



**The Parliamentary Election of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
on June 30, 2007
Preliminary Assessment by the Election Observation Mission
of the Government of Japan**

Dili, July 4, 2007

1. The Election Observation Mission of the Government of Japan was deployed to the districts of Dili, Manatuto, Liquica, Aileu, Baucau and Lautem from June 23 to July 3 to observe the preparations for the polling day, the polling itself, and the counting and tabulating procedures at the district tabulation centres. (On the polling day (June 30), our 14 observers visited (a total of 100 times) polling stations in 55 polling centres from before the opening of the centres to the closing time.) In addition, H.E. Mr. Kenji Shimizu, the Japanese Ambassador to Timor-Leste, visited the district of Manufahi on the polling day to observe the situation on the ground. Through these efforts, the Mission endeavored to have a better grasp of the situation in Timor-Leste regarding the elections, in close cooperation with the Embassy of Japan in Dili.
2. The Mission regards this election to be a very significant political step in the course of the nation-building of Timor-Leste. The Mission believes that the result of this election will reflect the will of the Timor-Leste people regarding their visions and directions for their nation-building. The Mission has been dispatched by the Government of Japan as an "All Japan Team" comprised of academics, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and NGO representatives in addition to government officials, in order to ascertain whether or not this election is carried out in a free, fair and peaceful manner. (In this series of elections, including the presidential, a total of 36 Japanese Election Observers have been dispatched to Timor-Leste.)
3. Although the Mission's activities were geographically limited and shortly timed, the Mission found, based on the information it gathered and also considering views comprehensively exchanged with other international observation teams and UN officials, that polling station preparation, polling, counting and tabulation were conducted in compliance with the election rules generally, though some minor technical problems were noted.
4. The Mission notes that during the election campaign, there were some incidents of violence in some regions, such as throwing of stones and even 2 cases of death caused by shooting. The Mission, however welcomes the fact that this election, in general, was carried out peacefully, without major confusion. The Mission noted that some concern was raised regarding the changes made in the counting procedure. There is no doubt that these changes complicated the work of the election staff, security officers and election monitors. However, the Mission is of the view that (1) the actual working procedures from closing of the polling centres to the counting operations had been made clear in advance, and had also been made known to the electoral officers, and (2) the transportation of the ballot boxes which were sealed at the closing of the polling were prepared carefully and conducted in tight security. Such actions contributed to the proper implementation of the election. The Mission also observed that the improved capacity of the electoral officers in all stages of their work from the preparation, polling, and tabulating.



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to Timor-Leste**

5. While the Mission members were engaged in their activities, Mr. Katsunari Suzuki, the Head of the Mission, interacted with high-level representatives of the government and also the political leaders. He reiterated the message of the Government of Japan that (1) all parties should make proactive efforts to carry out the election in a fair manner, (2) all parties accept the result of the election so as to enable the Timorese people and their government to engage in their nation-building with ownership, and (3) Japan is ready to respond with partnership to such ownership demonstrated by the Timorese people. The Mission believes that these messages were listened to and also welcomed.

6. The Mission expresses its sincere respect to the Timorese people who participated in the election to express their views for the future, and also to STAE, CNE and all the electoral officers who made every effort to implement the election properly. It should be mentioned that delivery of ballot papers to some regions were difficult owing to unseasonal rain, but the challenges were overcome. The Mission also welcomes the activities of the domestic election observers, such as KOMEK, and the representatives of the political parties who observed the polling and tabulation. In the implementation of the election, the contributions made by the UN volunteers in the field should also be noted, and for the maintenance of security, the contributions of UNPOL, PNTL, and ISF are highly appreciated. Throughout the monitoring of the election, the Japanese Observers were able to observe the Timor-Leste people taking another step forward in the course of its nation-building, with warm assistance from UNMIT and the international community.

7. The Mission commends the fact that all 14 political parties and coalitions had signed and committed to the “Political Party Accord” and the “Code of Conducts for Political Parties”. Japan strongly hopes that the Accord and the Code are implemented, and that claims of irregularity during the election should be appealed and processed peacefully through the complaint procedures prescribed in law, and not through violence, and also that the will of the people expressed through elections be accepted by all. Japan firmly believes that the implementation of these commitments would advance Timor-Leste’s nation-building to a new stage, with the unity of the Timorese people.

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