The Asia Foundation

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INSTITUTIONALIZING COMMUNITY POLICING IN TIMOR-LESTE:
Exploring the Politics of Police Reform

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SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the last decade, the development of the *Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (PNTL) has been a core focus of the international community as well as successive national governments. As capacity has been developed at both the individual and organizational levels, the need for the PNTL to develop into a community oriented police service has been stated regularly. Despite this prominence in international and national rhetoric on police development, demonstrable progress toward making community policing a cornerstone of policing in Timor-Leste has been very limited. There have been pilot projects, and on the job capacity building by United Nations Police (UNPOL) officers, as well as efforts to train police commanders on community policing. At the national level there has also been progress with discussions on community policing, resulting in the PNTL national strategy referring to the need for Community-Police Councils as well as increased focus on introducing community policing concepts to basic training. For those wishing to see a more comprehensive move to institutionalize community policing by the PNTL, these developments must be viewed positively, but the fact remains that there have not yet been concrete results in operationalizing community policing at the station level.

The political leadership of Timor-Leste is very focused on the issues around the police and the need for police reform. There is a strong commitment to strengthening the PNTL as an institution, as well as improving the performance of its police officers. Resources continue to be focused on capacity and skills development, specialization and other initiatives. Despite this political will for change and recognition of the basic problem, community policing is not yet seen as a high priority within the list of reforms desired. As a vague ambition rather than an immediate priority, community policing is chronically under-resourced, with the most recent FY12 budget leaving out its funds for training completely. In general, there seems to be a continued lack of vision for how the PNTL might develop into a more community oriented police service, and an inability to see community policing as a potential solution for many problems facing the PNTL. At present, pilot projects in community policing, such as that carried out by The Asia Foundation, seem to have demonstrated the potential for positive impact of community policing initiatives on safety and security in Timor-Leste. Despite this, these efforts have been insufficient to mainstream community policing within the PNTL and catalyze the demand for community policing among key reform leaders and across the broader Timorese society.

Reforms have both technical and political aspects. On the technical side there needs to be an understanding of the major processes, procedures, and practices that would need to be changed to promote community policing practices. Politically, any intent to work toward supporting the PNTL to strengthen its community policing approach will require an understanding of the potential supporters of such changes within the security sector, the government, and civil society. Additionally it is important to understand groups and individuals that might push against such reforms or seek to delay them, and to start developing knowledge of the incentives that lead actors to obstruct reform.

This study intends to focus on and clarify the national-level political aspects of police reform in Timor-Leste. Presenting openly this analysis of the politics and pressures affecting the direction of police development in Timor-Leste is intended to stimulate constructive debate. By gathering and presenting information on levels of understanding of, and support for community policing among key groups and actors, this research aims to enable a more nuanced discussion on the limitations and opportunities for improving policing and security in Timor-Leste. The study identifies potential obstacles and challenges, as well as opportunities and practical recommendations for addressing these problems.

Defining Community Policing

Comprehensive community policing is not a program or an activity, it is a *philosophy and an organizational strategy*.[1] It is a change in the actual approach to policing that should affect many aspects of policing rather than just adding specific activities to already existing procedures. Almost all comprehensive community policing models will have at least the following three pillars in some form:

(1) Building effective partnerships with communities. This would require that the police engage stakeholders in the community both to identify and solve local problems.

(2) Police take a problem solving orientation. Police resources should be focused on specific problems that are causing crime and insecurity within a target area. Instead of police exclusively reacting to crimes committed, police should work with communities to identify and remove the underlying causes of and enabling factors for crime.

(3) Develop police structures and management procedures allowing decentralized decision-making and deep understanding of local communities and contexts among officers. In order for police officers to listen and respond to community needs and priorities, they need to have structures that allow them to access the communities, and they need to have the operational flexibility to adjust activities based on local needs and priorities.

Examples of specific police officers or leaders introducing community policing activities in their areas can be found throughout Timor-Leste. All of these different cases can demonstrate a wide range of ways in which the community policing approach can be locally relevant in Timorese communities. This being said, there has been little progress made in aggregating these various experiences into a Timorese model for or even understanding of community policing within the PNTL and other key institutions. Lessons learned from those experiences will be critical for the continued development of a practical definition of what Timorese community policing will consist of.

Community Policing in Timor-Leste

Developing a clear sense of the potential benefits of a community policing approach within the context of Timor-Leste requires consideration of the nature of insecurity and conflict resolution

[1] Trajanowicz, Robert and Bonnie Bucqueroux (1994) *Community Policing: A Contemporary Perspective* Cincinnati, OD: Anderson

in Timorese communities. Viewed within that context, the potential for community policing to improve the safety and security environments would seem to be significant.

Considering the security context in Timor-Leste, the country is often described both as having low rates of crime, but having relatively high levels of insecurity. A 2008 survey of community police perceptions by The Asia Foundation found that the most commonly perceived causes of insecurity tended to be communal or group conflicts involving martial arts groups, gangs, or communities disputing issues relating to religion or socio-economic conflict. Common disputes such as those over land and cattle frequently escalate from conflicts between individuals to family, gang, or communal conflicts.[2] This problem can be further exacerbated by a tendency for vigilante justice that the 2008 survey suggests still is prevalent. Tensions and disputes have even been shown to migrate with people, as conflicts in urban centers such as Baucau or Dili can often be traced back to enmity between families or villages in rural areas, and urban conflicts can again cycle back to the villages.[3]

Looking at the question of dispute resolution in Timor-Leste, traditional and informal mechanisms remain dominant throughout the country. In a 2008 survey of law and justice, it was found that for all of the most common types of disputes, the vast majority of respondents would go first to Aldeia Chiefs, Suco Chiefs, or elders to make a complaint or discuss the problem. Generally less than 10 percent of respondents would consider going to the police first.[4] There are a wide variety of *lisan* practices (traditional dispute settlement and conflict prevention methods), but they generally involve a person of authority leading consensus based negotiations to conflict. Most often these methods encourage open dialogue between not only individual disputants but their families or clans. Conflict is not viewed on an individual level, but at a communal level so negotiations are generally conducted publicly so that the whole community can observe, negotiating openly. This openness is also part of the enforcement mechanism as a strong sense of shame is felt by entire families, leading to intra-family pressures largely ensuring that agreements are upheld.[5] Urbanization, modernization, and other processes are beginning to create pressure on the traditional systems, especially among the youth, but informal dispute settlement remains more relevant for most Timorese citizens than the still nascent formal justice system which remains limited by poor capacity and weak legitimacy among much of the population.[6]

While this is a simplified portrayal of the safety and security environment in Timor-Leste, it does provide a basis for considering why community policing might provide the most appropriate

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[2] *Law and Justice in Timor-Leste: A Survey of Citizen Awareness and Attitudes Regarding Law and Justice* The Asia Foundation (2008) pg. 48

[3] See for example Groups, gangs, and armed violence in Timor-Leste TLAVA Issue Brief (April 2009) based on research by James Scambury
http://www.timor-leste-violence.org/pdfs/Timor-Leste-Violence-IB2-ENGLISH.pdf

[4] *Law and Justice in Timor-Leste: A Survey of Citizen Awareness and Attitudes Regarding Law and Justice* The Asia Foundation (2008) pg. 49

[5] *Rethinking Timorese Identity as a Peacebuilding Strategy: The Lorosa'e – Loromonu Conflict from a Traditional Perspective* by Jose Trinidade and Bryant Castro
http://www.indopubs.com/Trindade_Castro_Rethinking_Timorese_Identity.pdf

[6] For a basic overview of the justice sector see *Security Sector Reform Monitor: Timor-Leste No. 3* The Center for International Governance Innovation CIGI (January 2011)

tools for police to best contribute to solutions for safety and security challenges. Several conclusions about the appropriateness of community policing might be made given this contextual background:

Prevention is crucial in Timor-Leste – Because of the manner in which conflict escalates, and the communal nature of disputes once violence occurs, reacting to specific incidents and intervening or making arrests often has limited impact on actually ending the conflict. Community policing encourages the shift from reactive to preventative policing, and can improve systems for the police to get early warnings on potential conflicts.

Communication is key – In order to generate early warnings on possible inflammatory disputes, gather information on sensitive issues such as domestic violence and stay informed about potential risk groups and threats to safety and security, the police need strong communication with community members and knowledge of the local security environment. In Timorese society, potential conflicts are usually caused by tensions and issues that are recognized widely within a community. Information about these potential flashpoints is available and community members are aware of potential problems, but strained relationships between the police and the community can often prevent the spreading of that information to the police.

Need to focus on insecurity more than crime – Traditional policing is targeted much more on reducing incidents of crime than alleviating insecurity. Timor-Leste needs less focus on crime rates and more on making its citizens feel safe and secure.

Nature of the most frequently occurring crimes – The biggest crime challenges seem to be resource disputes and domestic violence. These are very challenging issues for traditional policing approaches focused on detention and arrest to generate effective solutions to. To reduce the prevalence of these kinds of incidents multi-sectoral efforts with some focus on social development are needed.

Importance of informal justice mechanisms – Given the importance of informal justice, and the weaknesses of the formal system, it is important that the police have means of building constructive working relationships with these systems.

Limited state penetration outside of district centers and Dili – Governance in Timor-Leste is still developing, and many of the functions of the state are still only being performed in district centers and Dili. Outside of these areas, state presence is weak, and the PNTL often are the main actors in representing the state. How the police act on a day to day basis, and respond to crises around the country, is directly affecting larger issues such as state legitimacy and state-society relations. Given this key role that the police are playing because of the nature of governance in Timor-Leste, the manner in which they interact with communities and represent the state is very important.

SECTION II – METHODOLOGY

Research for this report was carried out in two phases. During an initial desk study, articles, past reports, and other available information was reviewed and an initial discussion was held to (1) formulate a common understanding of the security sector in Timor-Leste; (2) discuss potential obstacles and opportunities for the future of community policing from initial resource and prior knowledge; and (3) identify gaps in knowledge and issue areas which required additional research. During this initial phase the team developed preliminary analysis and several working assumptions on the potential for institutionalizing community policing in Timor-Leste in order to help shape lines of questioning for key informant interviews. The second phase of research consisted of key informant interviews with interlocutors from the PNTL, parliament, executive branch, civil society, and the international community. Meetings were conducted in Dili over two weeks in November 2010. The list of interviews was by no means exhaustive and proved insufficient for a comprehensive technical analysis of the PNTL, but the information gathered offered important insight regarding the political networks and affiliations that shape police reform processes in Timor-Leste.

Working Hypotheses

Based on the desk research, a number of hypotheses about the levels of interest in, support for and knowledge of community policing were generated prior to conducting field interviews. These hypotheses were used to frame discussions, and focus approaches to key interviews. While interviews were not conducted with a formal questionnaire, and varied depending on the course of conversation, there was an emphasis on testing these hypotheses throughout. The five specific working assumptions developed prior to the interviews were:

1. **Despite some superficial knowledge of general community policing principles among police leadership, there remains a lack of concrete understanding of what community policing means from an operational standpoint.**
2. **The future of police reform is intrinsically linked to discussions on the relationship with the military, and the roles each institution should play.**
3. **Knowledge of the potential benefits of community policing is still limited among influential actors.**
4. **The major challenge to the institutionalization of community policing is prioritization as opposed to direct opposition.**
5. **The process of "militarizing the police" may not be directly in opposition to community policing, but it creates mixed messages on the direction of the service.**

In order to assess the accuracy of these hypotheses, the research team started by developing a common understanding of the historical and developmental trends within the PNTL, the key institutions in the security sector reform landscape, and the key informal networks that hold political power in Timor-Leste. From this basic understanding the interview process exploring how these actors, institutions, and organizations relate to the PNTL and the prospects for comprehensive community police reform. Section III of this report lays out findings on these subjects. Section IV then works within the context of that political economy framework to explore important trends in police development, and assess the challenges and opportunities for

promoting community policing reform, while considering how an effective coalition in support of community policing reform might begin to develop, as well as how the development of such a coalition might be supported. Finally, Section V proposes an analytical framework for assessing progress toward the full institutionalization of community policing within the PNTL.

SECTION III – THE PNTL

History of PNTL Development

The *Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (PNTL) is one of the world's youngest police services, having been more or less pulled together from scratch only ten years ago. The institution was initially set up with the support of the United Nations Transitional Administration East Timor (UNTAET) in March 2000, this new institution was created mostly using new recruits with no prior policing experience, in addition to some 370 officers who had served in the Indonesian police force (POLRI) prior to independence. New recruits were given three months of formal training, followed by six months of on the job learning with UNPOL officers.[7] Until May 20, 2004, this fledgling police service was under the executive authority of UNTAET and its successor, the UN peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNMISET). These initial years did see the recruitment and provision of basic training to enough officers to lay the foundations for a police service, but accomplished less in trying to develop a strong overall institution with effective strategic planning, management, and administrative systems.

Political crisis in 2006 brought to light the institutional fragilities of both the police and the FALINTIL-*Forcas Defenza de Timor-Leste* (F-FDTL), which had been created in 2001 from a combination of former FALINTIL fighters and new recruits. Contentious but comprehensive accounts of the crisis and literature analyzing key events and political maneuvers that resulted in the breakdown of the security sector are readily available.[8] One interpretation of the events of 2006 is that the personal animosities and political manipulation played out through informal networks in and around both the police and military institutions, and ultimately these informal networks proved to be much stronger than the legal and institutional structures in place. Some observers have oversimplified the situation and referred mainly to tension between the police and the military spilling out into violence, but actually over the course of the emergency, military personnel attacked each other, police were fighting with other police, and civilians, often armed, and recruited by both sides participated in a number of incidents.[9] Membership in either institution did not decide one's position in the various struggles, it was the informal networks which dictated the choices made by key actors. The pressures on these institutions took the greatest toll on the Dili police, which collapsed almost completely.

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[7] *Security Sector Reform in East Timor, 199-2004* Ludovic Hood in *International Peacekeeping Vol. 13 No. 1* (March 2006) pg. 64

[8] See *Report of the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry for Timor-Leste* (Geneva, October 2, 2006) or the International Crisis Group's *Resolving Timore Leste's Crisis* Asia Report No.120 (10/10/2006).

[9] *Ibid.*

The development of the PNTL since 2006, led largely by the international community, could be described as taking place around three main strands of activity; building institutional structures, vetting of potential officers and leaders, and developing individual capacity through training and mentoring. Looking across these three areas, academics and commentators have found it somewhat easier to identify shortcomings in the efforts rather than clear accomplishments.[10] While institutional structures have certainly been developed, these structures remain somewhat hollow as the police service lacks in consistent application of the processes and procedures that actually determine how the institution works. While significant efforts at training have been made, the fact is that today in 2011 international donors are still attempting to develop effective training systems for both 'in service' and new recruit training. With regard to the UNPOL mentoring program, there has been sufficient literature already published about the challenges of that program, and the difficulties in mobilizing an international contingent of police officers with limited or no mentoring experience and vastly different systems in their home countries, to systematically teach the Timorese how to effectively carry out their duties.[11] The vetting process has been similarly limited in its effect, as the process frustrated and alienated many within the PNTL, while failing to deny certification to many who had participated in the violence of 2006.

The limited impact of the vetting process might also, in part, be due to a flawed assumption that tensions and rivalries within the police service, and between the service and the army, were based solely on the presence of those officers who committed crimes or abuses, or acted in a demonstrably partisan manner during the 2006 crisis. This assumption seems to underestimate the problem of tension and divisions within the PNTL. Even if those proven violators had been removed, the political and patronage frameworks within which they had acted would still be in place. There are certainly significant levels of tension generated by complex personal histories based on specific incidents, but this cannot be assumed to be the sole or even primary cause of continued animosity. Personal histories between key leadership figures and incidents ranging back decades certainly set much of the tone of the relationships between institutions and even specific units, but the bar room brawls and street level incidents between the rank and file of the military and police suggest a broader set of issues. Symbolic affiliations and historical resentment certainly is present, based on issues such as the inclusion of former POLRI officers in the PNTL, and resentment among some former resistance fighters who had thought they might be integrated into the police service, but these legacies are only one part of the story. There also has to be consideration for practical competitions over overlapping roles, resources, pay, working conditions, and prestige.

Revisiting and improving upon these and similar flawed assumptions is a core challenge for the international community providing assistance for the continued development of Timor-Leste, especially within the security sector. A lesson which should be learned from the first decade of international efforts in the country, is that reform processes not grounded in the political and

[10] See for example *A lot of Talk but Not a Lot of Action: The Difficulty of Implementing SSR in Timor-Leste* by Gordon Peake in *Security Sector Reform in Challenging Environments,* eds. Hans Born and Albrecht Schnabel (Munster: LIT, 2009) 213-238 or *The UNPOL to PNTL 'handover' 2009: what exactly is being handed over?* By Bu Wilson and Nelson De Sousa C. Belo for the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum (October 2009)

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power landscape of Timor-Leste are unlikely to be effective or sustainable. Community policing reforms are no different.

SECTION IV – POLICE REFORM IN CONTEXT

Institutions Involved in Community Policing Reform

Before a consideration of the informal networks at play in police reform, it is also important to establish the institutional landscape in which any efforts at reform play out. This is distinctly different from the next section of analysis, on the informal networks. The short paragraphs below will not go into specific detail into the processes and procedures through which these various institutions work, but will rather try to briefly establish how they are engaging in police reform issues, as well to suggest their levels of influence in the process.

Prime Ministers Office – Given the importance of the security sector, as well as the prime minister's dual role as the Minister for Defense and Security, major reform initiatives invariably involve the prime minister's office. The prime minister is uniquely powerful in a formal sense. As the Minister for Defense and Security, technically the prime minister is the head of all civilian oversight of the military and police, which grants the Prime Minister specific powers of review. Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao is supported in his role by a Secretary of State for Defense (currently Julio Tomas Pinto) and a Secretary of State for Security (Francisco Gutteres). In addition to the formal power, this particular Prime Minister wields even more considerable informal powers to affect the development of the security forces that enable him to impact appointments, promotions, and internal disciplinary matters. Regarding the police specifically, the prime minister has not been observed to be micro-managing operations, but is engaged in significant decisions, setting the strategic direction of the service, and in any case where potentially politically inflammatory actions involving the police are taking place. His involvement has been most obvious in appointing and promoting key leaders, something the Prime Minister directly involves himself with.

President's Office – The president is formally the Supreme Commander of the defense forces and can appoint and replace the commander of the F-FDTL, he is also the chairman of the Superior Council for Defense and Security. Both of these positions are largely symbolic, carrying very limited authority in the realms of policy or budget. While President Ramos-Horta's informal power may outstrip the formal powers afforded to him in his role as president, at present his influence on the key decision-makers appears constrained. The President has created a group of advisors, known as the 'President's House' that are participating in discussions on the issue of security sector reform and the setting of a national defense strategy. Their formal role in deliberations and advisory role is important in shaping dialogue around the security sector, but there is limited scope for this office to direct actual decisions being made. In general the president seems to be more engaged with defense issues rather than policing.

Superior Council for Defense and Security – This body is chaired by the president, and includes the prime minister, three parliamentarians, the relevant ministers (defense, justice, interior, foreign affairs), the national state security officer, the heads of the F-FDTL and PNTL,

and two civilians appointed by the president. This body was created in 2005, but its specific role remains somewhat ambiguous. It is presumably a body more for coordination and consultation than decision-making. It does have the power to review relevant legislation, declare a state of emergency, and select or dismiss the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but these, and several other, formal powers in practice are secondary to its role as a forum for decision-makers to discuss important issues around, and share information on defense and security.

National Parliament, Committee B (National Defense, Security and Foreign Affairs) – This parliamentary committee is responsible for providing legislative oversight of the security sector, as well as for developing legislation relating to defense and security issues and institutions. This Committee contains a number of powerful political figures, and given its role in forming legislation as well as making recommendations on budgetary issues, it has a potentially important role to play in police reform. Currently, however, the legislative branch of government has shown limited capacity to provide effective oversight or constructively shape security discussions, as the executive dominates. While important legislation might be possible that does not specifically rely on the prime minister's lead or vision, parliamentarians have limited technical capacity and political influence to affect implementation of a more significant legislative agenda on security policy.

Office of the General Commander PNTL – Within the police service, it is clear that the General Commander has the strongest role in affecting decisions related to the overall direction of the police. The current General Commander has taken an approach to institutional development focused on strengthening specialized units such as the riot squad and the *Policia Especial*. While the General Commander's formal power is unrivaled within the police force, particular unit and area commanders have considerable scope to make their own decisions regarding strategy and tactics, especially when they have their own political connections.

Community Policing Unit – Since the topic of study is specifically community policing, it is worth noting that there is a Community Policing Unit (CPU) within the PNTL. With the passing of the Organic Law, this unit no longer has any capacity to command or organize community policing officers, but rather is focused more on training. While members of this unit have had a relatively strong conception of community policing theory, it is not well resourced. Despite its own lack of resources, the fact that CPU leadership and even community level CPU officers are sometimes drawn away to support other units, implies that other units are more important and carry greater influence.

Police and Networks of Influence

The importance of informal networks in Timorese society, with national level political and security institutions such as the police being no different, has not been diminished with the construct of institutions based on "best practice" designs from around the world. Understanding the collapse of the security sector in 2006 requires recognition of the power that these informal networks wield. Without this side of the narrative, it is impossible to explain how the dismissal of F-FDTL soldiers could so rapidly devolve into the disintegration of the police in Dili, fighting within and between these two institutions, and the collapse of much of the civilian government. Facing this reality does not make Timor-Leste radically different from many other contexts in

which the international community is supporting police reform, but it does indicate that successful reform initiatives are going to require technical soundness and relevance to the security environment. This requires an understanding of the networks that have developed within and around the PNTL which can influence, promote, or even obstruct change entirely.

The term "informal networks" is being used in this context to refer to associations used for communication, the exertion of influence, and decision-making that operate outside of the PNTL's formal chain of command or decision-making structures, but still influence its strategies, operations, and institutional direction. The types of associations or organizations that fall within this framework have developed for a variety of reasons and motivations. One can identify networks built on individual histories and relationships, family or gangs, geography, shared experiences or even shared political goals. This study does not explore the issue of criminal networks forging relationships with the police, focusing instead on political networks. In addition, this research does not attempt to explore the reasons behind the formation of specific networks in great detail, but rather focuses more on the institutional implications of networks identified, especially with regard to the future of community policing in Timor-Leste. It is important to note that networks are not unitary, within any given association or organization there will be opinions and positions that differ significantly. In addition, networks are not mutually exclusive, many actors have personal as well as political associations and allegiances that spread across several networks. This study recognizes the importance of personal relationships, but chooses to focus more on those political and institutional associations that can be evaluated based on an assessment of interests and policies rather than nebulous inquiries into personal values.

Looking specifically into the institution of the PNTL, this study has identified four established networks that would seem to be of particular importance to the future direction of the police service as well as community policing. The four networks to be discussed are: the prime minister's network; a FRETILIN network; F-FDTL network; and veterans' networks. In addition, consideration of the influence of President Ramos Horta is discussed following discussion of the four major networks. To further clarify how these networks have developed or operated, a discussion of the 2006 crisis viewed through the lens of informal networks will follow the introduction of the networks.

The Prime Minister's Network – Looking into the coalition government's network of influence in and around the PNTL, it is most practical to simply consider it Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao's personal network. There are a number of police leaders who have risen quickly through the ranks, or have been chosen for leadership positions without prior policing experience. The prime minister is known to be actively engaged in the selection of police leadership positions, and has been known to reward those who have assisted him in the past with appointments. His network at the highest levels of the service must be considered very strong.

In assessing support for community policing in this network, it would seem that this is the most powerful constituency, but also the most conflicted when it comes to support for community policing. It is from within this network that the push toward the "militarization" of the police is currently coming (there will be more discussion on this trend in the next section of the report). An analysis from the perspective of the prime minister's interest suggests that as the head of the

civilian government, and given that his relationship with the military is rather complex, it is in his best interest for the police to be a strong enough institution to provide a balance to the strength of the military. The military has often been an ally to the prime minister, but with FRETILIN also maintaining significant levels of support within the F-FDTL, and the 2006 crisis causing heightened tension between Gusmao and key F-FDTL leaders including Commander Taur Matan Ruak and Colonel Lere Anan Timor, the military remains an independent institution that is not overly supportive of any one political party. While the PM has an interest in working toward a more balanced security sector, he also must ensure he does not act in way that might alienate his allies in the F-FDTL or lead the military to perceive the PNTL as more of a threat. This need for a measured approach to strengthening the PNTL most likely explains why the PM has not been supportive of the more extreme proposals put forward by the General Commander to purchase semi-automatic rifles and other offensive equipment. His network within the PNTL is, however, supporting the development of specialized units with more training and equipment. These units have been used in aggressive maneuvers against martial arts groups in the west of the country.

At present the prime minister's mixed relationship with the military leadership is not a clear threat to his agenda, so this incentive of creating a balance for the military should not be overstated. With regard to the push for specialized task forces, it also should be kept in mind that the great security success of the prime minister and the PNTL to date was the creation of an elite task force in Dili. While the international community tended to view this unit with distrust, and expressed concerns about the tactics and potential abuses committed by this task force, its push to end gang violence in Dili is generally regarded within Timor-Leste, and within the government, as a great success. Gang and youth violence decreased sharply, resulting in a political victory for the prime minister. So the tendency toward creating elite and specialized units is also rooted, to some extent, by the perceived success of this task force. It is also not a trend introduced solely by the current government, initial moves in this direction began under the FRETILIN government.

Another driving factor for the Prime Minister is the still recent memories of the 2006 crisis which led to a breakdown of the security forces, and brought down prime minister Alkatiri's government. Prime Minister Gusmao knows that a similar security sector collapse would threaten his leadership position as well. So strengthening the police as an institution remains a key priority, especially with the reality of a second UN drawdown coming in the next several years. It would seem that community policing is not seen as a particularly useful tool for strengthening the integrity of the institution. Discussions within this network seem to focus more on discipline and command chains rather than service orientation and other more community policing relevant terms. Given this focus, it is probably most accurate to say that the concept of community policing is supported in principle by this network, but it is not seen as a priority and will not be significantly invested in if the situation remains unchanged or if the specter of crisis emerges.

F-FDTL Network – The F-FDTL remains one of the most influential institutions in the country. While one might have expected it to be perceived in a less positive light, or be somewhat diminished in influence after the 2006 crisis, in practice this has not been the case. Following the 2006 crisis, the core leadership of the military is actually even more unified as dissenting voices

essentially split from the military and have not been reintroduced. In terms of popularity or public perceptions, the police and the previous government seem to have taken the brunt of the negative reaction to the crisis, certainly much more than the military. Connections back to FALINTIL and the history of resistance continue to sustain the legitimacy and prestige of specific F-FDTL personalities as well as the force as a whole. With its influence and status still high, the F-FDTL has a role to play in all reforms involving the security sector.

Unpacking the relationship between the police and the military is not an easy task. In order to start a description of how this relationships has developed over time one has to start by looking at what happened before there even was a PNTL. There were two decisions that were made by the international community (with agreement from most key national figures) in the creation of the PNTL that colored the relationship with the military from the very beginning. First there was a decision made to incorporate former POLRI officers (who had been vetted first with FALINTIL involvement) into the new police service so that there would be a leadership base of officers who had policing experience. Second, there was a decision made that the rest of the police service would be drawn from a large batch of new recruits, rather than attempting to retrain former resistance fighters. These two decisions, while perhaps sound from a technical perspective, and supported at the time by most key Timorese political figures, have over time made the relationships between the PNTL and F-FDTL institutions more susceptible to political interference. Issues such as distrust for a police service with links back to POLRI, and resentment from veterans who felt left out of both the F-FDTL and the PNTL were later successfully used to exacerbate tensions and create conflict. In the early years international support for the police, and the decision to engage only minimally with the F-FDTL also fueled resentment as the police received more resources, support and attention from international actors.

F-FDTL perceptions of the police as a threat to the country, and a potential rival to the military for funding and influence developed further with increased politicization of the police starting from 2002. This created tensions that were made all too clear by the 2006 crisis. This crisis, in which elements of the police and military had multiple gun battles against elements of each other, also revealed the extent to which the F-FDTL's network had developed within the PNTL. Many police were observed to have left the police, and in some cases offered support to actors linked to the F-FDTL when the institutions started to break down. This burst of violence did nothing to relieve the tensions, and today the view of the F-FDTL seems to largely still be that the PNTL is a threat, not only to them but to the country. When the police undertook the offensive against martial arts groups in the West, many hailed this as an advance in police-military relations as a joint-command was formed between the two institutions.[12] But other commentators described the role of the military as almost watching or monitoring the police to make sure they did not go too far during the campaign, so rather than a partner they almost viewed themselves as a chaperone. Another joint exercise in 2010 between the F-FDTL's navy and the maritime police, can largely be seen as evidence of the F-FDTL's influence within the PNTL. This event took place largely outside the formal hierarchies of the police without the prior knowledge of top police leadership, and happened largely because of the strong linkages between the commander of the maritime police and the military leadership.

[12] This was the second joint command, following one put into place during the state of emergency declared after the attacks on the President and Prime Minister in February 2008.

With regard to the views of the F-FDTL on community policing, there seems to be wide support for the police to adopt a much more community oriented approach. Reading this support from an incentives perspective, it is clearly in the best interest of the F-FDTL if the PNTL moves more toward community policing rather than focusing on so-called "militarization." A clear move toward community policing limits the potential for the PNTL to grow into a genuine rival to the military, and also ensures that there is some continued justification for a military in a country with no obvious external threats. This potential for rivalry is not only fueled by the development of the PNTL, but also the increasing expansion of the F-FDTL into policing with military police units increasing and becoming more visible and active. This trend might, in part, also be pushed by a feeling that the police lack the national pride and service orientation of the F-FDTL because they were not resistance fighters who had fought so long for their country. Among the military there is a pride at this history of serving the country, and this has translated into a strong sense that the police must develop a similar sense of duty, again leading most military actors to be supportive of community policing.

FRETILIN Network – Having lost the government, FRETILIN has been diminished as a political force in Timor-Leste, but it has maintained a legitimate network of support down to the grassroots level. These networks also extend into institutions like the police. Just as the relationships between the prime minister and the F-FDTL can be difficult to gauge at times, so too can the relationships between the F-FDTL and FRETILIN. The top military leadership has strong FRETILIN links, but that is balanced to some extent by significant personal support for Prime Minister Gusmao for his years of leadership during the independence struggle. FALINTIL and FRETILIN had historical linkages, which Gusmao worked hard to sever by formally making FALINTIL non-political during the 1984-87 period. Following independence, as the commander of FALINTIL, Gusmao was able to lead the selection process to decide which leaders from FALINTIL would become the commanders of the new F-FDTL. His role in this process by no means ended FRETILIN's linkages with the military, but it did weaken them somewhat. Faced with this situation, FRETILIN made a conscious effort, led by Minister for Interior Administrations Rogerio Lobato (a rival to Alkatiri more than an ally), to develop their ties to the police during the years after independence. This push helped create tensions that contributed to the 2006 crisis, but it also served to develop a network of FRETILIN supporters within the police that still persists, although the presence of their supporters in top leadership positions has been limited under the current government.

One of the reasons why FRETILIN supporters within the PNTL seem to keep a low profile, is that the party has focused some on the police and their poor performance and continued institutional weakness as a political issue. FRETILIN has been extremely vocal in criticizing the Police General Commander, and is portraying the proliferation of specialized units and the purchasing of new equipment as irresponsible and wasteful, despite the role of their party in initiating the specialization of policing units under the previous government. Despite this history, FRETILIN as the main opposition force wants to frame the inability to generate an effective and service-oriented police institution as a government failure. The events of 2006 and the importance of the security sector still weigh heavily in the minds of FRETILIN leadership as they clearly hold the view that much of the conflict was orchestrated as part of an attempt to bring down Prime Minister Alkatiri and his government.

This is not to say that actors from within FRETILIN would deny that tensions existed within the security sector leading up to 2006, but they do think that those tensions were exploited by political actors to exaggerate the crisis in order to undermine the government. While FRETILIN today most likely could use its connections into the police and military to again raise tensions, the reality is no one believes a repeat of 2006 is in their best interests. What seems to be happening instead is that the FRETILIN sympathetic network within the police service are trying to subtly undermine the authority of police leaders within the prime minister's network. While the opposition does not want another break down in security, it also does not want to see the government get credit for perceived successes in the security sector, and seeks to portray government initiatives to make the PNTL more professional and strong as hollow and unsuccessful.

This political calculation that the security sector is an important political battleground and their desire to portray the government and its informal network within the police as ineffective at building the police as an institution actually creates incentives for FRETILIN to support community policing. Community policing offers a model that attempts to improve service to normal citizens, and also contrasts with the direction in which the current government and general commander have taken the police service. So support for community policing by FRETILIN leaders would seem to be backed by sound political incentives to push for these types of reform. Involvement of FRETILIN on issues such as community policing however, runs the real risk of making the issue a political one, in which case it will be supported or opposed not on the merits of the concept but rather based on political maneuvering.

While the incentives are there to support community policing, FRETLIN leaders are aware of community policing and superficially supportive, but are clearly not completely sold on community policing as a priority or a solution to important policing and security issues. In private discussions with FRETILIN actors, the issues of discipline and weak capacity among individual officers seem to be viewed as more pressing problems than the need to reorient the police toward the community.

The Veterans – The role of the veterans in Timorese politics is well established. They have successfully advocated for benefits including payments and special rights and have, at several points used political activism to influence politics. Veterans are well respected for their role in creating an independent Timor-Leste, and they have a certain sense of entitlement to get involved in deciding the direction that the country as a whole is taking. The veterans are by no means a united network both within and between the various veterans associations that are active.[13] The two most important veterans groups are the Fundacao Veteranos das FALINTIL and the Associacao Veteranos das Resistencia, both with strong ties to FRETILIN as well as the Partido Democratico (PD). Despite clear political preferences among key veterans, these actors have direct lines of communication and influence into the F-FDTL and PNTL that exist outside of party structures and are largely independent of the main political leaders.

Involvement with the PNTL and F-FDTL is unavoidable given the linkages that exist both at the district/local and national levels. The perception of the current police service as neither

[13] Edward Rees "*Under Pressure, FALINTIL: Three Decades of Defense Force Development in Timor-Leste*" Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2004.

trustworthy nor competent, certainly is held by many of the veterans, and in the build up to the 2006 crisis some of the fringe veterans linked to FRETILIN were crucial in drumming up sentiment against the police and decrying the links of PNTL leadership to POLRI. This action was largely viewed as part of a campaign to get more veterans recruited into the PNTL, and help it become a FRETILIN power base able to balance the influence of the F-FDTL. This pressure campaign was not able to encourage the recruitment of more veterans, but its legacy might be the negative opinion of the PTNL that many veterans share regardless of political affiliations.

Given the variety among the veterans, it is difficult to assign one clear standpoint on community policing. Perspectives range from completely dismissive of the idea to strongly supportive and interested in supporting the development of a police service with a clear community orientation. Despite the networks and influence wielded by the veterans within the security sector, as a group they have not been constructively engaged on discussions of police reform in a clear way. This is a network that could be important if they got involved on the issue of community policing, and have the greatest ability to weigh in on security issues without generating immediate politicization of the debate.

President Ramos Horta – Looking across the key actors and networks affecting police reform, one influential character who is difficult to place within this landscape is the president. His position gives him a leadership role on issues relating to security, despite his formal powers being limited. Despite his history as a member of FRETILIN, his current associations within the networks described above are somewhat ambiguous. In this manner Ramos Horta is able to engage on security sector issues without being seen as representing one political grouping or the other. This potential as a partner for police reforms is limited by the lack of a network of influence that could rival the others discussed here in any way. Initial reading on the views of community policing from within the president's network of advisors is that they, much like others, see it as an important piece of Timor-Leste's long-term policing plan but suggest that issues of discipline, training, and institutional integrity are more immediate priorities.

The 2006 Crisis and Competition in the Security Sector[14]

The events of 2006, in which Timor-Leste's newly developed security sector suffered an almost total meltdown, offers some important context to an understanding both of how the relationships between the networks described above have been shaped, but also how the security sector has figured into struggles for influence. Before launching into this discussion, it is important to note that we should not look to 2006 as a predictor of how actors and networks will act going forward, incentives have fundamentally changed since then. In 2006 FRETILIN was in power and Alkatiri was the prime minister. Current Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao was the president, a symbolic position which did not accurately reflect his actual influence and strong relationships with many former resistance fighters.

The historical roots of the crisis begin at least as far back as 1975, but a brief narrative might start in1983/4, when Xanana Gusmao began to orchestrate a split between FALINTIL and

[14] For a more comprehensive review of the 2006 Crisis see *Report of the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry for Timor-Leste* (Geneva, October 2, 2006) or the International Crisis Group's *Resolving Timore Leste's Crisis* Asia Report No. 120 (10/10/2006).

FRETILIN. Gusmao, then commander of FALINTIL, started some negotiations with the Indonesians and tried to improve relations with the church and former political rivals. These changes were enough to incite several senior FRETILIN officers to attempt a coup. Following the failed coup, Gusmao purged FRETILIN hardliners from FALINTIL and formally split the organizations in 1987. These actions created a separation between FRETILIN and Xanana, as well as FRETILIN and the military. Following independence, this legacy and other rivalries led FRETILIN to leave the National Congress for the Reconstruction of East Timor (CNRT) coalition in 2000, just a year after it had been created.

While FRETILIN won the 2001 elections, it could not reestablish its control over the military. In fact their influence within the military was further weakened in 2001 when FALINTIL was reorganized to be the F-FDTL. The process led by Gusmao as FALINTIL commander and UNTAET consisted of selecting 650 FALINTIL fighters to join new recruits for a planned force of 1,500. As part of the plan, the FALINTIL High Command was allowed to select the FALINTIL soldiers that would join the new force without external review. This allowed Xanana Gusmao to hand pick his allies to lead the F-FDTL, and the process as a whole resulted in a frustrated block of largely pro-FRETILIN veterans who felt they had been unfairly excluded, in addition to a FRETILIN government nervous because the military leadership seemed even more aligned with then President Gusmao.

Facing this situation, many within FRETILIN seemed to see the fledgling PNTL as a potential balance for the military, and an institution in which they could gain influence as it was still developing. A key member of the FRETILIN party leadership, Rogerio Lobato became the Minister of Interior Administration in 2002, which gave him oversight of the police. Lobato, who within the party was more of a rival to Alkatiri than an ally, worked to build FRETILIN influence into the PNTL. He undertook this largely by building his personal networks rather than party loyalties, and did not hesitate to use potentially destabilizing actions and groups to strengthen his hand. He first reached out to a fringe group of malcontent veterans to mobilize them both to advocate for veterans to be recruited into the PNTL, and to fan public anger at the inclusion of former POLRI officers in the PNTL and demand for new police leadership. This approach encouraged public mistrust of the PNTL and helped solidify the image of the PNTL as potentially dangerous among veterans. This politicization of the PNTL also heightened tensions with the F-FDTL, who saw these developments as the police increasingly becoming a threat to their own influence.

A brief summary of key moments in the crisis might be described around the following six steps:

The Trigger – Protests about discrimination based on origin (Westerners vs. Easterners) within the F-FDTL leads to a petition for change and eventually large numbers of soldiers leaving their posts without permission, this group came to be known as “The Petitioners.”
Tension Builds – The F-FDTL leadership offers to investigate the claims of discrimination, but orders all soldiers back to their posts for the duration of the review. Most soldiers return, but leave again when an investigation was started and these soldiers are all dismissed from the F-FDTL along with other absentees, meaning almost one third of the force was removed. This led to protests in Dili, which were fueled by a speech by President Gusmao saying he thought the dismissals were wrong.

Violence Breaks Out – During the protests, youth and gangs started to become violent, and fighting started to spread throughout Dili. Police were not able to respond effectively, and the military was called in. The military was untrained for this situation and ultimately opened fire on civilians resulting in an official death toll of five.
Backlash – This violence led to Major Reinado leading another group of armed defectors to leave the F-FDTL (some police joined him). Another protest in Gleno reacting to the civilian deaths in Dili turned violent when a government official arrived with a police guard, a police officer was stabbed to death by the crowd.
Security Breakdown – A firefight between Major Reinado's defectors and the F-FDTL caused substantial panic. Illicit weapons transfers took place including the F-FDTL distributing weapons to veterans for added support. Following that first firefight with Reinado, a group of armed police and civilians attacked the armed forces headquarters, and a group of police attacked the home of the F-FDTL commander.
Police – Military Conflict – Before international support arrived, the military (with support from some police units), disarmed police in the Dili streets and exchanged shots with other police. Finally a group of F-FDTL soldiers attacked police headquarters leading to a long firefight. UN actors managed to negotiate a ceasefire, although one F-FDTL member was killed during this time, the negotiated settlement would allow the police to leave the building if they were first disarmed. When the unarmed police emerged some soldiers opened fire and killed eight police and injured 27.

Considering the key events of the 2006 crisis, the actions of leaders seemed to vary wildly between political opportunism and crisis management. No one orchestrated the events as a whole, but different actors tried to push their advantage in those key moments when their rivals or potential allies showed weakness. As a result of this process, the Alkatiri government fell and then President Gusmao was able to develop his CNRT coalition and eventually become prime minister. The role of the military was not diminished, and in fact it emerged from the crisis with less internal dissent and a more closed circle of leaders. As for the police, the fault lines within the institution were exposed. Over the course of the crisis, various police were accused of participating in acts of violence. Some police joined the petitioners, some were openly working with the F-FDTL, and others just abandoned their posts for the relative security of home villages. So when the challenges emerged, the institution of the PNTL was easily torn apart by informal networks. This reality has increased the incentives among all actors to work toward genuine police reform, as no party wants a return to the 2006 instability, as well as increased the pressure to deepen political linkages into the police and ensure that their allies gain police leadership positions. Knowing that the PNTL is still not an institution strong enough to survive another crisis, it is logical that key actors would seek to build relationships into this institution so that in the event of another crisis they have a network to rely on.

Putting Noteworthy Trends into Context

This description of the key networks that might have a role to play in community policing going forward is only a first step in generating an understanding of the reform environment around the PNTL. During the course of the research several trends and recurring issues came out that can be discussed to add depth to this analysis, and insight into the potential obstacles and opportunities for forwarding community policing reforms.

Militarization of the police – The idea that the PNTL is becoming a more "militarized" force is becoming an increasingly common sentiment to hear in Timor-Leste, especially within the international community. While this term is commonly used, there is not generally a clear understanding of what it implies. Understanding this trend requires consideration of what the "militarization" of the PNTL means in practical terms, and whether it is possible for the PNTL to pursue "militarization" and community policing reforms simultaneously?

On the first question of what is actually meant when we refer to "militarization" it quickly became apparent that, especially when viewed from the lens of the networks of influence, that this trend was an amalgamation of three separate trends within the PNTL. First there is the discussion on militarizing the structure, culture, and chains of command that is written into the language of the 2008 PNTL Organic Law. Second there is the proliferation of highly trained specialized units. Thirdly there is the push for more offensive and powerful weapons.

An interest in the militarization of institutional culture and chains of command is driven by a perceived need to build discipline and professionalism within the PNTL. This line of thinking often comes from comparisons with the F-FDTL, who are considered to be better disciplined and more apt to follow orders. This viewpoint is expressed most vehemently by opposition leaders, those linked to the military, and those in the president's office. This type of "militarization" should not be viewed as necessarily detrimental to the cause of community police reform. The concept that you generate discipline and *espirit du corps* through hard training, rigid command structures, and strong leadership is a traditional view of police development. There is actually a strong argument that community policing can also generate better discipline and incentives for improved performance as well. Better discipline and stricter command increases top-down accountability, where as community policing can increase accountability and a sense of responsibility from the bottom up. So rather than seeing this trend as detrimental to the development of community policing, it might be seen as an opportunity if the case can be made that community policing would help achieve the desired results which are driving this form of "militarization."

The second piece of this militarization picture has been the proliferation and use of specialized, elite units. This trend may have started under the FRETILIN government, but currently it is associated with General Commander Monteiro and the Prime Minister's policy on securing the country. As previously mentioned, the use of the Special Task Force in Dili to reduce gang violence was seen as a clear success by the police and the political leadership. It sent the message that Timor-Leste could deal with security challenges themselves. Since this event, there has been increased focus on creating, developing, and equipping permanent special units based on this task force model. These units are meant to increase the capacity of the police to deal with significant security challenges, but are also aimed at raising the prestige of the service.

This trend is perhaps slightly more concerning for those desiring a growth in community policing activities by the police. In theory there is no contradiction to have the bulk of police officers take a more community oriented approach, but having some units that are less engaged in the community and focused more on reactive measures in dire situations rather than preventative policing. This is not an uncommon model, even in police services that are practicing community

policing. There are, however, risks with this approach. Among some civil society actors interviewed during research there was concern that any benefits from genuine community policing practices that could improve police-community relations could easily be undermined by special forces that continue to be threatening, confrontational, and perhaps even abusive. If community members are unable to distinguish between the different police units, then action by one will potentially taint all the others. Perhaps an even more significant challenge posed by this trend is related to prioritization and resource allocation. Rather than focusing resources on community policing training or ensuring there are resources for activities to engage communities and equipment assigned to these officers, resources are focused on developing the specialized units and their capacities.

The third piece of this "militarization" trend is the acquisition of more offensive equipment. While the desire to increase the strike capacity and prestige may be a common cause for this trend as well as the trend toward specialization, it is useful to distinguish between the two measures. While the move toward using specialized units seems to be a clear policy that has emerged from a broad cross section of the political elite, the push for more offensive weapons and equipment seems to be a more personal initiative pushed by the general commander and to a much lesser extent the prime minister. The threat of this trend to community policing might be seen as similar to the proliferation of specialized units, it is not that the service could not move toward community policing while pursuing this policy, but it sends very mixed messages and raises major concerns about priorities and resource allocation.

An important point to make on the topic of "militarization" is the history of policing in Timor-Leste and its legacy from and continuation of relationships with the police in Indonesia and Portugal. Still today special units that are developing seem largely to be modeled on the Indonesian Mobile Brigade (Brimob) as well as the Portuguese Military Police (GNR). With the Portuguese, the strong relationship with the PNTL remains in place, and is a definite influence on the manner in which the PNTL is developing. In discussions on all three types of "militarization" interlocutors pointed to examples from Portugal or Indonesia to explain the thinking behind the promotion of each trend.

Capacity Development and Emergence of Professional Police Officers – While the capacity of PNTL officers have been developing much slower than most would like, there is a small, younger generation of leaders developing who are professional police officers. This growing set of middle rank officers, including some of the district commanders and leaders of less powerful units in headquarters, are professional police officers, dedicated to improving police performance. While this group is growing, they are not organized in any way that would identify them as a clear network. Some of these officers have been building relationships through various interactions, and are often darlings of the international community, but there is no evidence that these relationships are able to affect strategy, operations, and decision-making. The presence of these individuals affects the units and districts which they lead, but has not translated into an ability to affect police and political leadership looking at wider institutional reform issues.

In interviews with some of the innovative district commanders who have shown a clear interest in community policing, they were explicit in saying that leadership in headquarters was not taking account of the lessons learned and innovations used on the ground. The top leadership

within the police service remains mostly political appointees, often with limited policing experience. To what extent these professional officers could influence policy debates most likely depends on their own association with other networks rather than through this still loose network of career police leaders. Among this younger generation of leaders, support and enthusiasm for community policing seems quite high and an understanding of community policing as a concept as well as a practice has developed. This is also the level at which genuine Timorese models or approaches to community policing are being experimented with and developed. The existence of these officers is important for the long-term future of the PNTL, but in practice many if not most of these actors have already been, or will be, co-opted into the other networks of influence that currently are much more relevant in determining changes within the police service. As it currently stands, the continued use of political appointments rather than merit based appointments to fill top leadership positions, and the well-documented troubles with the misuse of promotions within the police service make it unlikely that changes pushed from innovative officers at the ground level will lead to significant police reforms.

UNPOL departure is looming large and executive policing authority handover is already complete – Discussing the current context around police reform, it is impossible not to bring the impending departure of the UNPOL contingent into the discussion. Some of the rhetoric and fears are in fact overblown, as UNPOL's influence over executive policing decisions and overall police strategy has been diminished in recent years, something that can also be said about UN roles in day to day policing. So in many regards the departure of UNPOL units will not change the way policing is currently being carried out. What will be removed is the presence of the UNPOL forces as a kind of safety net, which has a calming effect in Timor-Leste and generates a sense of security for the country's leadership. While publicly the leadership is posturing to say that they have risen up to assume responsibility for policing and that the handover of executive policing authority has gone well, privately it is thought that there is genuine concern about the state of the security sector. Suddenly facing the reality of not having UN backup on issues of security, there are increasing incentives to reform and strengthen these institutions. This might, in theory create opportunities for community policing reforms to take hold, but understanding and support for community policing is not such that the leadership would see these types of reforms as securing the country. The "militarization" trends discussed earlier in the report seem to be the more likely types of reforms envisioned and pushed through if they are genuinely concerned about security issues after the departure of the UN. Given all of the issues involved with the transition, such as what to do with UNPOL physical resources (such as vehicles) and other issues to cover for a successful exit, the focus is clearly not on operational reform and adding new capacities, but more practical matters.

Internationals increasingly removed from security sector reform (SSR) – Local frustration with the efforts of the United Nations and the international community more broadly, especially in the security sector, is at a high in Timor-Leste. Perceived slights to local leadership and limited voice in reform processes, past poor performance, slow processes, and a host of other issues have contributed to this frustration and have led local leadership to increasingly sideline many international players. Nowhere is this more clear than in the security sector, and even within the police. The Security Sector Support Unit has very little traction in government, and even UNPOL commanders have found themselves gaining less access to key discussions on the future of the police service. A disconnect between broader security sector reform efforts pushed

by internationals and specific proposals on police reform has further limited their ability to engage on policy decisions. The general commander has largely insulated himself from the international advisors, and so much of the international engagement is at the level of exploring "entry points" in specific units rather than comprehensive engagement in strategy, planning, and overall plans for reform. This trend, which could be described as international fatigue or just natural frustration on the part of local partners, means that there is growing resistance for ideas and reforms that are perceived to originate from the international community. Given this context, it is unsurprising that community policing is regularly written off as being a foreign model irrelevant to the Timorese context.

Despite this distance between the internationals and key decision-making processes, this has not led to a drawdown in international engagement with the police in Timor-Leste. In fact as the UN prepares to depart, the bilateral donors have intensified their efforts to stake claims to supporting various reform and institutional needs. So the police support sector remains a crowded field, meaning that this sense of frustration with internationals pushing ideas onto the PNTL will most likely not dissipate. This creates challenges for initiatives to introduce more community policing reforms, as success will depend on the process and substantive changes proposed being developed within and for the context of Timor-Leste, and being perceived as relevant and locally driven.

Elections on the horizon – Looking forward to the next several years of police reform in Timor-Leste, especially from the angle of politics, a major event will be the next round of parliamentary elections which will happen by 2012. Elections are potentially important for two reasons, first as a potential security threat, and second as an opportunity or challenge for policy debate and potentially change. Elections generate challenges for any police service. Securing an election in a fragile security environment is no simple task, despite a relatively peaceful track record in Timor-Leste. There is no doubt that the police leadership and the government are aware of this, but it is unclear what their response might be. The focus on developing specialized units, including the Public Order Battalion (BPO), would seem to demonstrate that the government thinks security will come from developing police capacity to respond effectively and with some strength to threats. If specialized units are seen as the only way to make the police more effective, then getting movement on the issue of community policing will be challenging during this timeframe. On the other hand, there might be an opportunity to discuss the fact that a community policing approach will actually make the police more effective as well. The preventative aspects of community policing, and the potential for stronger relations with communities to generate early warnings for potential elections related violence and mitigate risks of escalation would strengthen police responses to potential conflict and tensions.

Another potential effect of elections on police reform processes is the potential for public discussions on policy and plans for the future for the next government are going to begin to be shaped now. FRETILIN especially seems likely to make policing a political issue going forward, and seems poised to move on demonstrating their commitment to better policing. If policing, and community policing, becomes a political issue in the build up to the elections it might ultimately have an effect on the way police reform happens after a new government takes shape. However there is also a risk that if the issue of police reform enters in any significant way into the political dialogue, it might generate strong opposition to reforms based purely on political positioning. It

is also worth noting that when elections become closer, genuine reform and change tend to become more challenging to push through. Political leadership will start focusing more on political negotiations, building support, positioning on key issues and less on more technical reform needs.

SECTION V – CONCLUSIONS: MOVING FORWARD WITH COMMUNITY POLICING

Opportunities and Challenges

Previous sections of this report have tried to introduce the key informal networks that are playing a role in shaping the development of the PNTL and analyze their stance on the future of the PNTL and the potential role of community policing. From that understanding of the police reform landscape an analysis of the opportunities for supporting the development of effective community policing, and the potential challenges that might be faced is possible.

Developing a Timorese model for community policing – Interviews with interlocutors from across the political spectrum suggest that many see community policing, as discussed at the national level, as being a foreign import to Timor-Leste. While there is certainly some truth in this perspective, there are numerous examples of work being done using a community policing approach that are based on local needs rather than international ideas of what community policing activities should be. During interviews with district commanders and the commander of the Maritime Police there were examples provided of initiatives that would fall within most definitions of community policing which they had initiated without international support.

As long as key actors immediately react to discussions on community policing by labeling it a foreign tactic designed for Western democracies, it will be a challenge to generate political traction or support on this issue. During interviews there was certainly an interest in the development of a Timorese-owned model of policing that involves community policing, but very few concrete ideas as to how such a model would be developed. In practice, the most willing partner to work with on a model would be the Community Policing Unit, but in fact efforts with and through this unit would most likely have little ultimate effect on the perspective of more influential actors or even units within the police service. The technical process of drawing up a model is far less important in this case than the generation of ownership among key actors.

In order to generate this model, the keys to success would be ensuring that transfers of knowledge are Timorese to Timorese, and the use of international experts, even those from within the region needs to be limited. The use of district commanders and others who are actually carrying out community policing activities is crucial. Another important aspect would be getting broad participation from a cross-section of important actors, targeting and involving key players from parliament, the executive, military, police and civil society and ensuring that they receive information and perhaps observe firsthand how community policing is being practiced on the ground. This should be a process of understanding what community policing approaches are already being used and having some local level success rather than trying to present this as a completely new strategy that is not understood or used. Community policing is what the best

Timorese police officers tend toward in order to best serve their communities rather than an ambition imposed by Western donors, which it is currently seen as.

No absence of support but no clear leader – Another clear conclusion that can be drawn from this research process is that there are very few actors who openly oppose community policing. There are some that would argue that the timing is too early, but even in those cases they generally also would state that community policing should be worked toward, it is just the pace of change they would question. This lack of strong opposition seems to be mirrored by a lack of strong leadership in support of community policing. In most of the interviews there were very few actors who indicated they would be willing to expend their own political capital to push community policing reforms forward.

In terms of the programmatic implications of this finding, while community policing is not a high priority among top political leadership, the issue of police performance is absolutely forefront in the minds of key leaders with the impending drawdown of the UN, potential unrest leading up to elections, and the continued lack of discipline and performance within the police. Linking community policing more effectively to these issues that are seen as being so important will be a key part of raising the level of support for these types of reforms.

Need to link community policing to improved security, prevention, as well as internal discipline and performance – Carrying on for the discussion on the current lack of leadership, the fact that policing itself is widely seen as a key issue creates opportunities. The challenge then becomes ensuring that influential actors see community policing as a means toward accomplishing the goals they set when thinking about police reform more broadly. The clear goals for police reform that seem to have been set out are to (1) improve discipline and performance of the police; (2) increase police capacity to prevent potential security threats to escalate. Interviews show that in both cases, influential actors did not associate community policing with efforts to achieve these goals that are largely shared among political leaders.

The argument that community policing, when done well, improves police performance and in itself generates a service mentality needs to be made more explicit in the Timorese concept. The development of personal integrity among members of an institution is most often approached through capacity building and education. Experience has shown, however, that incentives are generally a more important force driving individual actions than capacity. While performance standards and discipline could, in theory prompt changes, these technical systems are very challenging to overhaul and rarely produce the desired results in police services like the PNTL that suffer from impunity, politicization, and a lack of transparency and oversight. At the level of the individual police officer, building linkages with the communities they serve adds incentives to improve performance and adopt a more service-oriented mentality.

In the Timorese context community policing also has a lot to offer in terms of helping police prevent the escalation of potential security threats. Police generally get far superior access to information when community policing is effective, so that they can better understand disputes and conflicts as they arise and before they spiral out of control, which can be a problem in Timor-Leste. Also the preventative aspect of community policing is key, and when done well, can eliminate many causes of crime and conflict. In order for this case to be made, the success of

pilot activities in challenging security environments such as Gleno, Comoro in Dili, and Baucau will be key. To this point, only task forces using aggressive and sometimes violent tactics have seen marked success in reducing security threats in those particular areas.

Link to issue of police-military responsibilities and relationships needs to be considered – The clear interest of the F-FDTL in ensuring that the PNTL becomes more community oriented, as well as the noted influence of the military throughout the Timorese political landscape, would seem to make the F-FDTL commanders key allies in the promotion of community policing. Engaging with the active military on issues of police reform is not a simple undertaking. In the past, the international community has attempted to do this through pushing for a delineation of responsibilities between the F-FDTL and PNTL. This approach has been repeatedly rebuffed by the Timorese government, which now seems to reject outright the idea of delineation and thinks instead the way forward is increased cooperation. Government officials publicly suggest that the only way to reduce tensions between these two key institutions is to make them work together and build some trust. Without arguing the logic behind these approaches, with the cooperative approach there is less opportunity to use the process to prompt the military to use its influence to help move the PNTL toward a certain type of police service.

Far more likely, is that the influence of the military can be co-opted indirectly though working with the veterans. Veterans are an extremely powerful group in Timorese civil society and politics, and there are certainly connections still between the veterans and the military leadership. Veterans also tend to embrace their perceived role as the guardians of the nation, and have a particular interest in the security situation as well as ensuring that Timor-Leste is policed in a very different manner from that introduced by the Indonesians. This set of incentives and the self-perceived identity of the veterans makes them a logical potential source of support to start building pressure for genuine police reform. This is not, however, a proposition without risk or obstacles. The veterans, like the military, more generally maintain a distrust and resentment of the PNTL for reasons discussed earlier, and their own political affiliations are varied. Working through the veterans would probably be risky unless veterans groups from across the political spectrum could be engaged, otherwise the risk is politicizing the issue of community policing in such a way that builds support, but also creates opponents. It is also challenging for international actors to work directly with the veterans, and a key to success with this type of engagement would be the efforts of a strong local partner.

Developing a role for civil society – The potential of civil society to drive issues such as police reform is immense, but extremely challenging to take advantage of. There are a few actors who are monitoring security issues and human rights abuses by security forces, but their access to actually affect policy decisions is minimal. There is also not an overwhelming sense that community policing is a high priority among key civil society actors. While continuing to develop the capacity of civil society to monitor and engage on issues of safety and security is clearly an important step forward, there are perhaps other opportunities also available. There must be a key role for civil society to play in generating interest and knowledge of police reform and police issues within society broadly, as well as with various leaders. There is significant public discussion on abuse, corruption and these important issues, but little discussion on what examples of good policing exist and good policing is.

Civil society will need to be intimately involved in the development of any genuinely Timorese model for community policing. As discussed, the key to developing a workable model must be ensuring that it is shaped by Timorese voices. The less international involvement there is in generating a model, the more likely that the model will be owned and supported by Timorese actors. Civil society could play an important role in starting to shape some sense of how Timorese want to be policed, and those civil society actors monitoring security actors already might also be an important conduit for collecting good practice as well. Monitoring does not only need to seek out human rights violations and negative trends, civil society could also be an important tool for generating an understanding of the community policing related activities that some Timorese police are already doing on an ad-hoc basis.

There is more interest in status than structure – Perhaps the most significant challenge that will be faced when trying to promote institutional change within the PNTL is the simple fact that looking at the interests of the informal networks, it is less important what the institutional structure of the police is, but rather whether or not members of their networks get key roles within that structure. This is why promotion, appointment, and recruitments systems are so challenging to genuinely change within most police institutions. Within the PNTL, structures have been changing rapidly and regularly since its creation. Despite these changes, the nature of the institution has changed very little. Most international actors are extremely caught up in structure, and the technical capacity to fulfill specific roles within that structure, but as this research has begun to explore, structure matters less than influence and networks. For this reason, effective movements toward community policing are going to be made less with trainings, new units, and improved regulations, and more with changing on-the-ground practice and demonstrating to those with influence that genuine community policing changes will actually help achieve some of their goals relating to the police.

Local political dynamics – One potential shortcoming of this research initiative is that there was not sufficient time to extend analysis in detail to the subnational level. At the local level, the politicization of the police is something we have limited knowledge of. In fact the extent to which politics affects local decisions made by *suco* and *aldeia* chiefs is also an area that has not been studied sufficiently. Experience gained through pilot projects suggests that, perhaps due to the youth of the institution and its current alienation from communities, local political capture of police officers is not as much of an issue as in many other countries. The issue in Timor-Leste seems more to do with families or gangs calling on relations who happen to be police officers to get involved in individual disputes. The prevalence of these types of dynamics and the specific challenges they pose to the enhancement of community policing practices is unclear. As policing assistance projects take place, this might be an important topic for further inquiry. Recognizing this point further underscores the importance of local ownership for the success of any reforms, for international actors to understand all of the complicated relationships that shape actions and reactions in Timor-Leste is nearly impossible.

Tracking Progress toward the Institutionalization of Community Policing

The conclusions and analysis resulting from this research project have attempted to generate clarity on the political landscape in and around the PNTL. Despite this effort, when dealing with questions of motivations, political maneuvering, and the “capture” of institutions there is

generally far more information we will not have than we can glean from this kind of process. Generating a picture of the political landscape and interpreting the incentives of key actors does not create an unerring predictive capacity for practitioners, there are arrangements, tensions, values, and other variables that affect decision-making that are nearly impossible to clarify through any research process, no matter how rigorous. What this paper can hopefully do is to introduce information and analysis that, when used effectively, improves the probability that the inputs community policing supporters generate can result in the anticipated outcomes and impacts. This is an inexact science, and further learning will be needed from a process of engagement and observation, taking note of where causal relationships between inputs and outputs force us to reassess our analysis and assumptions.

Tracking the relationship between inputs, outcomes, and eventually impact, clearly requires project specific monitoring and evaluation plans. This can, however, be broadly complemented by a structure to monitor progress toward the overall institutionalization of community policing within the PNTL. The broad analytical framework presented here will clearly be weak in generating evidence of a causal link between specific initiatives and progress, but generates benchmarks which that help practitioners think beyond projects and focus on actual progress toward the goal of more institutionalized community policing. The proposed analytical framework is structured on four levels:

1. Training and capacity development;
2. Structure and management;
3. Practice and implementation;
4. Awareness/understanding of community policing among key constituencies (PNTL, government, military, civil society)

The fourth level of analysis is somewhat different from the other three, which are more technical in nature. This fourth level acts as an enabling factor for specific progress on the other three more technical sets of changes.

Training and Individual Capacity Development

There have been significant resources from the international community dedicated toward training PNTL officers. Community policing has been one area of capacity building grouped in with a large number of others and traditionally, indicators for program outputs focus on the numbers of materials produced or officers trained. The benchmarks presented here are more qualitative in nature, and focused on tracking progress on capacity building that focuses on Timorese models, practical learning methods, and the integration of community policing across trainings rather than the depth covered in a specific training. The following five benchmarks are suggested:

1. The development and use of Timorese trainers, both police and civil society, who have experience with community policing initiatives
2. The use of Timorese examples in trainings relating to community policing
3. Visits by PNTL officers (at all levels of the PNTL) to see Timorese approaches to community policing

4. Community policing approaches taught in training modules not specifically focused on community policing, both for new recruit and in service training
5. Trainings focused on specific strategies and operations in use by Timorese police rather than theory

Structure and Management

For institutionalization to occur, it will not be sufficient to simply make community policing an add-on activity for Timorese police. There will need to be a greater emphasis placed on changes to management and institutional processes. With that being said, there is no one structure for a police service or management system that should be seen as an ideal. Rather whatever systems the PNTL puts into place need to generate opportunities and incentives for officers to take a community policing approach. Five benchmarks are proposed in this area:

1. Officer performance evaluations include community policing related criteria, and promotions actually based on evaluations
2. Incentives developed for innovation and problem solving at officer and station level
3. References to community driven policing in Organic Law linked to specific regulations and directives from police leadership
4. Development of bottom up oversight mechanisms that are used by the general public
5. Evidence of success at station or district level with community policing tactics being used to consider national strategy and planning

Practice and Implementation

Changes to management and the development of individual capacities do not always mean that actual performance improves, especially with a PNTL where the formal institutional structure does not function as desired. Also, given the array of specific activities that can be carried out as part of a community policing approach, benchmarks on specific practices are often not helpful, especially given the context in Timor-Leste where community policing will only be a success when it happens without the involvement of international actors. When Timorese come to view some form of community policing as the best model for their society, and the police are adopting practices with the objective of improving their performance, that will be a success. Four potential benchmarks for the practice and implementation are:

1. Local information on incidents, disputes, tensions, etc. are collected, analyzed, and used to set local strategies
2. Police stations work with *suco* chiefs/councils to lead the development of consultative mechanisms in their communities without donor support
3. Police and public priorities on safety and security issues better aligned at local level
4. Increased activity to prevent incidents rather than relying only on reactive policing

Awareness and Understanding of Community Policing among Key Constituencies

Increasing awareness and understanding of community policing are not in themselves impacts that would improve policing performance. In light of the findings of this study, however, without increased engagement on the issue of community policing within key networks, it is unlikely institutional changes around community policing would take place. The benchmarks proposed in this area are not focused on generating support for community policing, the process of generating support is far more complex and specific to certain political moments and opportunities. Rather, this is about ensuring that key constituencies are made aware of how community policing might actually be an effective tool for improving safety and security, so that if they choose to support it they are well equipped to make a clear case for reform and have other informed constituencies within which to seek allies.

- Civil society, especially media and NGOs, are aware of successful applications of community policing approaches in Timor-Leste, especially those undertaken without direct international support
- Discussions on police in parliament, especially in Committee B, demonstrate understanding that community policing improves police effectiveness
- Discourse with police and security sector leadership demonstrates development of a Timorese model for community policing over time (less discussion of community policing as being a foreign concept)
- Increased occurrences of key political leaders raising community policing related reforms in public discourse on policing
- More *suco* chiefs and councils getting involved with the police on safety and security issues without external pressure

Conclusion

After a decade of investment in the police service, the importance of the continued development of the PNTL to the long-term stability and security of Timor-Leste remains undisputed. However, concerns about the institutional effectiveness of the police linger. Numerous splits between a number of stakeholders both national and international have emerged in the approaches being taken to support and carrying out institutional reform. This is true both in terms of the underlying theories of change being applied, and the scale of the outcomes desired. One of the key shortcomings of international support for reform to date has been over reliance on technical approaches, without sufficiently nuanced understandings of the political motivations that shape and sometimes obstruct the intended direction of change. Community policing is a prime example. Community policing is an approach that, while publicly championed by international actors and senior Timorese leaders alike, has made limited inroads in the observable practice of the PNTL. Instead, powerful individuals and groups seek to advance self-interests that directly and indirectly compete with the fundamental principles of community policing. While there is a clear role for technical assistance in institutional reform, imposing another foreign model of policing in Timor-Leste is unlikely to yield success. As the UN is expected to completely withdraw by the end of 2012, the operational approaches that will constitute a Timorese model of policing in practice will undoubtedly become clearer.

The analysis of the networks and organizations that have shaped the PNTL as an institution put forward in this paper reveal a complex set of relationships between individuals and groups within

the PNTL and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao, FRETILIN, F-FDTL, veterans, ex-POLRI, martial arts groups and gangs, and other political parties. The actions and influence of these networks has significantly influenced the PNTL. However, understanding the rough structure of these networks does not in itself generate a clear path forward for community police reform. Instead, successful change will require more in-depth dialogue, consensus building, and the encouragement of support from a range of key actors, many from within the networks identified in this report. Equally important will be the repositioning of conceptions of national interests. Reforms toward community policing, as with other approaches to police development, must coincide with the widely held Timorese desire for greater "militarization" of the police, specifically those reforms that strengthen command and control in the PNTL. This is something that is not necessarily antithetical to community policing, and in fact might be enabled in some manner by an effective and locally relevant approach to community policing. The ongoing balancing of influences and networks within and around the institution also reflects the ongoing broad process of shaping and stabilizing Timor-Leste's political settlement. As events of the past have shown, the security sector is central to this process as both a field of contestation for influence, a barometer for who is holding real power in Timor-Leste, and as a potential flashpoint for violence and unrest.

This report, through a focus on community policing, seeks to shift the discourse on police reform to be relevant in an environment driven by increasingly national reform agendas. In the past, literature on the underdevelopment of the PNTL has often focused on technical errors made by the international community, as well as lack of constructive engagement on key points between internationals and key Timorese. This focus tends, in both cases, to argue for more technical solutions to the problems, which often only cover up the lingering tensions and weaknesses within the institution rather than present lasting solutions. In fact, the great challenges that will need to be overcome are rooted much more in national political development and Timor-Leste's state-building experience. Until the PNTL as an institution is strong enough to withstand external political pressure like that witnessed in the 2006 crisis, it remains an open question whether the PNTL will be a reliable source of stability.