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FM AMBASSADY JAKARTA
TO SECESTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5538
INFO AMBASSADY CANBERRA
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: SHUM, PGOV, PINS, ID, NL
SUBJECT: _______VIEWS ON EAST TIMOR DEVELOPMENTS

REF: JAKARTA 14033 (NOTAL)

EXTEND CLASSIFICATION

1. (S) SUMMARY: _______ON SEPTEMBER 7 PROVIDED US WITH AN
UNUSUALLY CANDID READOUT OF _______VIEWS ON DEVELOPMENTS
IN EAST TIMOR. FROM _______HAVE HEARD THAT THE INDOONESIAN RESPONSE TO
THE AUGUST 8 ATTACK IN WHICH INDOONESIAN SOLDIERS DIED
INCLUDED REPRIASLS AGAINST VILLAGERS, A REPORT WE HAVE
HEARD FROM NO OTHER SOURCE AND TEND TO DOUBT. _______SOURCES ALSO SAID THEY HAD NO CONFIRMATION THAT AN
OFFENSIVE IS UNDERWAY, BUT THEY HAVE REPORTS THE SITUA-

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TION IS TENSE. AS FOR THE CAUSE OF THE ATTACK AND
BREAKDOWN IN TALKS BETWEEN THE GOI AND FRETLIN, _______
RECENTLY SUGGESTED THAT THE ATTACK SIGNALLED THE END OF FRETLIN INTEREST IN TALKING. EXpressed REGRET THAT THE NEGOTIATING TRACK HAD FAILED AND TOLD THE GOI WOULD RESUME "ARMED ACTION." FINALLY, ARE NOT COMPLETELY SURPRISED BY THE BREAKDOWN IN NEGOTIATIONS, SINCE THEY HAD HEARD IN EARLY JULY THAT THE TALKS MIGHT BE STELAEMATED. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS THIS WEEK, STRESSED THAT ONUS FOR BREAKING OF DE FACTO CEASEFIRE CLEARLY SEEMS TO LIE WITH FRETLIN. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) IN COURSE OF SEPTEMBER 7 CONVERSATION BETWEEN EMOFF AND ASKED WHETHER WE COULD CONFIRM THAT FIGHTING IS UNDERWAY IN EAST TIMOR. HE SAID THAT SOME BELIEVE THE RUMORED MOVEMENT OF INDONESIAN TROOPS TO EAST TIMOR IS DESIGNED TO INTIMIDATE FRETLIN RATHER THAN INDICATING IMPENDING CONFLICT. THE MORE STRONGLY HELD VIEW IN HOWEVER, WHICH SHARES, IS THAT HOSTILITIES ARE IMMINENT OR ACTUALLY UNDERWAY. EMOFF RESPONDED WE HAD NO FIRM EVIDENCE ABOUT RESUMPTION OF FIGHTING.

3. (C) SAID A MET WITH ON SEPTEMBER 6 FOR A READOUT ON EAST TIMOR DEVELOPMENTS. EMPHASIZED THEIR INFORMATION WAS SECOND AND THIRD HAND. WITH REGARD TO THE AUGUST 8 INCIDENT NEAR VIQUEQUE, UNDERSTOOD THAT SIXTEEN TO NINETEEN SECRET

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INDONESIAN SOLDIERS DIED (OUR INFORMATION IS THAT 15 DIED). SOURCES IN EAST TIMOR REPORTED THAT IN RETALIATION FOR THE KILLINGS, AND ESPECIALLY FOR VILLAGERS' DIRECT ROLE IN KILLING AN INDONESIAN SOLDIER WHO NEARLY ESCAPED, INDONESIAN FORCES CARRIED OUT REPRISES TWO DAYS LATER AGAINST THE VILLAGERS. THE INFORMATION REACHING CLAIMED THAT UP TO TWO HUNDRED VILLAGERS DIED. Afterwards, several hundred and perhaps up to 500 "HANSIP" (CIVIL GUARDS) DEFECTED WITH THEIR WEAPONS TO FRETLIN.
4. (S) COMMENT: THE [REDACTED] STORY IN MANY WAYS DOES NOT NOT TRACK WITH OTHER REPORTS WE HAVE SEEN ABOUT THE AUGUST 8 INCIDENT, INCLUDING THOSE FROM [REDACTED] MOST REPORTS, FOR INSTANCE, INDICATE THE "HANSIP" PARTICIPATED IN THE ATTACK ON THE INDONESIAN SOLDIERS. IN ADDITION, THIS IS THE FIRST WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT REPRISALS AGAINST VILLAGERS. WHILE IT WOULD BE OUT OF CHARACTER FOR THE INDONESIAN MILITARY NOT TO TAKE STRONG COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST ANYONE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE FRETILIN ATTACK, WE ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF INDISCRIMINATE RETALIATION AGAINST VILLAGERS. MOREOVER, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE MAIN TARGET OF INDONESIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EAST TIMOR AT THIS TIME IS FRETILIN ELEMENTS WHO HAVE REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT AMNESTY AND "HANSIP" WHO MAY HAVE DEFECTED TO THEIR SIDE. END COMMENT.

5. (C) [REDACTED] MOST RECENT INFORMATION INDICATED THAT NO/NO INDONESIAN OFFENSIVE IS UNDERWAY AGAINST FRETILIN. THE SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR, HOWEVER, IS REPORTEDLY VERY
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TENSE. IN DILI, THERE HAVE BEEN HOUSE TO HOUSE SEARCHES
FOR PRETILIN SUPPORTERS AND WEAPONS. HAD GO DE-
TAILS ON POSSIBLE ARRESTS OF CIVILIANS. NEW TROOPS
HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED, ACCORDING TO , BUT HAVE
NO RELIABLE NUMBERS; ONE ESTIMATE SPOKE OF UP TO TEN
THOUSAND NEW SOLDIERS. ALLEGEDLY, ALL ACCESS TO EAST
TIMOR HAS BEEN CLOSED. (NOTE: THIS IS NOT ENTIRELY
TRUE. IN A BRIEF ENCOUNTER WITH

TOLD EMBOFF THAT HAS RECEIVED A NEW ENTRY PERMIT
FOR EAST TIMOR AFTER TO
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JAKARTA. WOULD RETURN TO DILI
SEPT. 8 OR 9.)

6. (S) TURNING TO POSSIBLE MOTIVATIONS FOR THE ATTACK,
AND REFERRED TO A CONVERSATION

TEN DAYS AGO. TOLD HE
THOUGHT THE ATTACK MUST BE SEEN AS A SIGN THAT THE EffORT
TO NEGOTIATE WITH PRETILIN HAD FAILED. THE GOI HAD BENT
OVER BACKWARDS IN ITS NORMALIZATION EFFORTS. NOW,
ASSERTED, THE GOI HAD NO CHOICE BUT "TO

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RETURN TO THE SITUATION BEFORE THE TALKS," I.E., "ARMED ACTION." [ASSURED]
THAT STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN TO RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF THE
POPULATION. [CLAIMED HE REGRETTED THE SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR HAD COME OUT THIS WAY.]

7. (S) [ALLEGED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT CAUSED FRETIMI BIN TO DISTURB THE RAPPROCHEMENT OF RECENT MONTHS. IN WHAT THE] [TOOK TO BE A POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO SHIFT BLAME FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF THE TALKS, [ADDED THAT FRETIMI MIGHT HAVE BEEN REACTING TO GOVERNOR CARRASCALO'S DECLARATION THAT "FRETIMI HAS CEASED TO EXIST." [SAID] [ARE UNAWARE OF ANY SUCH PUBLIC STATEMENT BY CARRASCALO.
NEVERTHELESS, [WENT ON TO LAMENT THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD BROKEN DOWN SINCE (SIC).]

8. (C) [SAID NEWS OF THE BREAKDOWN IN THE TALKS DID NOT COME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE TO ] [WHEN ] [MENTIONED TO ] [THAT FRETIMI REPRESENTATIVES WERE IN JAKARTA ON JULY 4 FOR TALKS, ] [SECRET]

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SEEMED PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR THE OUTCOME. HE REPORTEDLY CLAIMED THAT THERE WAS REALLY NOTHING TO DISCUSS AT THAT TIME, SINCE FRETIMI REPS REFUSED TO ABANDON THEIR "POLITICAL" DEMANDS AND THE INDONESIANS COULD NOT DISCUSS THEM. DESPITE HIS PESSIMISM, HOWEVER, [GAVE NO INDICATION AT THAT TIME THAT TALKING MIGHT STOP.

9. (S) COMMENT: [APARENT EFFORT TO SHUNT BLAME FOR THE BREAKDOWN IN THE TALKS OVER TO GOVERNOR CARRASCALO CONVENIENTLY IGNORES ] [CALLED ON FRETIMI TO ABANDON ITS INSURGENCY AND ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT'S AMNESTY OR FACE A TOUGH MILITARY RESPONSE BY THE ARMED FORCES.

10. (S) MOREOVER, INDONESIAN OFFICIALS DIRECTLY INVOLVED HAVE BEEN CAUTIOUS CONSISTENTLY ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR THE TALKS. BOTH [AND ] [IN CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFFS IN MAY THIS]

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YEAR EXPRESSED PESSIMISM THAT FRETLIN WOULD ABANDON THE INSURGENCY. [O]BVIOUSLY WANTED THE TALKS TO SUCCEED AND APPRECIATED THE RESPITE FROM FIGHTING, BUT [I]N PARTICULAR THOUGHT IT WOULD BE DIFFI-
CULT TO TALK FRETLIN OUT OF THE JUNGLE PERMANENTLY. IN RETROSPECT, WHAT MAY BE MOST NEMARKABLE IS THAT THE GOI-
FRETLIN TALKS CONTINUED AS LONG AS THEY DID.

11. (S) [REDACTED] (PROTECT), WHO FOLLOWS EAST TIMOR VERY CLOSELY, STRESSED IN A RECENT CONVERSATION HIS

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VIEW THAT ONUS FOR RESUMPTION OF HOSTILITIES LIES WITH
FRETILIN, WHICH FIRST LEAKED THE NEWS IN LISBON OF THE
TALKS AND THEN WITHOUT SEEMING PROVOCATION ROSE UP AND
KILLED A SIZABLE NUMBER OF INDONESIAN TROOPS.

HOLDRIDGE