

# AN UPDATE ON THE ELECTION AND INAUGURATION OF VIII CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT OF TIMOR-LESTE

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## BACKGROUND

Many of us were/are conscious of what has happened with Timor-Leste's government during the past year of 2017. A short background is necessary to understand why an early election for the new government was held on the 12 May 2018.



The 2017 election was run peacefully even though for the first time Timor-Leste conducted it without assistance from the international community. There was a number of political parties for this democratic electoral process. The 2017 election results were:

CNRT (Congreso Nacional Reconstrusaun Timor-Leste - *National Congress for Reconstruction of Timor-Leste*) won 22 seats,

PLP (Partido Libertasaun Popular- *People's Liberation party*) won 8 seats

KHUNTU (Kmanek Haburas Unidade Nasional Timor Oan - *Promoting National unity for all Timorese*) won 5 seats.

FRETILIN (*Front Revolutionary for Timor-Leste's Independence*) won 23 seats

PARTIDO DECOMRATICO (*Democratic Party*) won 7 seats.



Fretelin and PD then formed a coalition of 30 seats in the parliament but were not able to form a stable government. Also the general budget for the next five years was not approved by the majority of the members of the opposition representatives in the parliament which consisted of CNRT, PLP and Khunto.

For these reasons, the president then dissolved the parliament and an early election was conducted on 12 May.

## EARLY ELECTION CONDUCTED

At the time, after the president officially announced the election date above, every political party had wanted to compete or to be able to participate in this early election. They have to be registered in the Supreme Court to be valid. Many political parties were registered but only ten political parties were endorsed to run the campaign for this early election.

They were CNRT, PLP, Khunto, Fretelin, PD, FDD (Frente Dezenvolvimentu Democratico - *Democrat Front for Development*); PR (Patido Republic- *The Republic Party*); DEP (Partido Esperansa da Patria - *Patriotic hope Party*); MDM (Movimentu Dezenvolvimentu Nacional -

National Movement for development party ) and MSD (Movimentu Social Democrata - Democrat social Movement party).

Among them CNRT, PLP and Khunto will form a coalition with the name “Aliansa Mudansaba progresu (AMP)” which means “Alliance of change for progress”. Fretelin and others are independent parties.

During the campaign and right up to Election Day, the people of Timor-Leste showed their political maturity despite there being some disharmony or counter arguments between the political leaders during the campaign. These arguments centred on the past history over who fought more and who fought less during the fighting against the Indonesian illegal occupation to the land, but nevertheless everything was run peacefully. The result of the election was well accepted by majority of Timorese people (except those who support Fretelin) as the coalition won a majority of seats for the next government. The advantage for AMP is that, the 2017 election of which 35 seats were won, would not change dramatically, because the voters would stick with their parties. This was proven correct, with a majority of 34 seats, AMP was able to form a government in their own right. The victory for this election is a coalition party of AMP with a majority seats as shown on the table result below.

**Table result: Early election gives majority to AMP**

Ballot position	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Party	PEP	PD	PR	Fretelin	MSD	MDN	FDD	AMP
Valid votes	5,060	50,370	4,125	213,324	3,188	4,494	34,301	309,663
% of votes	0.81%	8.07%	0.66%	34.16%	0.51%	0.72%	5.49%	49.58%
Seats won	0	5	0	23	0	0	3	34

Source: La'oHamutuk, 13 May 2018.

## THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF TIMOR-LESTE

The new government has now been formed and was inaugurated on the **22 of June 2018**. The newly appointed Prime Minister, Taur Matan Ruak was presented with a list of the new government members consisting of 42 officials. However, the inauguration of 12 nominated officials is still uncertain needing further clarification. Those nominated, whose names are on the list of the new cabinet which was widely published, but not on the list for inauguration are:

Helder Lopes, Francisco Kalbuadi Lay, Gastão Sousa, Tomas Cabral, Marcos Da Cruz, Sergio Lobo, Virgilio Smith, Jacinto Rigoberto, Antonio Verdial, Jose Turquel, and Filomeno Paixão (Independent, June 22, 2018, Language source: Tetun).

Those who are waiting to be inaugurated have been accused by the public and the President of the country, His Excellency, Fransico Guterres - Lu-Olo, and are under investigation into corruption or administrative fraudulent activities from the past which are registered in the tribunal.

The House of Representatives with their leader for the parliament, Arao Noel, are now on duty and have been going well for nearly a month. The Prime Minister and other ministers have taken up their positions over the last week, so there is much more still needing to be done in the near future of their government. The impression given is that both the members of the House of Representative and the Government have a strong commitment to

guarantee stability, and peace and a willingness to fulfil all the promises they have made during the campaign.

They are also committed to put all their efforts into working hard to bring people out of poverty. Therefore, the people of Timor-Leste are very hopeful that this new government will realise their promises made during the campaign and will not work for their own interest or their party's interest, but for the people and for the nation.