Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER)
Report 2: June 13 – July 1

Release Date: 11 July 2007

> *The EVER reports are published regularly by BELUN with the support of IFES. The information in the reports is compiled from a network of 35 trained monitors throughout the country who monitor incidents of election violence, potential violence, tension levels, and peaceful activities surrounding the parliamentary elections. The EVER reports are intended for use by local and national stakeholders such as political parties, election and security officials, the public, etc., to help prevent and reduce election violence and tensions in Timor-Leste.*

The Second Report on Electoral Violence issued by the EVER Program covers June 13 to July 1, 2007. A total of 45 incidents of election-related violence were captured and verified by EVER monitors during this period. This is an increase from the 34 reported in the first report (covering May 28 to June 12).

Key Findings

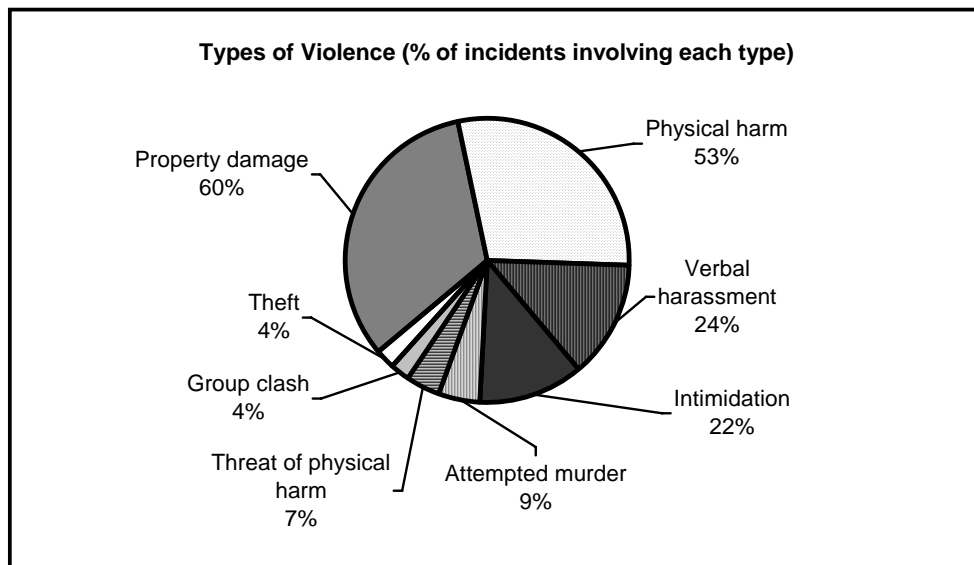| Number of Incidents by District	
Baucau	7
Ermera	7*
Lautem	6*
Manatuto	6*
Dili	5
Covalima	3*
Oecussi	3
Viqueque	3
Aileu	2*
Ainaro	1*
Bobonaro	1
Liquica	1
Manufahi	0
Total	**45**
* incidents increased since 1st report	

- Of the 45 reported incidents of violence, 22% (10) took place on June 27, the last day of campaigning. Election Day saw 3 incidents of violence reported.

- The highest number of election-related incidents were reported in Baucau and Ermera, with 7 each (see table at right). The number of reported incidents in Baucau decreased slightly from 11 in the first reporting period; but incidents increased in 6 districts, most notably in Manatuto rising from 0 to 6. Manufahi had no incidents reported.

- As in the first period, other incidents of violence continue to occur alongside those covered in the EVER report, and incidents reported by EVER do not reflect overall levels of violence per district.

- Across the country, 35 people were wounded in 19 reported incidents, roughly the same as in the last reporting period. No one was killed during this period.

- As in the first report, the most frequent perpetrators and victims are political party supporters, candidates or leaders. Overall, more than two-thirds (71%) of the incidents recorded were committed by party supporters and/or leaders against various victims. Victims of election violence were also political party supporters and/or leaders in 71% of incidents. Party supporters or leaders attacked other political party supporters, candidates or leaders in 60% of all incidents.

- During the current reporting period, out of the 16 competing political parties and coalitions, the following 9 parties or coalitions were identified as perpetrators in incidents: ASDT/PSD Coalition, CNRT, Fretilin, KOTA/PPT Democratic Alliance, PD, PDRT, PSD, PUN and UNDERTIM.

- The 9 parties or coalitions identified as victims in incidents were: ASDT/PSD Coalition, CNRT, Fretilin, PD, PMD, PNT, PR, PST, and UNDERTIM.

- Analysis of patterns in incidents shows that in many cases, violence escalated after one party or group would instigate the violence, and the victim retaliated. This was observed to occur both immediately after (within minutes) as well as days after the initial act of violence.

- Many incidents happened on the day of campaign activities or in other instances in which party supporters were moving in large groups (such as traveling to campaigns or greeting leaders). Some of these could have been prevented if parties had adhered to the Political Party Code of Conduct. Contrary to the agreement in the Code of Conduct, some parties brought convoys from the districts to Dili on the last day of campaigning. For example, in one aldeia in Manatuto, 4 incidents happened

as convoys drove through to Dili. Some violence was perpetrated by people in the community throwing stones at vehicles. In other incidents, people in the convoys left their vehicles and attacked houses or people in the communities.

- Monitors also observed that almost all political parties did not adhere to the Calendar for Campaigns as agreed upon with the CNE. Some political parties changed days, times or locations of their campaign events which then sometimes coincided with other political parties' campaign events. These situations contributed to increased tensions and potential for violence.

- More incidents occurred during the day throughout this period than in the first report. Over half of all incidents (26) occurred before 6PM. Of those 26, the most incidents (8) occurred between 12 and 2PM. In the first report, half of all incidents reported occurred after dark.

- The majority of incidents (27) took place in public areas, though several occurred on private property (10). Three occurred at polling stations, 3 at suco offices, 1 at other election facilities, and 1 on government property.

- There were more incidents involving property damage in this period (from 29% to 60%) and physical harm (from 33% to 53%) than in the first period, indicating more incidents are causing more harm. The chart below shows the breakdown of incidents by type of violence.[1] The most common type of violence was property damage, occurring in over half (27) of the incidents. Six incidents involved only property, not people. Physical harm occurred in over half (24) of all incidents.

Types of Violence (% of incidents involving each type)

- Most incidents involved stones or thrown objects (26). The second most common method of violence was fists, or using hands (12 incidents). Other incidents involved knives or arson, and one incident involved a gun.

Updates

- In the first report, EVER issued an alert about the urgent situation in Ermera. On July 6, several political parties met in Ermera to discuss the situation with community leaders and others.
- Verification of incidents is an ongoing process. EVER monitors have verified 5 additional incidents that occurred during the first reporting period. These will be included in the final EVER report.

Conclusions

BELUN notes that violence was reported in every district but one in the lead-up to Election Day. Although election violence has not been severe (with relatively few people killed or wounded since May 28), it has

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[1] Please note that multiple types of violence may occur in one incident, and multiple methods of violence may be used. For example, physical harm and property damage may take place in the same incident. Or, perpetrators may throw stones as well as beat a victim.

been consistently felt in many communities. Additionally, more incidents are involving property damage and physical harm, causing more impact on communities. During this reporting period, incidents occurred nearly every day (17 out of 19 days in the period). A spike in violence occurred on the 27th of June, with 10 incidents on the last day of campaigning. This is similar to the beginning of the campaign period. Election Day and the first day of counting were relatively calm and generally went according to procedure.

As in the last report, it is apparent that most of the impact of violence is localized – however, this impact should not be underestimated. Monitors reported increasing fear and tension in the communities in which violence occurred. Though none of the incidents appear to have affected the outcome of the elections, some communities were subject to intimidation and fear that may have affected their freedom of choice during the election.

In every district there were several events to promote peace and prevent conflict throughout the reporting period. These ranged from meetings to discuss peace and conflict, to targeted dialogues on community problems, to coordination between various stakeholders, to sporting events and concerts. Events were organized by security officials, community leaders, political parties, and youth groups. In particular there were many such events in Baucau and Dili, two areas where tensions are often high. Similar events should continue in the post-election period and are good opportunities for sharing information on the results and government formation processes.

BELUN is concerned that the announcement of the final official results and the process of government formation is a potential trigger for increased tensions and violence in the coming weeks and months. There is much debate over the correct constitutional interpretation regarding who has the right to form a government in Timor-Leste. There is potential for supporters from all parties to be frustrated or angered by the resolution of these issues. Parties may need to meet locally with supporters and the public to help all understand the proceedings.

<u>Recommendations</u>

- Political party leaders, community leaders, and youth leaders should address the escalation of violence in conflicts between party supporters and encourage restraint if people are confronted by rival parties or groups. Victims should report violence to the proper authorities, and/or to EVER Monitors, as alternatives to violent retaliation. Security authorities should pay particular attention to local cycles of violence in the coming weeks.

- Party leaders, community leaders, and civil society groups should increase public information efforts to ensure that communities understand and accept 1) the final declarations of results and 2) the formation of the new government. Particular attention should be paid to communities in Baucau, Ermera, and Viqueque where tensions have been high.

- The media should seek out and provide accurate and comprehensive information on the process of government formation to support public awareness and understanding of the process. The media should report information responsibly and in a manner that is sensitive to existing tensions within communities.

- Political parties should continue their pre-election messages of peace to their supporters. Parties should also consider ways to publicly and jointly declare their commitment to peaceful debate and governance through the post-election period and beyond.

- The president should regularly address the nation with messages of peace and stability as a means to calm the situation and encourage dialogue between political parties in finding an acceptable solution to the formation of the new government.

- Civil society organizations (CSOs) and community leaders should regularly engage political party representatives and security representatives to reduce tensions between party supporters and promote non-violence in the community. CSOs could organize a public oath by parties and/or community members at the suco or sub-district level committing to non-violence and collaboration in the post-election period.

- BELUN encourages security officials to be proactive and responsible in providing security for any demonstrations or meetings that may be held in the post-election period. Security officials should consider increased patrols in communities that have seen cycles of retaliatory violence and remain tense such as Baucau, Ermera, and Viqueque.

- BELUN believes that there is a lack of public awareness about electoral law and democratic processes in general. Civic education programs could be improved and expanded to empower citizens to make better decisions and participate more fully in democratic processes. This could help reduce the tendency to rely on violence to resolve political conflicts or feel left out of political processes.

- All stakeholders, particularly organizations specializing in conflict prevention or mitigation during the elections, should make use of data relevant to their communities and feel free to offer feedback and recommendations to monitors or to BELUN about the EVER project.

Announcing Call for Proposals for Small Grants to Support Peace Activities

BELUN and IFES invite community organizations to apply for $1,000 grants to conduct peace activities in their communities. Proposals are due to BELUN by August 15, 2007. Please contact BELUN for more information.

About the EVER Project

EVER is a program to monitor and report on election violence with the goal of preventing and reducing violence. EVER was developed by IFES and has been implemented with civil society partners in 8 countries such as Guyana, Nigeria, and Bangladesh. In Timor-Leste, this first implementation of the EVER project is a collaboration between BELUN and IFES.

Within the EVER framework, "election-related violence" or "election violence" refers to any violence (harm) or threat of violence (harm) that is aimed at any person or property involved in the election process, or at disrupting any part of the electoral or political process during the election period. Election violence generally involves political parties, their supporters, journalists, agents of the government, election administrators and the general population. It includes threats, assault, murder, destruction of property, and physical or psychological harm. An "incident" of election violence refers to any act that 1) has a specific victim(s) and perpetrator(s) and occurs within a limited timeframe and location; 2) meets the definition of election-related violence; and 3) has been verified by monitors using at least two different sources of information.

The objectives of EVER are to:

- Identify, document, and monitor violence which happens during the election period and has an impact on the election process (election violence)
- Increase capacity of civil society in Timor-Leste to prevent and reduce conflict
- Share information about election violence and responses with all stakeholders and the public through 6 (six) EVER reports to be published before and after the elections (between 22 June and 15 September 2007)

BELUN manages a network of thirty-five monitors across the country who have been trained in the EVER methodology to gather and verify information from the media, election officials, security officials, government officials, political parties, civil society organizations, community leaders, voters, and eyewitnesses to violence, and from attendance at campaign and peace events. Monitors will work from 28 May to 31 August 2007. It should be noted that monitors will not be able to record every incident of violence in the country. EVER reports list incidents verified by at least two sources. This improves the reliability of information that stakeholders have on the patterns of violence - that is, the major types of violence that are happening and who is involved.

About EVER partners

BELUN was established in 2004 with the mandate to serve communities, develop the organizational capacity of partners, reduce tensions and prevent conflict in Timor-Leste. BELUN works with 120 CBO/NGO partners across all districts and has five teams strategically sited throughout the country- in Ainaro, Baucau, Dili, Maliana, and Oe-cusse.

IFES is an international nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that supports the building of democratic societies. IFES is headquartered in Washington, DC, and currently has field offices in more than 20 countries. Since 1987, IFES has provided technical assistance to over 100 countries in transition in the areas of election administration, civil society building, human rights, rule of law and good governance.