



REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE
IV CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

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Statement

By

*The Spokesperson of the IV Constitutional Government,
The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers*

On June 26, 2009, a story by the Australian Broadcast Association (ABC) titled ‘Gusmão faces corruption claims’ was circulated in print, television and radio, aired in Australia and throughout approximately 46 countries throughout their Asian Pacific network.

“While we welcome the interest of the ABC in reporting on Timor-Leste, we would ask for better due diligence in ensuring the facts are correct before misinformation is widely disseminated,” said Agio Pereira, The spokesperson for the IV Constitutional Government and Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers, “There are several inaccuracies in the reporting, especially when referencing the laws of the Constitution which seem to be the basis for the corruption allegations.”

Shortly before leaving office, Fretilin enacted the **Statute of the Holders of Sovereignty Bodies (Law 07/2007)**. The law addresses guidelines for business interests amongst a range of other inclusions.

The Constitution of the Republic of Timor-Leste states that the Sovereign Bodies are the President of the Republic, the National Parliament, the Government and the Court. These entities, and the members thereof, are not considered ‘agents of the administration’ or ‘public bodies’ under the Timorese Constitution.

Agio Pereira commented “Since the Fretilin Government was responsible for writing and enacting all the aforementioned laws, they would be well aware that no corruption has taken place, and should have been transparent with the Australian Broadcast Corporation.”

During a time of the global food crisis, the IV Constitutional Government went to extensive lengths to ensure food security. Sixteen Timorese companies were fairly awarded contracts to import rice. The guidelines under the procurement laws were followed and contracts executed only after a lengthy interdepartmental evaluation committee assessed bids and negotiated terms. This was a joint effort across many ministries.

The corruption allegations are part of a continued campaign by the Fretilin Opposition to discredit the Xanana Gusmão Government, with the latest and boldest accusations appearing just one working day before Gusmão’s **Anti Corruption Commission** is due to be approved by the plenary of the National Parliament.

It will be the first Anti Corruption initiative to be proposed or established by any Government.

Agio Pereira closed by saying “The timing of this story as propagated by Fretilin was deliberate, we have been working on the Anti Corruption Commission for almost two years now and this story will not derail our accomplishment or announcement on Monday. It would be more useful for opposition to focus on the development of Timor-Leste rather than focusing on propagating misleading stories through the Australian media.”

The Prime Minister, who has personally led the campaign to establish the Anti Corruption Commission, reiterated the commitment and support of his Government to be open to any investigation pertaining to maladministration, collusion or corruption. **ENDS**

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