

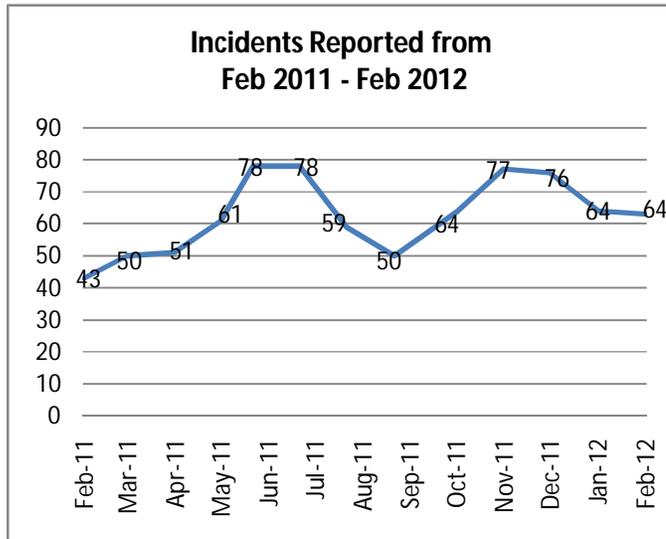
SITUATION REVIEW: FEBRUARY 2012

ISSUES TO WATCH THIS MONTH:

- Molotov Cocktail Thrown at CNE and STAE Offices
- Concern over F-FDTL and PNTL Member Conflict Involvement
- Youth-Related Violence

ISSUES TO WATCH

Total Reported Incidents



Data analysis from the 13 districts¹ indicates that there have been no significant changes in conflict dynamics month to month. Considering the approaching electoral period, this is a positive signal as there has been no significant spike in the incident numbers.

¹ In Feb 2012 the EWER program expanded to 43 sub-districts to include Nitibe subdistrict of Oecusse. Monthly Situation Reviews endeavor to oversee all 65 sub-districts.

CONFLICT TRENDS

Political Party Activities



Activities of political parties remained positive in February, largely avoiding community tension. Two candidates for presidential election, Manuel Tilman and Francisco Gomes, could not conduct their district campaign activities as scheduled due to a delay in the arrival of financial support from CNE. In Liquiça Vila campaign supporters covered a campaign banner of José Ramos Horta with a banner for Taur Maun Ruak. The matter was resolved between the two campaign teams. The number of children involved in campaign activities indicated there is still extensive civic education work required. Minor traffic infractions including absence of registration plates on state vehicles and motorcycle riders without helmets were left unattended by police.

Molotov Cocktails Thrown at STAE & CNE Offices

On the night of February 20 three incidents took place involving unknown persons throwing molotov cocktails. The first incident took place at 1.50am when an individual riding a motorbike threw a molotov cocktail into the STAE office, whilst the second cocktail was thrown into CNE's office shortly after at 2.40am. On the same day, also in Dili (aldeia bairo Formoza, suco Grisen) an unknown person threw a molotov cocktail inside the car of an UNPOL officer. The incidents remain under police investigation.

The STAE office was also a target in Lospalos during the 2007 election in which a STAE officer was murdered by an unknown person. Whilst the PNTL General Commander stated that the molotov cocktail incidents were minor cases by comparison, it remains critical to monitor the security surrounding elections. The late night timing of the latest incidents suggests a need for the offices of both STAE and CNE to have 24-hour security.

Security Actor Conflict Involvement

On February 18 in Cristo Rei subdistrict of Dili (aldeia Lao Rai, suco Kuluhun) a member of F-FDTL together with a youth physically assaulted another young man after colliding with him in a motorbike accident. The young man was injured and the case has been reported to police. Also on February 18 in Dom Aleixo subdistrict (in aldeia Zero II Bedik, suco Fatuhada), another traffic accident occurred when a member of the police hit the Xefe Aldeia of Aldeia Zero III with his motorbike. Not in uniform at the time, the assailant then stopped his motorbike and removed his helmet and proceeded to hit the Xefe Aldeia with it, who lost two of his teeth as a result. The incident was subsequently resolved through community channels.



ISSUES TO WATCH

Community Leader Conflict

In Laleia subdistrict (Manatutu), a Xefe Suco hit a truck driver when found driving at night with passengers. In Maubisse subdistrict (Ainaro), the community withheld the motorbike of a Xefe Suco because they did not agree with his use of leftover rice donated by the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS) to support vulnerable community members. The xefe gave the remaining ten sacks of rice to local road workers. In Lospalos Vila subdistrict, one young man threatened to stab the Xefe Aldeia while he facilitated a mediation case after disagreeing with the xefe's approach.

Violence In Schools

On February 4 in Baucau Vila subdistrict (aldeia Lutumutu, suco Trilolo) one 'SMA 2' secondary school student hit his teacher after the teacher cut his hair badly. Also on February 4, in Alas subdistrict (aldeia Kolo-Kau, suco Uma-Berloik), a teacher hit a student until the student's cheek bruised because the student did not follow the school rules. On February 14 in Viqueque Vila subdistrict (aldeia Manehat, suco Carabvalho) fighting between the students at Beloi pre-secondary school broke out during a party at the school. On February 16 in Vera Cruz subdistrict (aldeia Manu Fuik, suco Colmera) students from the National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL) threw stones at each other during the opening of academic orientation.

CONFLICT TRENDS

Youth Incidents (11)

Based on the month prior, overall youth-related incidents decreased from 14 to 11. However, the data indicates the number of incidents in Dili increased from 4 to 7. Incident motives included tensions due to love-interest disputes, vengeance and a football game. From these incidents, seven people were reported injured and one incident resulted in the destruction of a house. The police are investigating seven of the cases, the local Xefe Suco another, and three remain without response.

Alcohol-Fuelled Violence (9)

The linkage between alcohol consumption and violent activity continued in February. On February 13 in Lospalos subdistrict (aldeia Lilapuhu, suco Home) a group of youth assaulted each other with spears and machetes after a drinking binge. Other alcohol-related incidents during which injuries were reported also occurred in Laulara (Aileu), Laga (Baucau), Ainaro Vila (Ainaro) and Lahomea (Covalima) subdistricts.

Martial Arts Activity (3)

Post the decision in December by the Council of Ministers to suspend problem-causing martial art groups, reported incidents remain low with only three reported for the month. On February 3 in Bazertete subdistrict in Liqueça (aldeia Nartutu, suco Maumeta) eight men from one martial arts group beat one man from a rival martial arts group. On February 15 in Liqueça Vila subdistrict (aldeia Mausoi, suco Tibar) a confrontation occurred between two martial art groups. This was related to a previous incident in December last year also at suco Tibar which resulted in one man being seriously injured. On February 16, the martial arts groups continued to provoke each other, but there were no reported injuries. The police are continuing their investigation into the incidents and those involved, which include some members of the PNTL.



SITUATION REVIEW: February 2012

ISSUES TO WATCH

Martyr-Family Pension Dispute

On February 7 in Ainaro Vila subdistrict (aldeia Ainaro, suco Ainaro) one man beat and threatened his sister with a machete after she used their younger brother's martyr money. The dispute remains unresolved within the family.

Family Disputes

On February 2 in Gleno subdistrict an incident broke out at aldeia Atres, suco Talimoro, before continuing at aldeia Erbihiut, suco Lauala. A man attempted to harass a married woman - her family then retaliated by beating him until he sustained facial injuries. The case is now under police investigation. On February 25 at Passabe subdistrict (aldeia Abani, suco Passabe) an issue of domestic violence arose which then proceeded to involve the family. A house was destroyed in the process and relations between the families have soured.

Other Crime

On February 8 in Remexio subdistrict (aldeia Aimerahun, suco Asumau) a young man threatened to beat and kill an old man. In Bazartete subdistrict, fighting broke out between two women after one was found to be cheating with the other's husband. In Liquiça Vila subdistrict, a family destroyed another family's trees in their field after suspecting them of using black magic. In Ossu subdistrict two EDTL officers began fighting inside their office due to arguments over their jobs. On February 21 at Nedere School in Uatulari subdistrict (aldeia Uni-Uma, suco Vessoru), a woman stabbed another woman whom

she suspected had slandered her name. On February 23 in Laulara subdistrict (aldeia Konsin, suco Fatisi), one man, with his face covered, used a piece of wood to hit a woman with her child as they returned from the market. On February 27 in Same subdistrict (aldeia Fahiluhan, suco Hola Rua) a man used a machete to cut an old man's forehead after an argument.

CONFLICT RESPONSE

Conflict Prevention in Community

Supported by Belun, the Conflict Prevention and Response Network (CPRN) of Baucau Vila subdistrict hosted an event for 11 sucos to discuss conflict prevention through the electoral period. Presentations and discussion were conducted by STAE, CNE, PNTL, PDHJ and the Sub-district Administrator. The CPRN in Ermera subdistrict held a Tara Bandu at district-level to prevent violence and damaging environmental and agricultural practices through the promotion of traditional law. In Lautem subdistrict, the CPRN organized a seminar on how to prevent conflict through presentations from the General Commander of F-FDTL, CNE, PDHJ and DNPKK.

Peace Building Activities

During February, the National Electoral Commission (CNE) organized an event of National Unity between political parties in the districts of Baucau, Aileu, Bobonaro, Viqueque, Lautem, Manatuto, Covalima, and Dili to sign a peace pact for the duration of the electoral period. Catholic Relief Services and the Justice and Peace Commission also organized a 'Long March for Peace through Prayer in Election Time' in Dili.

ABOUT THIS SITUATION REVIEW

This document has been produced with the support of the European Union through the Instrument of Stability, GIZ and the Government of Ireland, Conflict Resolution Unit. The contents and opinions in this document are the sole responsibility of NGO Belun and CICR and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union, the Irish Government or GIZ. 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 February 2012. 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