

**The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers and
Official Spokesperson for the Government of Timor-Leste
Ágio Pereira**



**November 19, 2009
Dili, Timor-Leste**

Personal Protection and Security of Government Officials

The Close Protection Unit personnel attached to members of the Government have always conducted their duties with professionalism and integrity.

Security is assigned as per international practice to those who may require basic protection.

This includes the Secretary-General of the Fretilin party Mari Alkatiri and the President of the Fretilin party Lu-Olo; who have endorsed the quality and dedication of the trained protection units.

Security officers usually carry a hand pistol which is partially if not completely concealed.

The issue of allowing protection units into National Parliament is debated each year, with the general consensus to allow the units to carry out their duties and functions as per protocol and defined job description. The protection officers have never interfered, intervened or interrupted the proceedings of National Parliament.

Ágio Pereira noted "The international statement made by Jose Teixeira is offensive to the brave men and women who serve Timor-Leste, its' sovereign pillars and those who are charged to their care. Teixeira has yet to devolutionize the concept that Timor-Leste now has a non-partisan and depoliticized security force. Some of the officers in the public gallery were also reminded by Fretilin MPs to not be there when they were exercising their right to listen to the debate, as every citizen deserves the right to do so."

'These statements only degrade our nation in the eyes of the international community and bring nothing of value to our people. It does typify excessively unproductive behavior during the budget period, more of which unfortunately, we will see in coming weeks.' ENDS

For More Information Please Contact:

Ágio Pereira +670 723 0011
E-mail: agiopereira@cdm.gov.tl

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