

SITUATION REVIEW: November 2011

ISSUES TO WATCH THIS MONTH:

- Alcohol-Induced Violence
- PNTL Security Concerns
- Politically-Charged Violence
- Land Disputes

ISSUES TO WATCH

Total Reported Incidents

District	October	November
Lautem	2	2
Covalima	2	1
Dili	13	20
Viqueque	5	6
Aileu	3	7
Ainaru	9	6
Ermera	4	2
Baucau	6	5
Manatutu	4	4
Manufahi	6	8
Oe-cusse	2	3
Liquiça	5	8
Bobonaru	3	5
Total	64	77

With more than a 20 per cent rise in reported incidents between October and November, a worrying historical pattern of increased violence in many districts during the festive season appears to be continuing.

CONFLICT TRENDS

Youth-Related Violence

Youth-related incidents: 19

Martial arts-related incidents: 2



Youth dialogue held in Remexio Sub-district, implemented by the Conflict Prevention & Response Network (CPRN), facilitated by the Ministry of Social Solidarity's Department for Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion, with support from UNDP and Belun, Nov. 2011 (see details, p.3)

Many districts have again experienced violent incidents between youth groups including a notable rise in alcohol-fuelled incidents. Provocation has been evidenced at both suco and bairo levels with occurrences at seasonal parties and post sporting matches, as well as disputes regarding relationships between young people and one accusation of theft by a local youth group from another aldeia.

More positively, Martial Arts incidents showed no signs of sudden increase, with only two recorded incidents in November. These appeared to occur largely due to existing tensions between rival groups. In Fatuhada tensions continue to remain unresolved, but leaders of the Martial Arts groups in Manufahi district were able to quickly manage verbal threats and aggression, avoiding further incident escalation.



Generously supported by the
Irish Department of Foreign Affairs,
Conflict Resolution Unit.



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ISSUES TO WATCH

PNTL Security Concerns



Of particular concern this month were three incidents implicating members of PNTL in violent incidents.

The first instance resulted in the fatal shooting of a young woman who was caught in crossfire between two PNTL policemen at a birthday party in Bobonaro. Both officers have since been arrested and incarcerated in Becora prison.

In suco Dare two further incidents also took place. In the first, two policemen physically assaulted four people travelling to Aileu with all four victims reporting minor injuries. In the second instance, a local PNTL member accused a local teacher of practicing black magic and proceeded to assault the teacher with his helmet. The victim suffered minor injuries to his arm and head.

Both cases are currently under review by the PNTL National Investigation Unit with the results to be taken to the Office of the Prosecutor-General.

CONFLICT TRENDS

Alcohol-Related Incidents

As mentioned earlier, districts across the country have experienced increased youth violence resulting from excessive alcohol consumption, including three incidents in Liquica, sub-district Bazartete and one in district Bobanaru, sub-district Maliana Vila.

The incident in sub-district Maliana Vila occurred on Santa Cruz Day when intoxicated youth en route to the cemetery clashed with another group of youth playing football. The intoxicated youth were then intercepted by a member of the F-FDTL who responded with undue force resulting in minor injuries to one of the youths. The local CNJTL Coordinator assisted in resolving the situation, but the injured youth is now seeking to take the matter to police.

Crimes under Investigation

Death Investigations: three separate incidents resulting in four deaths are currently under investigation from the month of November. The first was a student found by the roadside in Manleuna near the Dili Institute of Technology (DIT) suffering fatal head wounds, whilst the second involved the discovery of a deceased member of the F-FDTL at Metiaut beach. The final incident was a suspected double murder at Beach Garden Hotel, for which two alleged suspects have been detained for questioning by police.

Additional Crimes: two incidents also occurred in sub-district Viqueque Vila, suco Caraubalho. Both cases continue to be under police investigation with the first involving as yet unknown assailants stoning a bus causing broken windows - fortunately no injuries were reported. In the second instance a house was also stoned causing significant disruption to the homeowners.

Two further incidents also occurred in Liquiça, sub-district Bazartete. The first observed members of the local community burning a recently arrived priest's dwellings to the ground - as yet the motive remains unclear. The second incident involved an attempted sexual assault of a local female youth by a male youth. Despite the matter being reported to police, the attacker continued to provoke the victim's family, including a failed attempt to injure her brother with a vehicle.

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Politically-Charged Violence

The Democratic Party (PD) recently ran its regular meeting of Congress in Covalima district, sub-district Zumalai, during which a group from the local community damaged the generator and party materials including flags. Police have been informed, but no action has yet been taken.

In sub-district Alas, party congress youth were declined permission by the Xefe Suco to hold evening festivities due to their pending school examinations. Subsequently the youth threw stones at the Xefe Suco resulting in minor facial injuries.

In Bairo Pite, Dili, the dispute between opposing ASDT factions continued, with the Francisco Xavier Amaral-led faction raiding the allegedly redundant new head office, citing a lack of recognition of the official ASDT party. The dispute is to be presented to the Court of Appeal for resolution.

Land Disputes

Disputed land is still a causal factor in a number of incidents across the country, with six as yet unresolved disputes arising between local families and their claims to land across both agricultural and residential purposes.

CONFLICT RESPONSE

Border Tensions Continue With Indonesia

A dialogue between suco Abani in Passabe sub-district and suco Sunkaen in Indonesia was held on November 19 to resolve cross-border conflict from earlier in the month. The discussion focused on plant and domestic dwelling materials being misappropriated from the border area the local Indonesian community believe to be as yet unresolved. Traditional justice was used as the basis for resolution that deemed respect be held of the borders as per international agreements between the countries. This was further supported by the General Commander, PNTL, who requested maps illustrating the agreed borders be distributed to both communities.

Conflict Prevention & Response Network (CPRN)

With support from Belun, the CPRN facilitated seminars in both Lautem Vila and Maubisse regarding prevention of electoral violence. In the first step of the reconciliation process between sucos, a seminar was also hosted in sub-district Suai Vila between suco Labarai and suco Belekasak, as well as to strengthen peace between youth and local Martial Arts groups. An October dialogue resolving a water access conflict between aldeias in sub-district Remexio and sub-district Cristo Rei was reinforced in November with a tara bandu facilitated by the CPRN and the Ministry of Social Solidarity's Department for Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion, with support from UNDP and Belun.

National Peace Building Events

The Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) both hosted peace building events in November. CEPAD's forum focused on their latest report '*Valuing the collective sacrifice of independence: bringing the national interest to the forefront in Timor-Leste*'; whilst CRS held the final of its *Dahur* dance competition between 22 aldeias across six Dili sucos.

ABOUT THIS SITUATION REVIEW

This situation review reports on key issues related to violent incidents and trends emerging from data collected through Timor-Leste's Early Warning, Early Response (EWER) system during November 2011. Belun endeavors to share information that is both up-to-date and accurate. Given situations evolve rapidly, we welcome further information which may clarify or update data acquired through EWER. Please email EWER Program Manager Bylah Da Costa: bylah.belun@gmail.com. Images © Jennifer Hill, Belun