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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5538  
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 14397

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

EXTEND CLASSIFICATION

REF: JAKARTA 14033 (NOTAL)

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 INDONESIAN RESPONSE TO  
THE AUGUST 8 ATTACK IN WHICH INDONESIAN SOLDIERS DIED  
INCLUDED REPRISALS 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 FRETILIN, [ ]

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: THEODORE J. HEAVNER  
DATE/CASE ID: 15 MAY 2003 200203808  
CLASSIFICATION: SECRET REASON: 25X1, 25X6

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RECENTLY SUGGESTED

[REDACTED] THAT THE ATTACK SIGNALLED THE END OF FRETILIN INTEREST IN TALKING. [REDACTED] EXPRESSED REGRET THAT THE NEGOTIATING TRACK HAD FAILED AND TOLD [REDACTED] THE GOI WOULD RESUME "ARMED ACTION." FINALLY, [REDACTED] ARE NOT COMPLETELY SURPRISED BY THE BREAKDOWN IN NEGOTIATIONS, SINCE THEY HAD HEARD IN EARLY JULY THAT THE TALKS MIGHT BE STALEMATED. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS THIS WEEK, [REDACTED] STRESSED THAT ONUS FOR BREAKING OF DE FACTO CEASEFIRE CLEARLY SEEMS TO LIE WITH FRETILIN. END SUMMARY.

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2. (C) IN COURSE OF SEPTEMBER 7 CONVERSATION BETWEEN EMBOFF AND [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ASKED WHETHER WE COULD CONFIRM THAT FIGHTING IS UNDERWAY IN EAST TIMOR. HE SAID THAT SOME [REDACTED] BELIEVE THE RUMORED MOVEMENT OF INDONESIAN TROOPS TO EAST TIMOR IS DESIGNED TO INTIMIDATE FRETILIN RATHER THAN INDICATING IMPENDING CONFLICT. THE MORE STRONGLY HELD VIEW IN [REDACTED] HOWEVER, WHICH [REDACTED] SHARES, IS THAT HOSTILITIES ARE IMMINENT OR ACTUALLY UNDERWAY. EMBOFF RESPONDED WE HAD NO FIRM EVIDENCE ABOUT RESUMPTION OF FIGHTING.

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

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INDONESIAN SOLDIERS DIED (OUR INFORMATION IS THAT 15 DIED). [REDACTED] 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 REPRISALS TWO DAYS LATER AGAINST THE VILLAGERS. THE INFORMATION REACHING [REDACTED] CLAIMED THAT UP TO TWO HUNDRED VILLAGERS DIED. AFTERWARDS, SEVERAL HUNDRED AND PERHAPS UP TO 500 "HANSIP" (CIVIL GUARDS) DEFECTED WITH THEIR WEAPONS TO FRETILIN.

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4. (S) COMMENT: THE [ ] STORY IN MANY WAYS DOES NOT/NOT TRACK WITH OTHER REPORTS WE HAVE SEEN ABOUT THE AUGUST 8 INCIDENT, INCLUDING THOSE FROM [ ] 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.

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5. (C) [ ] 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 FRETILIN SUPPORTERS AND WEAPONS. [ ] HAD GO DETAILS 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. [ ] SAID [ ] WOULD RETURN TO DILI SEPT. 8 OR 9.)

6. (S) TURNING TO POSSIBLE MOTIVATIONS FOR THE ATTACK, [ ] REFERRED TO A CONVERSATION [ ] "ABOUT AND [ ] "ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO." [ ] TOLD [ ] HE THOUGHT THE ATTACK MUST BE SEEN AS A SIGN THAT THE EFFORT TO NEGOTIATE WITH FRETILIN 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." [REDACTED] ASSURED [REDACTED] THAT STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN TO RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION. [REDACTED] CLAIMED HE REGRETTED THE SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR HAD COME OUT THIS WAY.

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

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8. (C) [REDACTED] SAID NEWS OF THE BREAKDOWN IN THE TALKS DID NOT COME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE TO [REDACTED] WHEN

[REDACTED] MENTIONED TO [REDACTED] THAT FRETILIN REPRESENTATIVES WERE IN JAKARTA ON JULY 4 FOR TALKS, [REDACTED]

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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 FRETILIN REPS REFUSED TO ABANDON THEIR "POLITICAL" DEMANDS AND THE INDONESIANS COULD NOT DISCUSS THEM. DESPITE HIS PESSIMISM, HOWEVER, [REDACTED] GAVE NO INDICATION AT THAT TIME THAT TALKING MIGHT STOP.

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9. (S) COMMENT: [REDACTED] APPARENT EFFORT TO SHUNT BLAME FOR THE BREAKDOWN IN THE TALKS OVER TO GOVERNOR CARRASCALAO CONVENIENTLY IGNORES [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] CALLED ON FRETILIN TO ABANDON ITS INSURGENCY AND ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT'S AMNESTY OR FACE A TOUGH MILITARY RESPONSE BY THE ARMED FORCES.

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

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YEAR EXPRESSED PESSIMISM THAT FRETILIN WOULD ABANDON THE INSURGENCY. [REDACTED] OBVIOUSLY WANTED THE TALKS TO SUCCEED AND APPRECIATED THE RESPITE FROM FIGHTING, BUT [REDACTED] IN PARTICULAR THOUGHT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO TALK FRETILIN OUT OF THE JUNGLE PERMANENTLY. IN RETROSPECT, WHAT MAY BE MOST REMARKABLE IS THAT THE GOI-FRETILIN TALKS CONTINUED AS LONG AS THEY DID.

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

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SUBJECT:  ON EAST TIMOR DEVELOPMENTS

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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 KITHOUT SEEMING PROVOCATION ROSE UP AND  
KILLED A SIZABLE NUMBER OF INDONESIAN TROOPS.  
HOLDRIDGE

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