



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



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Government works to ensure elections preparation ‘on track’

The Government, through the work of the National Electoral Commission [CNE], the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration [STAE], the Ministry of State Administration and the Ministry of the Interior are making all necessary preparations for the upcoming Presidential election to be held on the 20th of March 2017.

On the 15th of February the candidates for the Presidential election, validated by the Court of Appeals, were [announced by the STAE](#). All eight applicants for candidacy were found to be eligible. The candidates are: Amorim Vieira, António da Conceição, António Maher Lopes, Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, José António de Jesus Neves, José Luís Guterres, Luís Alves Tilman e Maria Ângela Freitas da Silva.

Timor-Leste is well regarded for our electoral processes and pluralism and in the recently published [2016 Democracy Index](#) was ranked 1st in South East Asia, 5th in Asia and 43rd of all states assessed. The recent [local elections](#) held throughout the country in October and November last year were calm and orderly.

As in the past, international election observers will be present during the election period this year. A team from the [European Union](#) will be led by Chief Observer, Ms. Bilbao Barindica who said that she was “honored to lead the EU Electoral Observation Mission to Timor-Leste” and that she trusted that “all stakeholders will contribute to ensure that the upcoming elections will further consolidate the country's track record for well-run, credible and peaceful elections.”

Security plans for the electoral period are being coordinated in line with the Strategic Concept for Defence and Security [approved](#) last year by the Government after a being developed through a broad consultation with stakeholders to achieve consensus. This high-level policy document articulates the Strategic Objectives of Defence and National Security, including ensuring “the freedom and security of people to exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms, public peace, protection of their property and national heritage”.

Spokesperson, Minister of State Agio Pereira, noted “election preparations are on track and we are confident that this year our country's reputation for holding free, fair and well organized elections in an atmosphere of peace and calm will be further enhanced.” **ENDS**



Agio Pereira
+670 77045002
agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl
govtlmedia@gmail.com
www.timor-leste.gov.tl