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CABINET SUBMISSION NO 964: ADMISSION TO AUSTRALIA OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FRETILIN

THE MINISTER

This submission is to be taken by the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee on Monday 14 February 1977.

2. You and the Minister for Immigration agreed in a discussion on 15 November 1976 that any person representing himself as a FRETILIN "Minister" should not be granted a visa to enter Australia and that requests for entry visa from any other persons claiming to be FRETILIN "officials" or office holders of any kind would be considered ad hoc. Addition of the phrase "known to be" in paragraph 13 of the submission is designed to prevent a FRETILIN "minister" or office holder entering Australia under false pretences.

3. One of the main issues involved is, of course, the long term danger to Australia, particularly as regards our relations with Indonesia, if a situation were to develop where FRETILIN leaders could come and go as they pleased. As the submission notes (paragraph II) the likelihood of FRETILIN establishing a Government-in-Exile here is small. East Timorese refugees now in Australia have generally not been politically active. Most of those with political sympathies were probably pro UDT. It should be noted, however, that press reports in Lisbon on 2 February 1977 quote a "Committee of Timorese Refugees in Portugal" spokesman as claiming that the refugees in Lisbon wished to emigrate to Australia, not for settlement, but in order to be close to their homeland, so that they would be able to struggle for its disoccupation and independence.

4. Indonesia has conveyed to us its concern that Australia should not provide a platform for what it regards as anti-Indonesian (that is pro-FRETILIN) activity especially by non-Australians.

5. Ramos Horta is the most widely known FRETILIN spokesman. Rejection of an application for entry by him would be seen in Australia and in Jakarta as another indication of the Government's firm attitude towards FRETILIN activities here. There have been indications that Horta may soon apply for entry to Australia.

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Possible Talking Points

- . Emphasise the long-term dangers of Australia becoming an established FRETILIN base. The Dutch problem with the RMS movement among the Moluccans in the Netherlands is relevant in this connection.
- . The likelihood of the East Timorese in Australia remaining quiet on the Timor issue is enhanced by preventing FRETILIN leaders entering Australia.
- . The policy described in the submission would assist in our relations with Indonesia.



(G.J. Price)
Acting First Assistant Secretary
South East Asia and PNG Division