civilians.

3 War end / Peace Process

For all intents and purposes, East Timor’s 24 year war for independence came to an end as the international peacekeeping force Interfet began deploying in the territory from September 20, 1999 onwards, with the Indonesian security forces and their militia proxies pulling out to Indonesian West Timor.

There were minor clashes between Interfet and militias during the deployment as well as a handful of cross-border incursions from West Timor into East Timor by militia groups, which led to several casualties both amongst the peacekeepers and the militias. On the whole, however, these were rather isolated incidents rather than part of a concerted
military campaign to regain control of East Timor by the militias. One of the militia incursions precipitated a tragic incident in Atambua, West Timor, in September 2000, in which three expatriate UNHCR staff members were killed by a militia-led mob.

No formal peace agreement was signed between the Timorese resistance and Indonesia, as technically the territory was under Portuguese and then under UN administration until 2002. Upon gaining independence, Timor Leste was officially recognised by Indonesia and normal diplomatic relations were established between the two countries. Several outstanding issues remain, such as the demarcation of the border and the payment of pensions to former Timorese members of the Indonesian state bureaucracy. These issues are, however, considered by both parties to be more of a technical nature rather than as major sources of potential conflict.

The lack of any concerted efforts by either the Indonesian government or the militia groups to destabilise the post-conflict reconstruction efforts made the already difficult task at least somewhat easier. After some initial reluctance by the local Indonesian military commanders to rein in the militias who were effectively running the refugee camps in West Timor, a change in military leadership in 2001 led to a more constructive attitude, reflected in an increase in returning East Timorese refugees and a decrease in militia activities.

Persecution of militia members and their backers in the Indonesian security apparatus by Indonesian authorities has been half-hearted at best. Only one militia commander, Eurico Guterres, was convicted for crimes against humanity but was released in 2008 only two years into his 10 year sentence. Both the Indonesian and East Timorese governments have shown a clear interest in ‘drawing a line under the past’ rather than actively seeking to persecute human rights offenders.

The presidential and parliamentary elections which were held under UN auspices before the hand-over of sovereignty to the new East Timorese leadership expectedly led to the victory of charismatic independence hero Xanana Gusmão as president and the most
prominent resistance party, Fretilin, in parliament. Though officially independent, Jose Ramos-Horta, Nobel Peace Laureate and one of the internationally most well-known faces of the resistance movement joined the government as ‘Senior Minister’ and foreign minister.

The relationship between many of the key players in East Timorese politics is difficult, leading to numerous power struggles within the political elite. These intra-elite cleavages played a key role in precipitating the 2006 crisis.

**DDR and SSR in Timor Leste**

Two of the key failings of the East Timorese post-conflict process, which are interlinked, were the way in which the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) as well as the security sector reform (SSR) were carried out.

The DDR-process of the former Falintil combatants and the integration of some of these ex-combatants fell indirectly under the mandate of the UN administration, UNTAET. Crucially, the DDR process was not in the original mandate of UNTAET and this lack of leadership had important ramifications for the process. The DDR process was thus not very structured and relied heavily on *ad hoc* initiatives by various donors or even peacekeeping contingents.

The cantonment, disarmament and demobilisation of the former Falintil was the responsibility of the Australian-led Interfet peacekeeping force. The disarming and demobilisation of the pro-Indonesian militias who fled to Indonesian West Timor was the responsibility of the Indonesian security forces, which for a long time proved highly reluctant to do so.

As a part of the disarmament process, UNTAET also promulgated a regulation (UNTAET, 2001) on firearms and offensive weapons, in which traditional offensive weapons (e.g. machetes, spears, daggers, swords) were given semi-legal status as long as
they are not used in an aggressive manner. With the flaring up of the gang violence in mid-2006, this has proved to be a problematic loophole for the security forces.

Several international agencies were involved in the DDR programmes for ex-Falintil members. These programmes were however less effective than had been hoped for and were more of a stop-gap measure for the ex-combatants than a real bridge into civilian life (see also Abdullah and Myrttinen, 2008).

The ‘original sin’ in terms of the process was however that the issue of who was a ‘veteran’ and thus eligible for entering the DDR-process was never fully clarified. A presidential commission was established to look into the issue but did not come up with a final list. From the outset, there were allegations that the commission favoured those politically close to the president, Xanana Gusmão. Female ex-combatants and other WAFF (and CAFF) were sidelined more or less completely (Cristalis and Scott, 2005; Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002).

Also, many males, especially the clandestinos who had participated in the struggle by forming the support network of the Falintil fighting force also felt sidelined. A number of them joined anti-government ‘veteran’s’ associations, perhaps the most famous of which is the semi-messianic Sagrada Familia led by the charismatic (and erratic) former field commander Commander Ely Foho Rai Bo’ot (also known as Elle Sete or L-7) and the Committee for the Popular Defence of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (CPD-RDTL). These groups also operate under the roof of the Association of Ex-Combatants 1975 (AC75) and have formed links to both the violent gangs plaguing Dili as well as to political parties.

Interestingly, in the light of later events, the initial complaints of being disadvantaged in the East Timorese DDR-process came from the eastern part of the country. A few years down the line, in 2006, it was the complaints of discrimination in the DDR/SSR processes by ‘westerners’ which led to the collapse of the new security forces. Thus the politicisation of what meagre spoils were to be had from the DDR-process led to a ‘zero-
sum’-dynamic in which ex-combatants from both regions were envious of each others gains.

SSR and the new security forces

The major employment opportunity offered to ex-combatants was however joining either of the two new security forces – the police (PNTL) or the new armed forces (F-FDTL). Approximately 150 ex-combatants were integrated into the former and some 650 into the latter force, out of a total force size of approximately 1 500 and 3 000 respectively.

Both PNTL and F-FDTL also included female members. In spite of gender sensitivity training for the security forces, however, they remained heavily male-dominated (especially in the leadership positions) and there were numerous serious allegations of sexual misconduct, harassment and sexual violence that were levelled against members of the security forces, which tended to brush them off (Abdullah and Myrttinen, 2008; Alola Foundation, 2004).

Prophetically, in the light of the events of April/May 2006, a leading Timorese women’s rights activist, Ubalda Alves, noted in 2004 that the men in the new Timorese security forces now ‘felt powerful’ strutting around displaying their UN-supplied weapons (quote in Abdullah and Myrttinen, 2008). Proper weapons control and storage remained a problem, democratic control of the new security forces was not given and the forces were divided into various regional and political factions (Amnesty international, 2003; Rees, 2004).

As mentioned above, relations between the F-FDTL and PNTL were strained at the best of times and were marked by mutual mistrust and jealousy. These problems were exacerbated by political manipulation of the forces by members of the political elite, especially by the former Interior Minister Rogerio Lobato. Throughout the years after independence, there were numerous stand-offs and even armed clashes between the two
forces. Things came to a head in early 2006 when approximately 600 members of the F-FDTL signed a petition claiming discrimination in the force based on their regional background and were promptly dismissed by the government. The situation quickly unravelled and soon both forces had disintegrated into factions which were fighting pitched battles in the streets of Dili. For the most detailed account to date of the events, see UN (2006).

The half-hearted DDR-process also left in its wake groups of disgruntled, economically, socially and politically marginalised young men – those who had not been accepted into the new security forces, those who did not qualify for veterans’ status and those who in spite of the DDR-support projects did not find civilian employment. Many of these joined various ‘veterans’ organisations’ (which also included disaffected members of society who were not ex-combatants) or became active in ‘martial arts groups’ (MAGs) and ‘ritual arts groups’ (RAGs), which have only tenuous links to martial arts and tend to be more involved in criminal activities. On the whole, disgruntled and at least equally marginalised female ex-combatants tend to have found more productive outlets in the post-conflict situation, be it in the private or public spheres.

The MAGs, RAGs and veterans’ organisations were quickly identified as some of the most pressing security concerns for the independent nation (Jane’s Intelligence Review, 2001; Rees, 2004). Rather than confronting the issue and trying to defuse it by addressing some of the valid political, social and economic grievances of the members of these organisations, the Timorese political elite decided to try and manipulate them instead, with different political parties actively supporting different groups and organisations (Scambary, 2006).

Again, as with the security forces, the attempts by the political elite to manipulate the gangs have ended catastrophically, with internecine gang warfare dominating in Dili since May 2006. The collapse of the security sector allowed these groups to get access to SALW in addition to their traditional (but no less lethal) weapons. Neither the international intervention force nor the reconstituted Timorese security forces have been
able to get a grip on the problem, highlighting the fact that the root causes of the problem – economic and social marginalisation, lack of possibilities for political participation and the assumed gender roles of the young men involved in the violence have not been addressed.

As the events of the 2006 crisis and beyond have showed, the lack of a transparent security sector with well-defined roles has become a major insecurity factor in Timor-Leste. Both the F-FDTL and PNTL have suffered and continue to suffer both from mutual distrust between the two organisations as well as from internal fissures. Lacking clear roles, both have been competing for what they feel is their rightful place in East Timorese society as well as over scarce funds. In the aftermath of the 2006 crisis, numerous outside donors have been pressing hard for a comprehensive SSR process but many in the East Timorese security elite have resisted this as a perceived form of outside meddling in internal Timorese affairs (see also Myrttinen, 2008).
SECTION 3: EXTERNAL VARIABLES – MILITARY INTERVENTION AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

A External Intervention

1 Parameters of the intervention

Between 1999 and 2008, Timor Leste has seen five different outside interventions in the form of UN missions accompanied by a slate of international agencies, international NGOs, contractors, and the like. The first mission (UNAMET) was in charge of organising and carrying out the 1999 referendum on East Timorese independence. In the aftermath of the 1999 violence, the territory came under the administration of the UNTAET mission. Following independence in 2002, two missions, UNMISET and UNOTIL, were meant to aid the new nation in its early years of state-building. Following the 2006 crisis, a more substantial mission, UNMIT, was approved.

Given the Howard administration’s reluctance to place the ADF under UN control, the ISF peacekeeping forces do not operate under the UNMIT mandate but work jointly with the UN mission. Following the February 11, 2008, coup attempt, Australian AFP officers have also become active in Timor Leste outside of the UNMIT mandate.

Of the UN missions, UNAMET and UNTAET had the clearest missions – one to run the referendum, the other to prepare the transfer of sovereignty to the new East Timorese nation-state. The UNMISET, UNOTIL and UNMIT missions tend to be much vaguer in their mission statements, a fact that is reflected in their names.

UNAMET, UNTAET and UNMIT were deployed into what were essentially combat zones. UNAMET, due to the political constraints of the May 5, 1999, security agreement for the independence referendum, had only minimal capabilities of reacting to the militia violence after the pro-independence vote. Only what amounted to a mutiny by the remaining (unarmed) UNAMET staff in Dili warded off an evacuation of the mission.
which would have led, in all probability, to the death of the East Timorese civilians huddling in the mission headquarters for several weeks in September 1999.

Both UNTAET and UNMISET were far more robust and both missions saw several brushes with cross-border incursions by militias. UNMISET had to confront violent anti-UN protests by East Timorese in Dili in December 2002. UNOTIL found itself under-equipped in the midst of the 2006 crisis and suffered casualties (wounded, not dead). UNMIT and ISF have been regularly been attacked by and moved against gangs as well as occasionally against the ‘petitioners.’

The main actors in the interventions have been ASEAN states, Australia, New Zealand and Portugal. They have not always acted in unison, with the Howard administration often having pushed agendas opposed by other outside intervening powers as well as by many in the East Timorese political elites and civil society.

**Table 2.: Overview of UN Missions in Timor-Leste 1999-2008** (source: UN DPKO, 2008, accessed at [http://www.un.org/peace](http://www.un.org/peace)), Deployment strengths are given as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Robust mandate (Y/N)</th>
<th>PKF</th>
<th>MLO/MO</th>
<th>UNPOL</th>
<th>Intl. Civilian staff (incl. UNV)</th>
<th>Local civilian staff</th>
<th>Main TCCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNAMET</td>
<td>09.08.1999 – 30.09.1999</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>668 (plus 3)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTAET</td>
<td>31.03.2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMISET</td>
<td>31.08.2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOTIL</td>
<td>31.03.2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIT/ISF</td>
<td>31.03.2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Start Date – End Date</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Police</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Observer States</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTAET</td>
<td>25.01.1999 – 20.05.2002</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>6 281</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1 288</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>1 745</td>
<td>Australia, Fiji, Japan, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMISET</td>
<td>20.05.2002 – 20.05.2005</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>4 656</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>771</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>Australia, Brazil, India, Japan, New Zealand, Pakistan, Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNMIT</td>
<td>25.08.2006 – present</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1 546</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>Bangladesh, Malaysia, Pakistan, Portugal (FPUs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISF</td>
<td>25.05.2006 – present</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Appr ox. 920</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Australia, New Zealand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The missions have all had the general aim of supporting the East Timorese nation in first achieving, through an act of self-determination, the kind of political settlement the East Timorese people wanted after the de jure end of Portuguese colonial rule (24 years after it
had happened *de facto*); subsequently this was followed by the aim of giving of support to the democratic development of Timor Leste as a stable and prospering member of the international community, and, when it ‘stumbled’ in 2006, helping it get back on its feet.

2 Election Monitoring

Starting with the 1999 independence referendum, all elections in Timor Leste have been monitored by a range of outside observers. These have included other states (e.g. prominently Indonesia and Portugal, but also Japan), international organisations (e.g. CPLP, EU, UN), as well as local and international civil society organisations. Many of these actors also provided electoral assistance and training to the National Electoral Commission. To my knowledge at least all major observer missions have made their respective findings public. At times, especially during the presidential election in 2007, some of the reports have been quite critical about the way elections have been conducted and this criticism has in most cases been dealt with constructively by the East Timorese authorities.

3 Military aspects of the intervention

The initial international military intervention following the post-referendum violence in 1999 was led mostly by Australian, British and New Zealand troops but in an effort to sweeten the deal for Indonesia by giving the Interfet operation a more ‘Asian face,’ Filipino, Korean, Malaysian and Thai troops also played a prominent role. At a later stage of UNTAET and during UNMISET, lusophone PKF, mainly from Brazil and Portugal, also played a prominent role.

*Vii List concrete measures that were performed by the external actors.*
During the years of the UNTAET administration, policing and border control was carried out by PKF and UNPOL, though the new East Timorese SSIs were, at least in theory, trained ‘on the job’ by UN staff so as to take care of both internal and external security upon gaining independence. The international community, as mentioned above, played a key role in both the DDR and SSR processes, though both were carried out rather sub-optimally. In the immediate aftermath of the 2006 crisis, both PNTL and F-FDTL were effectively stripped of their responsibility for internal and external security. Responsibility is, at the time of writing, still being transferred back to the East Timorese national institutions.

4 Intrusiveness

The most intrusive of the UN missions in Timor Leste was UNTAET, which for its mandated period from October 1999 – May 2002 was in charge of administering the territory. The transfer of powers to East Timorese actors took place in gradual steps, with the East Timor Transitional Administration (ETTA) headed by the UNTAET SRSG being formed in August 2000 to integrate East Timorese decision-makers into the running of the territory. Of ETTA’s nine portfolios, five (foreign affairs, internal administration, infrastructure, economic affairs and social affairs) were held by East Timorese. The transfer of full sovereignty was completed at midnight, May 20, 2002 by Secretary General Kofi Annan in a formal independence ceremony.

The UNTAET administration drew up legislation which in part is still in place and also assisted Timorese decision-makers in drafting legislation. To a lesser degree the UN’s follow-up missions as well as other international actors have continued in assisting the Timorese government in drafting legislation. Much of the Timorese legal code continues, however, to be based on Indonesian laws (which in turn partially go back to Dutch colonial times). The current constitution was drafted by a Constitutional Assembly which was elected by the East Timorese population on August 30, 2001.
Future economic policies became a flashpoint between Fretilin and the international community during the transitional period and beyond, with the UN, international donors, as well as IFIs favouring a conventional approach in which the World Bank and IMF would play central roles while Fretilin rejected this in favour of a more self-reliant approach. A further economic conflict arose over the oil and gas fields in the Timor Sea between Australia and Timor Leste, with Australia being perceived as attempting to bully its smaller neighbour into accepting a deal far more beneficial to Australia than what would have been the norm under international maritime law (from which Australia conveniently withdrew previous to East Timorese independence).

B Diplomacy, normative pressure and persuasion

Given the fact that there has been more or less a general consensus over the future course of the East Timorese nation between external and internal actors, there has been little need outside pressure and persuasion in terms of promoting democratisation. There are, however, two exceptions – the Timor Gap negotiations and during the height of the 2006 crisis. In the Timor Gap negotiations between Australia and Timor Leste, the Australian side was seen by many observers (including members of the Australian negotiating team) of pushing the East Timorese side excessively hard, which was matched by hard negotiating tactics by the Fretilin government. During the height of the 2006 crisis, several outside governments, including Australia and Portugal, as well as the UN, pressed the East Timorese political elites to settle their differences peacefully.

It could also be argued that the current EPA negotiations between the EU and the ACP countries are another example of outside interveners attempting to impose an economic model on Timor Leste indirectly. As the negotiations are being conducted en bloc with all Pacific ACP countries, the East Timorese government has not directly expressed its dissatisfaction with the terms offered by the EU, but rather the Pacific countries as a whole refused to sign to the full EPA as planned on December 31, 2007.
C Modes of interaction between internal and external actors

The intervening outside actors in Timor Leste have quite clearly pursued a policy of promoting both a democratic political system and an economic liberalisation. While local power elites have also by and large followed a programme of political democratisation (though on occasion attempting to tweak the process for their own political benefit), economic liberalisation has been met with a far greater degree of scepticism. A further complicated issue has been that of gender equity, to which both the outside and national actors have signed up to in theory but results have been slim. In spite of the rather limited advances in this respect, there tends to be a misperception in East Timorese society that women have been gaining more from the outside intervention than men, leading to resentment in some quarters (Cristalis and Scott, 2005; Koyama and Myrttinen, 2007).

There are numerous cleavages between the various external actors and internal actors. As far as the external actors are concerned, there has been a noticeable rivalry between Portugal and Australia, though the degree of this has often been over-dramatised within Timor Leste. During the tenure of the Howard administration in Australia, the country’s attitude to UN institutions (including the UN missions in Timor Leste) was rather reserved and relations between the Timorese and Australian government were also at times fraught, especially towards the later stages of the Fretilin government in 2006. An external player which is being viewed increasingly warily by other actors is PR China, which has been increasing its presence in Timor Leste by, for example, building the new Foreign Ministry and Presidential Office at no cost to Timor Leste.

Given the centralised nature of the RDTL, political power is concentrated in Dili, leading to a marginalisation of rural elites who do not participate in the national political process in the capital. As mentioned above, some of the national-level political leaders and their respective parties draw heavily on a regional power base, often rooted in the traditional leadership status of the leader in question.
In the aftermath of the 2006 crisis there has often been a tendency, especially in the foreign media, to use the ‘east/west’ divide which emerged in 2006 to also explain party political allegiances, with ‘the east’ seen as Fretilin’s power base and ‘the west’ as being anti-Fretilin. An analysis of the 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections does not, however, substantiate this theory. The picture tends to be far more complex, with urban/rural differences playing arguably a greater role than regional differences.

As in all outside interventions, there has been a degree of tension between the interveners and local actors, with local actors understandably often demanding a greater degree of say in matters than what the interveners are at times willing to give. This was especially true during the UNTAET years, when many key players in the Timorese political elite were pushing for a faster and more comprehensive hand-over of power within the ETTA framework. On the whole, however, there has been a general consensus (with the partial exception of economic policy) between the ‘interveners’ and East Timorese actors as to the kind of democratic state which both sides want to construct.

In spite of this consensus, however, there have at times been tensions between the ‘interveners’ and parts of the elite and/or the population at large. General anti-UN resentment caused in part by UN misconduct as well as the immense discrepancy between the lifestyles of the foreigners and the local population led to violent anti-UN protests in December 2002, protests which were apparently manipulated by veterans’ organisations and their respective political backers. The more offensive posture of UNMIT’s FPUs and of the ISF has also led to protests against and attacks on peacekeepers and civilian UN staff.

D Linkage, integration, convergence

1 I Neighborhood / Geographical linkage:
All of Timor Leste’s neighbours are, at least on paper, democratic, but practically all (with the exception of Australia to the south) can be considered to be ‘democracies in transition’ (e.g. Indonesia) or facing some degree of political crisis (e.g. Philippines, PNG). Seen from Australia’s perspective, Timor Leste forms part of the ‘arc of instability’ stretching from Burma to Tonga. As in Timor Leste, it tends to be the respective national SSIs which are part of the problem rather than the solution in these countries. Also, in many of the neighbouring countries the state apparatus is seen as a kind of booty for competing networks of patronage, rather than as a disinterested administrative structure aimed at providing services to the population.

As mentioned above, the end of the East Timorese struggle for independence was closely linked to the democratisation process in Indonesia. The downfall of Soeharto created new windows of opportunity for political activism and Soeharto’s successor B.J. Habibie decided to make the surprising move of allowing a U.N.-supervised vote on the future status of the territory.

The Indonesian era has left its marks on East Timorese political culture. This is visible for example in the campaigning styles used by various political parties and also in the approach of the state bureaucracy to its duties. The approach of the PNTL to policing has also been likened to that of the POLRI, and most damagingly to the ways of the notorious paramilitary Brimob unit.

**Economic and telecommunication links**

During the colonial era, the majority of Portuguese Timor’s trade was with Portugal and other Portuguese colonies, especially Macao. Trade with Australia and Indonesia played a minor role. The Indonesian occupation led to a re-orientation towards Indonesia, with Jakarta, Denpasar, Makassar and Surabaya becoming major hubs for Timorese goods, as is the case with the rest of eastern Indonesia. Independence has brought an increase of trade with Australia and PR China, though Indonesia and Portugal also remain major
trading partners. The country is heavily dependent on imports. According to the Ministry of Economics, in 2005 Timor Leste exported goods worth USD 8 million but imported goods worth USD 101 million.

From the initial stages of the Indonesian military invasion until the late 1980s, East Timor was effectively cut off from the rest of the world by the Indonesian military occupation. A Fretilin radio station had been able to broadcast from territory under its control until 1978 but after the operators were captured the only news coming out of the territory had to be smuggled out physically. International journalists were able, often with great difficulty, to gain access to the resistance movement after the territory was opened up in 1989.

Fortunately for the East Timorese resistance, several key members of the independence movement (including future Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, future President Jose Ramos-Horta and future Minister of the Interior Rogerio Lobato) had left East Timor several days before the Indonesian invasion to garner international support for their cause. The East Timorese diaspora was able to gain support from several sympathetic governments (mainly former Portuguese colonies in Africa) as well as a vocal international solidarity movement, which gained importance especially after the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre.

Within Indonesia, East Timorese activists, especially Timorese students studying in other parts of Indonesia, formed alliances with Indonesian pro-democracy and human rights groups, as well as with Acehnese and West Papuan independence activists. These links became important as the student-led reformasi-movement toppled the Suharto dictatorship in 1998.

Previous to its independence in 2002, Timor Leste was not a member of any international organisations. At present, Timor Leste is a member of (at least) the following organisations: ACP, ADB, ARF, CPLP, FAO, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, MIGA, NAM, OPCW, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, Union Latina, UNWTO, UPU, WCO and WHO. The country has
observer status in the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and is currently negotiating membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

**E International events**

Timor Leste’s modern political history can arguably be said to have begun with the Portuguese Carnation Revolution of 1974, after which ‘history descended on the island like a blade.’ In giving their support to the Indonesian invasion of the territory in 1975, the western powers which were most involved in the region (Australia, Japan, UK, USA) were undoubtedly motivated by other events in Southeast Asia that year, i.e. the ‘fall’ of three ‘dominoes’ (Cambodia, Laos, South Vietnam) to socialist movements and were thus wary of Fretilin’s left-leaning outlook.

International support for the independence movement remained minimal but received a boost in 1989 when pro-independence protests were caught on film by international media accompanying Pope John Paul II on his visit to the previously closed territory. A further increase in international awareness came with the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre and the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize for Jose Ramos-Horta and Bishop Belo.

The Asian economic crisis of 1997-1998 contributed to the downfall of the Suharto dictatorship and the ensuing liberalisation of Indonesia’s attitude to East Timor, with Habibie then allowing the territory to vote on its future political status. The international public outcry following the wave of violence after the 1999 referendum also forced initially reluctant international actors (such as the Howard administration in Australia and the U.S. administration under Clinton) to push for and contribute to an international intervention in the territory.

**SECTION 4**
4.A.1. i.-v.

Since 1999, Timor-Leste has received over USD 4 billion in external assistance. The figures are unfortunately not absolutely compatible as different donors use different reporting mechanisms and figures for some years are incomplete. Between 1999-2006, Timor-Leste had received USD 3.65 billion in assistance, of which USD 1.75 billion was used for the combined budget of UNTAET and UNMIS/PT.

Overall, the main donors have been, in descending order, Portugal, Australia, Japan, the European Commission and USA. In terms of assistance to the 'government and civil society' sector, Australia is clearly the largest donor, followed by Portugal, the European Commission and the USA. A new 'rising star' is PR China, which is the second largest donor (after Australia) in terms of on-going projects in the government and civil society sector in Timor-Leste (as of 25.03.2008).

According to the Ministry of Finance of RDTL, as of 25.03.2008, the sectors 'government and civil society,' 'NGO support' and 'gender equity' had received:

- USD 340 588 022 for completed projects,
- USD 846 067 503 for on-going projects, and a further
- USD 21 253 924 pledged for approved projects.

For a more detailed breakdown, see attached Excel files.

Due to the 'scorched earth' policy of the withdrawing Indonesian forces and their militia proxies as well as the massive displacement of a majority of the East Timorese population, much of the initial help was humanitarian assistance. As the situation normalised, an increasing amount of aid began flowing into reconstruction, supporting the setting up of various state structures and supporting the UN missions. The 2006 crisis and its aftermath during which around 10% of the population remained in IDP camps for the duration of 2 years saw a reversal back to increased humanitarian aid. The initial
period saw what has been described as a ‘donor frenzy’ by some (Scanteam, 2007) but the 2006 crisis in turn has led to a degree of ‘Timor fatigue’ in the donor community.

There is unfortunately no clear data available for external aid flowing into Timor-Leste previous to the arrival of UNTAET in 1999. These funds were managed via various Ministries and Foundations in Jakarta and there was a large degree of obfuscation in the figures on purpose in order to cover up for corruption, embezzlement and mismanagement by the central government. It is however fair to say that external post-conflict funding was by all means greater than what had flowed into the territory during the Indonesian occupation.

The external support given to Timor-Leste since 1999 has mostly been bilateral assistance. According to an assessment by Scanteam (2007), approximately 82% of the aid given was bilateral and around 16% went through multilateral institutions such as the three Multi-Donor Trust Fund modalities (TFET – Trust Fund for East Timor, TSP – Transitional Support Programme and CSP – Consolidated Support Programme) under the trusteeship of the World Bank. The latter are meant as budget support measures. Since 2002, external aid is, at least in theory, geared towards helping the RDTL government meet its National Development Programme (NDP) goals.

Timor-Leste has been highly dependent on external aid, with 66% of the country’s non-oil GDP stemming from external aid. Given the increase in income from its gas and petroleum fund, the RDTL government should in theory by now be far less dependent on external aid than it is, at least financially. Given the problems faced by both the previous Fretilin and current AMP government not only in meeting its NDP goals but even in executing its own annual budget, donors and outside organisations (e.g. UN agencies and INGOs) still perform many of the tasks which would nominally belong to the responsibilities of the state. The most obvious example of this is of course the security sector, where UNPOL and ISF still play a major role.
Democratisation has not been an explicit conditionality but rather an ‘understood,’ implicit one for OECD-donors, with the occasional ‘concern’ being voiced by donors in cases of lack of transparency, bad governance, heavy-handed security force crackdowns or the like. I am not aware of any case in which support was actually withdrawn from Timor-Leste but I do know from personal discussions with donor agencies, especially during the 2006 crisis, that especially Australia and Portugal have ‘leaned’ on RDTL counterparts, though at times this external ‘advice’ has been contradictory (e.g. one country apparently urging for a state of emergency to be declared and the other country advising strongly against it).

References


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