

Protecting Civilians in an Urban Conflict

Lessons Learned from Australia's Deployment Following the Timor Leste Crisis 2006-2007

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FOREWORD

In early 2006, as the United Nations (UN) was preparing to leave after seven years, Timor-Leste, erupted into inter-communal violence. The UN took immediate action by extending its mandate and creating a new mission, but it took six months before the UN police contingent reached full strength.

The interim response from Australia and others in May/June 2006 was the deployment of an International Stabilisation Force (ISF), which comprised Australian and New Zealand military and policing personnel and was complemented by Portuguese and Malaysian Formed Police Units.

It soon emerged that the ISF was not adequately structured or prepared for a number of reasons, including the urgency of the deployment, an unclear mandate and poorly informed views of the respective roles, operational approaches and legal responsibilities of the various contributing countries and components of the ISF. This was most evident between the police and the military components. The disconnect was exacerbated by challenges associated with the nature of ethnic conflict in an urban environment, overlaid by Timor-Leste domestic political partisanship in which Australia – the primary contributing country – was seen by some Timor-Leste communities to be an active participant.

The disconnect between the military and police components was at the most fundamental level – the conceptualisation of the mission. The military component viewed the situation in Timor-Leste as one of a deficit of 'law and order' and therefore primarily a 'police' issue, rather than a 'military' issue. The police regarded it primarily as a 'peace and security' issue to be resolved initially by the military before the 'law and order' issue could be addressed. This dichotomy reflects the traditional liberal-democratic policing approach to such public order situations as inherently reliant upon the existence of a functioning criminal justice system to process arrested offenders; this system was not effective in Timor-Leste at that time. The lack of a functioning criminal justice system undermined the implementation of a coordinated military/police response to the unrest and, ultimately, the smooth transition from a 'security posture', in which the military played the primary role, to a 'law and order' posture in which negotiation, conflict resolution and de-escalation methods (adopted by liberal-democratic police as standard practice) took precedence. This created a perception among the military (as well as among the belligerents) of policing ineffectiveness.

The disconnect evident in Timor-Leste in 2006 is more than a language and relationship issue. It goes to the very fundamentals of a blended 'high-end' policing and 'low-end' military response, including the initial conceptualisation of the mission and the adequate structuring and preparation of a combined force for deployment into a complex urban environment in a volatile and poorly understood political situation. Further, the operation evidences the limitations of a liberal-democratic policing response in the absence of a functioning judicial system including an adequate detention structure. It is clear that neither a 'purely military' response nor a 'traditional liberal-democratic policing' approach was appropriate in these circumstances.

The 'gaps' identified in this paper have largely been addressed or are under active consideration by key agencies including the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Department of Defence. This includes an enhanced capability within the AFP's International Deployment Group (IDG) since 2006 and the adoption of doctrine and operating concepts that reflect the AFP's broader capability. In addition, a number of projects have been initiated and publications issued by the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) in respect of military/police operational complementarity. These developments would benefit from more active wargaming or exercising and the opportunity to 'prove' the veracity of evolving operational postures and the effectiveness of enhanced capability.

Australian Civil-Military Centre, April 2015

ACRONYMS

AFF IDG	Australian Federal Police International Deployment Group
F-FDTL	FALINTIL-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (FALINTIL-Timor-Leste Defense Force)
FPU	Formed Police Unit
FRETILIN	Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente (Revolutionary Front of Independent Timor-Leste)
GNR	Guarda Nacional Republicana (Portugal)
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INTERFET	International Force in East Timor
IPTL	International Police Timor Leste
ISF	International Stabilisation Force
JTF 631	Joint Task Force 631
Loromonu	West / Westerner (also referred to as "kaladi")
Lorosae	East / Easterner (also referred to as "firaku")
MTRC	Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion (renamed Ministry of Social Solidarity in 2007)
PNTL	Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (National Police of Timor-Leste)
RDTL	República Democrática de Timor-Leste
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
UNPOL	United Nations Police

INTRODUCTION

The protection of civilians in urban conflict environments is a dynamic of contemporary peacekeeping operations which has received far less attention than it deserves. Urban zones are fast becoming the new territories of conflict and violence and this, what has been termed, the “new military urbanism”, is recognised within contemporary military doctrine¹ as a defining feature of modern warfare and armed conflict. However, inadequate consideration of the implications of urban epicentres of conflict on the protection of civilians has been given in the context of peacekeeping operations. The specific characteristics and dynamics of violence generated by an urban environment create unique challenges for the protection of civilians and have considerable implications for how peacekeepers implement protection of civilian mandates.

The capacity of peacekeepers to protect civilians is a measure of success by which peace and stabilisation operations are measured in terms of local credibility and international legitimacy.¹ However, empirical and anecdotal research is conclusive that the central weakness underpinning protection mandates lies in the gap between the imperative to protect civilians and the practice of protection in fragile cities characterised by low and medium intensity violence.² Increasing focus is being given to the challenges for United Nations peacekeeping and stabilisation operations in urban conflict environments with lessons being drawn from Brazil's pacification operations in the *favelas* and the contribution of Brazilian peacekeepers in MINUSTAH in Haiti.³

The aim of this project was to capture specific lessons about the protection of civilians in an urban conflict setting from Australia's military and policing deployment to Timor Leste following the 2006 crisis. This ‘snapshot’ of Timor Leste between the April/May crisis in 2006 and the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007 was selected because of the challenges that the low-intensity urban insurgency and large-scale displacement presented to the Australian military and police. These challenges of mass protracted urban displacement; land disputes; and a militant and politically exploited youth demographic are likely to be recurring themes within future Australian international deployments in cases of both conflict and natural disasters within the region. Protecting civilians in urban contexts can be a highly contentious, politicised and politically manipulated, and seldom impartial exercise. Capturing the lessons learned and embedding them within the institutional culture of two vastly different organisations is a challenging but not insurmountable task. The paper offers a series of recommendations for strengthening the ADF and AFP as protection actors and argues that greater interoperability and cooperation are at the core of enhanced protection of civilians.

Australia has been engaged in over a decade of continuous Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police missions to Timor Leste since the 1999 referendum for independence. In March 2013 the Australian Defence Force drew down from Timor Leste signalling the end of the Australian-led International Stabilisation Force, and the United Nations Integrated Mission to Timor Leste which concluded in December 2012. Australia's commitment to the half-island nation on its northern reaches has not ended there. The 2013 Defence White Paper stated that Australia's second strategic interest after securing Australia is the stability and security of the South Pacific and Timor Leste.² Certainly, the ISF deployment represented a blend of military ‘low-end fighting’ and police-led ‘high-end policing’ which is likely to be the prevailing type of intervention (similar to RAMSI) within the

¹ Kevin Savage and Robert Muggah, “Urban Violence and Humanitarian Action: Engaging the Fragile City,” *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, January 19, 2012, accessed <http://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/1524>.

² The term fragile cities is drawn from Kevin Savage and Robert Muggah, “Urban Violence and Humanitarian Action: Engaging the Fragile City,” *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, January 19, 2012, accessed <http://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/1524>.

³ Per M. Norheim-Martinsen, “Brazil: an emerging peacekeeping actor,” NOREF Report, November 2012.

region. However, keeping in mind the words of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon's words, the best form of protection is prevention³ and this report will offer recommendations about *sustainable protection*.

The crisis that erupted in 2006 paralysed the Timorese state, exposed violent schisms within and between the national security forces, and precipitated the breakdown of law and order and a humanitarian crisis with the displacement of 150,000 Timorese of predominantly eastern or *Iorosae* origin. The United Nations, after successive statebuilding and transitional missions since 1999, appeared largely unaware of the political and security developments and was preparing to depart the week prior to the crisis. Within a day of the Timorese request for assistance, Australia deployed troops under *Operation Astute* as part of the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) which comprised of Australian and New Zealand military and policing personnel and was complemented by Portuguese and Malaysian Formed Police Units. UN Security Council Resolution 1677 (2006) and 1704 (2006) extended the UN's presence and sanctioned the deployment of UN Police under the newly-established United Nations Integrated Mission to Timor Leste (UNMIT). It took just under six months for the UN Police contingent to reach full strength. During those months, a low-intensity urban insurgency dominated the capital, Dili with violence spilling over into the outskirts of the capital and within the districts of Viqueque, Ermera, and Baucau, particularly. However, the ISF and the UN mission reflected the common "state-centric" approach of peace support operations and was largely Dili-focussed with inadequate attention accorded at the district and sub-district levels despite over 80 per cent of the Timorese population being rural. Certainly, the violence was predominantly urban and the ISF was ill-equipped in terms of training, resources and local knowledge to quell the communal and gang violence and protect the internally displaced population housed in camps throughout the city.

The ISF was deployed without a specific protection of civilians mandate or a mission-wide protection strategy despite the conflict dynamics, humanitarian crisis and mass displacement. Protection was couched in terms of the request to "assist in the provision of security and safety to persons and property in Timor-Leste and the suppression of violence and intimidation" (*Status of Forces Agreement*, 26 May 2006). The absence of clearly defined language, credible and achievable tasks, and an appropriate and effective protection strategy indicates a failure to understand the degree to which civilians would become both the primary protagonists and victims in the crisis. The lack of protection preparedness, planning and guidance had direct implications at the operational and tactical levels.

This paper explores the lessons learned by the ISF between mid-2006 and mid-2007. Using the case study of the ISF Joint Task Force 631 Concept for IDP Reintegration as an example of good practice, the paper explores the strategic, operational and tactical challenges and limitations and the implications for protection. Lessons learned identified in this paper include the importance of a coherent and unambiguous peacekeeping/police-keeping mandate on the protection of civilians which is supported by clear and corresponding ROEs; a more nuanced understanding of local perceptions - and realities - of the gap between 'law and order' and 'peace and security'; the need to significantly improve relations between peacekeeping forces and international actors such as humanitarian agencies at the forefront of civil protection; improved interoperability and cooperation between the military and police deployments; and, critically, in a context where both multi-national forces and 'police-keeping' forces are deployed, the urgency for a coordinated and integrated approach to civil protection.

1. The 2006 Crisis

The political, security and humanitarian crisis

The crisis paralysed the state, revealed deep fissions and weaknesses within the security sector, and fostered communal and identity divisions within Timorese society. The crisis was politically driven and its origins lay in the power struggles within the Timorese nationalist leadership that had emerged during the 1974-1975 civil war prior to the Indonesian invasion. The power struggle – and its protagonists - remained a central dynamic within both resistance and post-independence politics. The competition for influence in the new state politicised the already fractured formal security sector and fuelled the informal security sector comprising of armed and unarmed non-state actors whose legacies lay in the popular resistance and clandestine movement. The crisis quickly found its way onto the streets through the conflation and manipulation of identity (east versus west) politics with resistance allegiances. The causes of the crisis can be traced both vertically and horizontally through Timorese politics and society. At its axis was a direct challenge to the state's authority.

Three distinct yet inter-related and overlapping conflicts emerged in early-mid 2006: the political-security conflict borne out of tensions within the political leadership dating back to the early years of resistance to the Indonesian occupation; the east versus west communal conflict which occurred largely in the capital, Dili, in the western part of Timor Leste and was exploited for political purposes and driven by land and property rights⁴; and the martial arts and ritual arts gang conflict whose origins lay in the former clandestine and resistance networks or semi-religious animist cults and who served as proxies for state or political parties. Most significantly, the crisis demonstrated the fallibility of the international statebuilding exercise and the overwhelming legacy and influence of complex resistance politics borne out of the twenty-four years of Indonesian occupation as a central challenge to the new Timorese state. The 2006 International Crisis Group report observed that the roots of the 2006 crisis reach back to “battles and betrayals...within Fretilin...just before and during the Indonesian occupation” and the “entire crisis, its origins and solutions, revolve around less than ten people, who have a shared history going back 30 years.”⁵

The catalyst for the crisis is often viewed to be the dismissal of approximately 600 predominantly western soldiers, known as the ‘petitioners’ due to their grievances, from the Falintil-Forças Defesa Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) by then Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri in March 2006. Underlying power struggles quickly emerged, however, and on March 23 Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao challenged the authority of the Chief of the Defence Force, Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak, legitimised the concerns of the westerners and suggested that if unresolved, it would appear that F-FDTL was just for easterners who believed that only they had fought the war, and all the others, ‘from Manatuto to Oecussi’ were ‘militia’s children.’⁶ This statement galvanised the east versus west tensions and the initially sporadic house burnings in Dili intensified leading to easterners fleeing their homes and seeking refuge in the capital. Paradoxically, statements by the Prime Minister that only the ruling Fretilin government could ensure stability raised suspicions that Fretilin had provoked the rioting for political means.⁷

Demonstrations by the ‘petitioners’ on 24 April outside the Palácio do Governo in the capital, Dili, erupted into an anti-government protest fuelled by the involvement of the ritual arts group, Colimau 2000. On 28 April, Alkatiri ordered the now Chief of F-FDTL (then Acting Chief), Colonel Lere, to deploy the army onto the capital's streets to restore order. The deployment of the F-FDTL, whose ranks were dominated by easterners, and with little experience controlling civil disturbances, exacerbated tensions and enflamed the communal violence. During the month of May, numerous clashes between F-FDTL and the national police force, the Polícia Nacional de Timor Leste (PNTL) occurred, approximately five

civilians were killed and the burning of over hundred houses in the capital. On 25 May, Several shootouts took place in Dili between F-FDTL and their armed civilian supporters, and PNTL, culminating in an F-FDTL assault on PNTL Headquarters. F-FDTL Commander Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak negotiated the release of approximately 85 PNTL officers. As the unarmed police officers were escorted on foot to the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) by UN Police (UNPOL), F-FDTL soldiers opened fire killing ten unarmed PNTL officers and injuring over thirty.

By the end of June 2006, the extent of the humanitarian crisis became clear. Thirty-seven civilians had died and an estimated 150,000 people, or 15% of the population, was displaced in Dili and the districts. House burnings, displacement, and communal and gang violence continued throughout 2006 and early 2007. Episodes of civil unrest continued until mid-2007 following the formation of the AMP Government and government initiatives to 'buy peace' through compensation packages targeting both the victims and the spoilers of the conflict.

Over the following year and a half, the numbers of IDPs reduced significantly to approximately 20-25,000 in Dili and 30,000 in the districts. Secondary displacement occurred as large numbers of IDPs left camps due to attacks on the camps. After consistent attacks in August and September on the Obrigado Camp (opposite the United Nations compound), 2,300 IDPs fled to other camps or other destinations, including the eastern districts. Many IDPs remained in camps because of the poor security environment and the perceived lack of coherent options provided by the government and the international community. For those IDPs who had returned home or relocated to the districts, there were ongoing security concerns and a deep frustration over incoherent government policies on compensation and the 'right of return.' The movement of IDPs to the districts exported the conflict outside Dili as discontent grew between the IDPs who received food aid and other services, and the communities who felt the strain of an increased population but did not receive assistance from the government. The IDP crisis therefore created a second layer of division and conflict between communities and IDPs over access to resources and services that extended beyond the initial east-west rift.

Urban violence and displacement: The protection context

Urban conflict environments are a dynamic of contemporary peacekeeping operations which has received far less attention than is warranted given the complexities of urban violence. Civilian and military defence planners and strategists have acknowledged the rise of the "new military urbanism", and contemporary military doctrine recognises that urban zones are becoming the new territories of conflict and violence⁴ and are a defining feature of modern warfare and armed conflict.

There are specific challenges attributed to urban conflict which are in part related to urbanisation and rapid social change but are also indicative of the concentration of power and resources as well as the contrary dynamics of disempowerment and poverty.⁵ Conflict and violence can be both sporadic and short-lived, but it can also become chronic contributing to an "architecture of fear."⁶ It is also critical to note that urban and rural environments are not two distinct environments and that there are many forms of exchanges

⁴ Kevin Savage and Robert Muggah, "Urban Violence and Humanitarian Action: Engaging the Fragile City," *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, January 19, 2012, accessed <http://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/1524>.

⁵ Elena Lucchi, "Humanitarian actors' struggle for access, impartiality, and engagement with armed non-state actors, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection," 13 January 2014.

⁶ Tunde Agbola, (1997) *Architecture of Fear: Urban Design and Construction Response to Urban Violence in Lagos, Nigeria*. Badan: African Book Publishers.

between them, notably migratory, economic and financial, as well as flows of information and resources⁷ (both licit and illicit).

Less consideration has been given to the implications of urban and peri-urban epi-centres of conflict on the protection of civilians in the context of peacekeeping operations. The specific characteristics and dynamics of violence generated by an urban environment create unique challenges for the protection of civilians and have considerable implications for how peacekeepers implement protection of civilian mandates. The capacity of peacekeepers to protect civilians is a measure of success by which peace and stabilisation operations are measured in terms of local credibility and international legitimacy.⁸ However, empirical and anecdotal research is conclusive that the central weakness underpinning protection mandates lies in the gap between the imperative to protect civilians and the practice of protection in fragile cities characterised by low and medium intensity violence.⁸

The complexities of urban displacement became a central dynamic of the crisis and a leading challenge to protection. Makeshift camps sprung up around the city where the displaced had sought refuge in churches, convents, the national hospital, parks, military barracks, adjacent to the capital's international airport and opposite the United Nations compound and the port. By June 2006 fifty-six internally displaced persons (IDP) camps housed approximately 67,916 IDPs and a further 78,431 IDPs were displaced in the districts.⁹ The capital became 'highly polarized and physically segregated'¹⁰ with camps of predominantly easterners scattered amongst western communities and neighborhoods. The internal displacement persons (IDPs) camps became epicenters of violence due to communal and gang violence between the IDP camps and neighboring communities. In February 2007 an additional 3,000 displaced persons moved into camps as a result of communal or gang violence. UNMIT estimated almost half of the violence could be attributed to "group violence."¹¹

The internal displacement crisis was protracted by the ongoing violence which ensured a continued cycle of forced and voluntary displacement with the newly displaced seeking refuge and secondary displacement occurring as a result IDPs moving between camps due to violence, alternative secure locations, and their home districts. The IDP camps also represented a 'safety valve' with populations often increasing prior to or during times of potential or real insecurity. Over the following year and a half, the numbers of IDPs reduced significantly to approximately 20-25,000 in Dili and 30,000 in the districts. For those IDPs who had returned home or relocated to the districts, there were ongoing security concerns and a deep frustration over unclear government policies on compensation and the 'right of return.' The movement of IDPs to the districts exported the conflict outside Dili as discontent and social jealousies grew between the IDPs who received food aid and other services, and the communities who felt the strain of an increased population coupled with pre-existing socio-economic pressures but who did not receive assistance from the government. The IDP crisis therefore created a second layer of division and conflict between communities and IDPs over access to resources and services that extended beyond the initial east-west rift. Moreover, ambiguous land and property rights rapidly emerged as one of the principle underlying causes of social jealousy and a catalyst for communal conflict.

Responding to and containing violence in an urban heavily populated environment was an enormous challenge for the ISF. As Colonel John Hutchison, Commander of the JTF 631, noted:

⁷ M. Harroff-Tavel, "Violence and humanitarian action in urban areas: new challenges, new approaches," *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 92 No. 878, June 2010, 332.

⁸ The term fragile cities is drawn from Kevin Savage and Robert Muggah, "Urban Violence and Humanitarian Action: Engaging the Fragile City," *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, January 19, 2012, accessed <http://sites.tufts.edu/jha/archives/1524>.

“...soldiers operated in urban areas and villages...such terrain consists of areas that are open and act as maneuver corridors and engagement areas, whilst others are more restricted. These inhibit movement, deny observation, and limit the effectiveness of sensors. The result is that soldiers can be drawn easily into close combat without warning...during the initial days of the deployment...there were running battles between youths and coalition forces in the confined streets of Dili.”¹²

Two additional dynamics arose out of the protection environment. First, the politicisation of protection and second, the fluidity of civilian identity in conflict scenarios.

The politicisation of protection

The politicisation of the displacement crisis and the humanitarian response had significant implications for protection. IDP populations were viewed by political interests as political commodities due to the partisan affiliations of the IDP camps. As the displacement crisis became entrenched, elements within the IDP camps became increasingly politicised and recalcitrant. In several cases groups of IDPs became armed, youths moved between camps to bolster 'combatant' numbers, or sought, or were forced to accept, the protection of armed groups. Neighbourhoods established popular security groups or supported, often under duress, particular gangs to guarantee their security. During periods of intense violence, the roads to the international airport and the National Hospital were impassable, ambulances refused to travel to certain areas for fear of reprisal resulting in the unnecessary deaths of children, women in labour and those injured in the fighting, and water and rice deliveries to IDP camps were blocked - often by IDPs themselves engaged in a game of brinkmanship with the Government and international humanitarian agencies. The politicisation of protection had implications for the ability of the international security forces to effectively engage with camps that were politically radicalised.

Civilian or combatant? The protection dilemma

A central dynamic of the crisis was the role of civilians in the violence. Civilians in conflict environments can have multiple identities which shift in accordance with the need to protect and survive. A civilian can be an IDP, a victim, a belligerent, a spoiler, or a combatant balancing a complex array of allegiances, loyalties and demands. The fluidity of civilian identities has implications for protection and reinforces the critical need for international security forces to understand the protection context. As a senior ISF police official observed:

‘Timorese in t-shirts...can’t tell who is good and who is bad.’

Australian Federal Police Officer,
Protection Working Group
Meeting,
Dili, 28 September 2006.

“In those early days the priority was to respond to calls for assistance, mainly to riots, serious assaults/homicides and fires. As much priority as could be given to protection of civilians was offered. To be honest when several hundred people are throwing rocks and several hundred others, who tend to reciprocate in kind it is difficult to sort out who is right and who is wrong.”¹³

Timor-Leste is a post-conflict society steeped in a legacy of guerrilla warfare, clandestine networks and popular resistance as a result of the Indonesian occupation from 1975-1999. The direct and indirect participation of civilians in the 2006 crisis was therefore informed by recent historical and socio-political experience. The complexities of identity and conflict were recognised by the Commander of Joint Task Force 631 then Brigadier (now MAJGEN) Mick Slater, in his statement in June 2006:

“We came into a society on the brink of civil war. Although ethnic divisions were very emotive to the local population there was no visible distinction between them in our eyes. So we had very complex human terrain, with gangs, ethnic groups, mutinous soldiers and police alongside those who considered themselves loyal to the government. Overlaying all that, we had a potential humanitarian disaster with large numbers of people seeking refuge in temporary camps.”¹⁴

As the displacement crisis became increasingly politicized and entrenched, IDP camps such as the Jardim IDP Camp, the National Hospital IDP Camp, and the Airport IDP Camp, which were deemed ‘high risk’ camps, became armed. The population of the Jardim IDP Camp, for example, swelled with the arrival of trouble-makers, gang members, and extortionists who held the vulnerable camp population virtually hostage. Contingents of young men moved between the Jardim IDP Camp and the Metinaro IDP Camp (opposite the F-FDTL barracks in Metinaro, east of Dili), to bolster easterner numbers during the height of the civil unrest in late 2006 and early 2007. In early September UNPOL sought an extension of their mandate and authorisation from Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta to conduct an operation to enter the Jardim IDP Camp and the potential use of force in a civilian ‘humanitarian’ area to ‘weed out’ the criminal elements. The operation resulted in several arrests and protests to Prime Minister Ramos Horta by the Jardim IDP Camp Manager that several IDPs had been ‘abducted’. The operation caused significant concern amongst the humanitarian community.¹⁵ This led to intense debate amongst the international humanitarian community about the definition of civilian and combatant and reinforced the growing perception amongst the international security forces that IDPs were trouble-makers.¹⁶

From the perspective of elements of the international police and military, the circumstances of displacement and the internally displaced themselves in Timor-Leste was increasingly understood in the context of ‘refugees, bludgers and criminals in tents’¹⁷ and in terms of context and protection. However, despite the reduction of IDPs in late 2006 and early 2007, negative depictions of the IDPs became increasingly prevalent as the IDP crisis appeared beyond immediate resolution, and empathy diminished. The fact that groups of IDPs were belligerents in the cycle of violence that saw camps and neighbourhoods pitted against each other in street battles, further supported the attitude amongst many international police and military that the IDPs were not ‘real refugees.’ The markets which sprang up around the IDP camps were perceived as evidence of the IDPs refusal to leave the camp and return home. Rather they were a response to the localisation of violence which prevented easterners from travelling to markets dominated by westerners.

The perception of IDPs as belligerents or bludgers was perpetuated by allegations that that the ISF and UNPOL (Australians in both cases) were aggressively asking IDPs at the Airport Camp in Dili if they were ‘FRETILIN,’ ‘*firaku*,’ or ‘*kaladi*.’ The overt political and ethnic categorization of IDPs by the peacekeeping forces was inappropriate and reflected a widely-held attitude that the IDPs were trouble-makers rather than civilians in need of protection. This in turn inflamed the perception that the Australian forces were anti-easterners and, specifically, anti-FRETILIN due to a common belief that the Australian Government was a central figure behind the removal of Alkatiri.

2. The International Stabilisation Force

It is widely acknowledged that the rapid deployment of the Australian-led International Stabilisation Force (ISF) prevented the crisis from potentially spiralling into a civil war.¹⁸ The ISF consisted of an initial forward deployment of Australian Defence Force Battalion Group of 1300 troops who landed in Timor Leste on 26 and 27 May and at full strength numbered 2500 Australian military and 250 policing personnel. The ISF subsequently included New Zealand military and police and, under the Trilateral Agreement, were complemented by Formed Police Units from Malaysia and Portugal. This paper focuses on the ADF *Operation Astute* and the Australian Federal Police International Deployment Group.

Agreement between the Timorese and Australian Governments on the nature and scope of the intervention force¹⁹ and the forward deployment of the ADF BG occurred almost concurrently. This in part explains the broadness of the mission objectives and the absence of specific guidance on the protection of civilians, the disarmament and detention of combatants, as well as well-defined Rules of Engagement. The Arrangement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Timor-Leste, signed on 26 May 2006, defined the objectives of the mission as follows:

- a. "assist Timor-Leste in the restoration of security, confidence and peace in Timor-Leste including through assisting in re-establishing and maintaining public order;
- b. assist in the provision of security and safety to persons and property in Timor-Leste and the suppression of violence and intimidation;
- c. as necessary, assist in the evacuation of Australian nationals and nationals of other third countries including personnel of the United Nations;
- d. at the request of the United Nations Mission in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) protect and support UNOTIL in carrying out its tasks; and
- e. facilitate humanitarian assistance operations."²⁰

The rapid deployment of the ISF had several critical implications in terms of the protection of civilians. First, the ISF "went in heavy to intimidate and limit casualties"²¹ thereby reducing the risk of further clashes between the F-FDTL and the PNTL. According to an ADF official, the operation was initially viewed as an evacuation operation with the expectation that the ISF would be in-country for a few days to "put a lid on it".²² There was a clear perception in Canberra that the crisis could be resolved swiftly and decisively. This was reflected in the clear disjuncture between planning at the strategic level (comprehensive assessment of the context and the creation of a clear and achievable mandate that matched the mission with the appropriate resources); operational planning (capabilities and force structure) and tactical-level planning (as dictated by the needs on the ground). The speed with which the ISF deployed and the assumptions which informed the deployment had implications for protection preparedness and capabilities.

The objectives of *Operation Astute* were to:

- "assist the Government of Timor-Leste to facilitate evacuation of Australian and approved foreign nationals as necessary;
- stabilise the security situation and facilitate the concentration of the various conflicting groups back into safe and secure locations;
- and create a secure environment for the conduct of a successful dialogue to resolve the current crisis."²³

No Explicit Protection Mandate

The ISF mandate did not contain clear or specific guidance on the protection of civilians. A senior defence official and member of the CDF Strategic Command Group in 2006 stated that the protection of civilians was neither a strategic or military objective but rather a condition that would result as a consequence of law and order and security.²⁴ The protection of civilians was therefore regarded as a product of stabilisation efforts rather than the necessary means to achieving durable peace.²⁵ As a consequence, the mandate did not contain explicit protection language. Instead, protection was couched in terms of:

“action will include assisting in the provision of security and safety to persons and property and the suppression of violence and intimidation.” (Status of Forces Agreement: 25 May 2006).²⁶

The language of the mandate is broad and ambiguous and the lack of a specific protection imperative had direct consequences in terms of operational and tactical guidance. The Rules of Engagement (ROEs) were similarly broad due to an anticipated need for a wide set of powers to authorise action to defend civilians and detain belligerents however because the operation was regarded as a non-combative evacuation operation,²⁷ there was little guidance on the use of force in the context of the protection of civilians. Moreover, the absence of specific protection language is a reflection of weaknesses within force doctrine in relation to an understanding of protection from a strategic, operational and tactical level. As a senior defence official suggested “you don't protect civilians by going in and just protecting civilians, you protect civilians by dominating the space.”²⁸ Establishing a protective environment is critical however and these activities must be incorporated into an integrated civilian, military and policing approach. Most significantly, due to the high level of expectations as a consequence of the local legitimacy accorded the enormously popular INTERFET, local perceptions on the part of the Timorese population that the ISF was failing to protect civilians (and property) damaged the Australian reputation immeasurably.

The primary focus on “keeping F-FDTL and PNTL apart”²⁹ as the principle strategic objective reflected a linear understanding of the crisis and the lack of awareness about the unfolding security situation on the ground. By late May, there was significant internal displacement within in Dili and escalating communal and gang-related violence which according to several Australian Government officials, “had not been anticipated.”³⁰ Given geographical proximity, historical relationship, Australia's experience leading the 1999 INTERFET mission, its diplomatic presence, substantial aid cooperation programs, and continued engagement in Timor Leste through both military and police bilateral assistance programs and successive United Nations missions, the question must be asked as to why there was such a deficit in local knowledge. The lack of local knowledge is explicitly addressed by the JTF 631 Commander Brigadier Mick Slater in his statement:

“..the situation that we faced in the first five days here this time was, in some significant ways, more complex and uncertain than the situation we faced in 1999....there was no cohesive force on the ground that could guarantee security while we attempted to get a firm foot in place and there was far more violence within Dili...

...the range of actors with arms of varying forms – from military assault weapons through to ...swords, machetes and even darts fired from slingshots – was quite bewildering. ...the complexity was increased because many of the institutions of state had collapsed. We had few reliable, legitimate sources of information about the range of actors rampaging through Dili when we arrived.”³¹

The absence of explicit protection language in the mandate can also be attributed to the assumption that the operation would transition quickly from military to police-led. According to an Australian Defence Force legal advisor, the crisis was viewed as a law enforcement scenario and not an armed conflict which in his view impacted on the relevance of the international legal framework that informed protection under the Law of Armed Conflict.³² Furthermore, as the mission transitioned to a police-led operation, ADF protection of civilians activities became subservient to Australian Federal Police (AFP) policing activities which regarded protection of civilians in terms of the prevention of criminal acts against civilians with the response based in law enforcement.³³ Consequently, belligerents were regarded as criminals and not combatants.³⁴ As Australian Federal Police Commissioner, Mick Keelty, stated 'You see the displaced people—the challenge is to normalise [security] as quickly as possible because the social and economic challenges are hard enough without these security problems.'³⁵

Deployment Patterns and the 'Peacekeeping Landscape'

According to then ISF/JTF 631 Commander, Mick Slater, the JTF 631 "very quickly sought to dominate the environment through aggressive patrolling" in order to "reassure the population and establish psychological ascendancy over the gangs and criminal elements which had begun to operate with impunity....[and] to raise ... situational awareness through intelligence-led operations."³⁶ The JTF 631 did however take several days to build up its capability at two key sites (the International Airport and the Seaport) prior to deploying into Dili's neighborhoods and surrounding areas which was met with criticism by Timorese and internationals alike.

There was however a gap between the ISF interpretation of 'area security' and the expectations of the Timorese population. The confusion may have resulted from inadequate communication in particular with the IDP camps, where a specific policing response, as opposed to military, was seen as the requirement by the humanitarian community. As the example of the Central National Pharmacy IDP Camp demonstrates, there was a disjuncture between the expectations of protection amongst the IDPs and the ability of the ISF to provide security. Following the initial ISF deployment in late May, the Timorese Government requested a static security post be established at the Central National Pharmacy warehouse. At that stage the site was not an IDP camp however the presence of the Australian forces resulted in IDPs seeking refuge in the compound. In mid-July the ISF withdrew the security section from the warehouse effectively leaving it without any form of security despite individual IDPs receiving ongoing threats and intimidation.³⁷ In response to concerns raised by the NGO Site Liaison Supervisor, the JTF CIMIC team provided basic repairs to the fence to prevent incursions; re-established the pre-existing security guard system; providing extra attention by JTF patrols at night; and visited the camp the morning and evening for the following five days.³⁸

The lack of a military or policing presence and the desire for regular police patrols was frequently reiterated at meetings between the CIMIC Unit and communities throughout Dili.³⁹ The request for increased and more-proactive patrolling was also regularly raised at humanitarian coordination and protection working group meetings throughout 2006.

On several occasions, the ISF were prevented from entering IDP Camps by elements within the camps. This had significant implications on the ability of the ISF to protect civilians within the camp itself. In late 2006 following the murder of an IDP from the Obrigado Barracks IDP Camp opposite the UN compound, camp leaders refused the AFP investigation team entry and government advisors negotiated a team of non-Australian police had to be assembled. Similarly, the ISF faced considerable opposition from the Airport IDP Camp following the deaths of two IDPs at Camp in late October 2006 which were wrongfully attributed to the

ADF. The ISF was banned from entering the camp and a sign on the camp fence stated: 'TARIK MILITAR AUSTRALIA' (Australian Military Keep Out). In response, the ISF requested holding a dialogue with the Airport IDP Camp and offered to establish a 'buffer zone' of 20-25 metres around the camp.

The inability of the ISF to contain the violence was acutely apparent in October 2006 when fighting erupted between the Airport IDP Camp and neighbouring villages forcing the closure of Dili's International Airport and Comoro Road, the main route leading to the Airport for a week.⁴⁰ This weakened the mission in the eyes of both the 'spoilers' and the wider civilian population. The fact that the street battles were fought on the one kilometre stretch of road between Timor Lodge, where the AFP were based, and the International Airport cast considerable doubt over the AFP's ability and capacity to control the civil unrest. The perception amongst the local population that the peacekeepers had no control over their area of operations further weakened the mission's legitimacy and authority.

Protection Pillars: Local Legitimacy, Credibility and Consent

Local legitimacy, credibility, and consent are critical pillars of protection and key to the effective implementation of protection activities. Central to this is the management of the local population's expectations (including perceptions of safety and security). The failure to manage and meet protection expectations had a negative impact on the legitimacy of the ISF.

The ISF inadvertently became part of the conflict dynamic and consequently lost legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of the local population, particularly amongst the IDP population. From August 2006, the peacekeepers became unwilling and unwitting participants in the east-west dynamic and the political contest between FRETILIN and opposition parties. This heavily compromised local perceptions of the ISF's neutrality and impartiality. The ISF sought to offset this by taking out advertisements in a local newspaper that stated 'The ISF is Neutral' and 'We do not favour any group or political party.'⁴¹

Accusations of the ISF demonstrating bias towards westerners and against easterners (the majority of the IDPs) was part of a broader political destabilising agenda that sought to discredit the ISF. In August 2006 the Australian commander of the policing contingent, Steve Lancaster, stated he was 'concerned about some rumours of international police taking sides, supporting one group over another.'⁴² Although the accusations were politically motivated, they were exacerbated and compounded by operational challenges. As the 2006 International Crisis Group report notes:

Many in Dili in 2006 faulted the international forces in their first few months on the ground for being too slow to respond to calls for help and too lacking in good intelligence to prevent attacks or identify perpetrators. The perceived slowness to respond, when most of the attacks in the capital were led by *loromonu* youths, reinforced perceptions that the Australians were partial towards the latter, in line with an anti-Alkatiri stance.⁴³

As the following example illustrates, the ISF was ill-equipped to respond to the urban violence. Responding to an attack on the Jardim IDP Camp by western neighbourhoods, the AFP entered the camp to question the IDPs involved in the fighting and take witness statements. Alerted by police sirens and scouts, the belligerents melted away into the back streets. Confusion arose over the expectation that the AFP would pursue and arrest the attackers which, without accurate intelligence, the AFP was unable to do. The IDPs perceived the inaction as evidence of the ISF's pro-western bias.⁴⁴ Frustrations over inaction and perceptions of bias gave rise to false allegations that the ADF had prevented wounded

IDPs from leaving the camp to seek medical treatment and that the AFP had destroyed religious objects in the process of searching IDP tents. These incidents significantly impacted on the ISF's legitimacy and relations between the IDPs and the ISF worsened.

The ISF's credibility was further weakened by its inability to effectively respond to the violence. In October, the ISF increasingly came under attack from gangs.⁴⁵ The public statement by the ISF Commander Mick Slater, that the 'ADF are the biggest gang in town',⁴⁶ did little to help local perceptions of neutrality. The allegations of bias continued to gain currency and were reinforced by a series of key incidents. In October 2006, then Chief of F-FDTL, Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak (now President of the Republic) claimed to have been mistreated twice at an ISF checkpoint in Taci Tolu when he was asked for identification. Taur Matan Ruak accused the Australian forces of taking sides in the conflict, called for an investigation into the behaviour of Australian troops, and criticised the peacekeepers' inability to control the violence and Australia's refusal to operate under UN command.⁴⁷ Then Commander of the ISF, Brigadier Mal Reardon, responded to the allegations by stating that the Australian troops were conducting themselves in a neutral and impartial manner and that the anti-Australian sentiment was 'orchestrated' and 'developed specifically to target us' [Australians].⁴⁸ Taur Matan Ruak toned down his remarks and in a slightly less provocative statement, claimed that he was calling for an investigation so that the 'prestige of the Australian force can be recovered' although he maintained his position that the Australian forces had failed because six months after their arrival, Dili still 'looked like a cowboy city'.⁴⁹ In November 2006, the President of the Parliament, Francisco 'Lu Olo' Guterres was reported as saying that the Parliament was receiving daily complaints of abuse by Timorese civilians against Australian soldiers to which Prime Minister Ramos Horta responded by condemning the allegations as a smear campaign.⁵⁰

Although the anti-Australian sentiment was politically motivated,⁵¹ it had direct ramifications on the ISF's ability to engage with the local population, gain local consent and obtain intelligence critical to establishing a secure environment and the protection of civilians. As a member of the ISF stated 'certain people tried to use us as a scapegoat. It gained some traction in small parts of the community.'⁵² Reports that ISF personnel had questioned IDPs about their political affiliations (namely, if they were Fretilin) and allegations that the ISF had beheaded several IDPs from the Airport IDP Camp exacerbated tensions. The JTF CIMIC team, in response to the strong anti-Australian feelings in the Airport IDP Camp, began a series of ad hoc meetings with the IDPs to foster better relations, however the meetings ceased after two weeks. In March 2007, unable to contain the violence, UNPOL handed security primacy back to the ISF for 72 hours. During the 72 hours, the ISF responded to a security incident at the Airport IDP Camp, were threatened and consequently shot and killed one IDP and wounded three others. The incident raised concerns amongst the humanitarian community over the appropriate use of force in the vicinity of an IDP camp.⁵³

The perception that the ISF was biased towards the western population and operational limitations which impacted on the ISF's ability to respond to violence, resulted in the loss of credibility and led communities to rely on informal security networks from neighborhood security groups to martial arts and ritual arts groups/gangs. Both the Timorese Government and the ISF received frequent requests from neighborhoods and villages in Dili to support community-based security mechanisms. For example, the Beto community requested financial support, logistical support, communications equipment, and direct communication links to the International Stabilisation Force.⁵⁴ The request was refused by the Timorese Government. By contrast, the local 'neighbourhood watch' group in Kampung Alor offered their services to the ISF in 'deputy sheriff' type role.⁵⁵ The ISF met with the group and came to a de facto policing arrangement in which the group were given very narrow parameters in which to operate thereby limiting their authority, while still providing the sense of ownership that they required. Interestingly, the number of minor incidents increased once they had their 'jurisdiction' – the rationale for the Timorese Government's refusal to support such initiatives.

This dependency increased the vulnerability of civilians and heightened the need for protective strategies and activities borne out of an understanding of the local context.

Protection Capabilities

The capacity of the ISF to protect civilians was also influenced by two factors: (1) force protection; and (2) force capabilities. The ISF's emphasis on force protection created a tension with its ability to protect civilians and property in accordance with its mandate. High levels of force protection hindered the ISF's ability to engage with the local population as well as respond to incidents of violence. The dilemma between force protection and the protection of civilians is further complicated by the fact that peacekeepers are increasingly being pulled toward more engagement in the areas of governance, humanitarian action, and human rights, and pushed towards using more force in conflict zones. There are trade-offs within this continuum, however, doing everything may result in few things being done well and effectively; doing a few central tasks may be effective but insufficient to meet a mission's objectives. In some situations, peacekeepers will need to choose between supporting "humanitarian space" and offering direct physical protection to a population in need.

The ISF's approach to force protection was mixed. The Australian Defence Minister Brendan Nelson was quoted as stating that "if the life of an Australian soldier is being threatened or fired upon, they will use an appropriate level of force to protect themselves, to protect Australians, foreign nationals and innocent Timorese."⁵⁶ Alternatively, the decision by Major Michael Stone, that "most of the time I didn't wear a flak jacket and I never carried a gun. I think that had a positive effect on my role and perception and image within the community and it certainly helped with trust"⁵⁷ demonstrated the benefits of a low-key defensive posture.

The AFP, however, were particularly challenged by their inability to uphold force protection measures. This was due to the AFP being deployed within inadequate logistics and equipment including radios, vehicles, and personnel. In mid-2006, the AFP were called out to between eight and ten incidents per night which were ambushes.⁵⁸ In one incident, the AFP responded to assistance requests from the Airport IDP Camp, were drawn in close to the camp's gate, and ambushed by a crowd of IDPs who stoned the officers and cars. Several officers were badly injured, vehicles were severely damaged, and the attack could have had tragic results without the arrival of the Portuguese Formed Police Unit (FPU), the paramilitary-styled GNR. The AFP's inability to contain the civil unrest contributed to a perception amongst AFP officers of being under attack.

The lack of sufficient assets clearly impacted on the AFP's ability to protect civilians and property. In contrast, the lack of appropriate assets impacted on the ADF's ability to respond to the nature of urban violence. The ADF were equipped with heavy assets better suited to warfighting operations than civil unrest and low-level gang insurgencies. It was clear that the ADF required more versatile and better suited equipment in operations other than war.

ADF - AFP Cooperation and Interoperability: the Implications for Protection

A critical issue that emerged in the initial days and weeks of the ISF deployment was the issue of cooperation and interoperability between the ADF and the AFP. As Harris and Jackson note, the difference between cooperation and interoperability is subtle but important.⁵⁹ Cooperation refers to the police and military working together to achieve a common goal often ad hoc and local and task oriented; and interoperability refers to the ability of the two organisations to work together as a result of formally aligned, integrated or exchangeable processes, systems of services and consequently having a more enduring effect.⁶⁰

Cooperation and interoperability between the ADF and the AFP was a challenge in Timor Leste. At the time, there was no inter-agency doctrine although the 2007 review of interoperability between the Australian Department of Defence and the AFP resulted in the signing of a *Memorandum of Understanding on Interoperability between the Department of Defence and the Australian Federal Police* in September 2008.⁶¹

This had protection implications at the doctrinal, strategic, operational and tactical levels. As a result of the relatively smooth transition from a military-led operation to a police-led operation in the Solomon Islands,⁶² it was assumed that a similar transition would take place in Timor Leste. Moreover, in post-conflict environments where there has been a cessation of outright violence, filling the 'public security gap' is critical and one that defence personnel are not equipped or trained for. As the former UNMIT DSRG and Resident Humanitarian Coordinator and current Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Finn Rieseke Nielsen commented "protection is difficult for an army to do...they are not equipped...protection is more traditional police work which is why the UN mission evolved into a police-led mission."⁶³

It was clear that the nature of the urban violence necessitated a policing response however it also became clear that the AFP lacked effective response mechanisms. It was clear that the military had been pulled off the streets too quickly. ISF Commander Brigadier Mick Slater acknowledged that the violence necessitated the need for the military to adopt policing-style tactics rather than acting in a purely military capacity and reiterated the need for actual police by stating that 'what we need are police who know how to do policing activity.'⁶⁴ Operational effectiveness was further compromised by the need to resolve Interoperability issues between the two forces on the ground.

The handover over of security primacy from the ADF to the AFP at the end of July, beginning of August was hampered by the length of time required by the AFP to build up its capacity and capabilities in theatre.⁶⁵ This included not only police personnel, but also logistics, vehicles, and communications⁶⁶ thereby emphasising the imperative for appropriately resourcing contingents prior to deployment. Initially, the AFP were limited in developing a 'response-based policing approach' and were on occasion unable to enter violent areas of Dili due to poor logistical support. The delays impacted on public perceptions of the ISF⁶⁷ and on the ISF's ability to respond to security incidents. The period of deployment of the full UNPOL force took just under six months. This created a public security gap as a consequence of the deployment gap between the arrival of the Australian military and the arrival of the policing contingents which had significant ramifications for how the ISF was perceived. The first commander of the AFP contingent in Timor-Leste in 2006, Steve Lancaster, stated before an Australian Senate hearing in 2007:

"that was the first major lesson that we learned--to shorten the gap between the ADF and the AFP responses in areas like East Timor...we have to have the right tools to enable us to bridge the gap between an ADF response and a police response. You want to demilitarise that zone as quickly as you can. If the community look out their doors and all they see is military, they do not start getting that feeling of security and that we are on the right path."⁶⁸

The ADF were required to respond to civil disturbance incidents in lieu of a police presence. A Timorese youth worker summed up the frustrations felt by many as they witnessed the destruction of their homes by gangs: 'You sent troops here to watch houses burn ... [but] the Australians always arrived too late...they never try and defend us.'⁶⁹

As a consequence of the deployment gap, the ability to restore law and order and bridge the enforcement gap was significantly weakened. This resulted in belligerents and criminals not

being arrested, a situation further compounded by the weak judicial system in Timor-Leste which acted as a 'revolving door.' Detainees were frequently released after 72 hours. As a result victims and witnesses to crimes were discouraged from making formal complaints for fear of retribution. The AFP was severely hindered as their practices were 'reliant on a judicial system that did not exist' and because they could not engage with victims, witnesses and the legal system due to language barriers. Communities

As Vice Chief of the ADF, Lieutenant General Ken Gillespie, stated in 2007 before an Australian Senate hearing:

One of the issues that we had there at the time was not that the police were to look on; they were there to help us effect arrests...Many of the issues that we had in a law and order sense were about riot control or crowd control. That is not a military function; it is a police function. But we did not have that police function in the police contingent there.⁷⁰

Whilst there was consensus between the ADF and the AFP on the need to protect civilians, the absence of force doctrinal and operational guidelines and a mission-wide protection strategy ensured that there was a lack of a coordinated and coherent protection plan. Not surprisingly, the ADF viewed protection from a military perspective with military solutions and the AFP from a public security perspective and the conflation of protection activities with community policing. As the head of an ISF policing contingent observed: "The difference between protecting civilians and community policing is complex. By achieving the second the first ultimately results."⁷¹ The JTF CMOC unit handed over CIMIC (including protection) activities to the AFP at the end of July, of which the core activities centred on the IDP Camps. In comparison to the JTF's pro-active engagement in the humanitarian response to the IDP crisis, the AFP did not have a distinct strategy beyond the implementation of community policing. The AFP disbanded the IDP Liaison Unit in late August, returning the officers to general duties. This decision was met with frustration and disappointment⁷² and signalled a shift in focus to broader public security concerns. Despite the apparent lack of overt prioritisation of the IDPs, former AFP Dili District Commander, John Ballantyne, believed that the AFP were better suited to undertaking IDP-related activities than the ADF.⁷³

The cornerstone of the ISF's strategy towards assisting the return and reintegration of IDPs was community policing.⁷⁴ However without a contextually-appropriate civil-policing approach that informed community policing in Dili, it was unclear how the ISF would support the return and reintegration of IDPs. As an Australian defence analyst noted, the policing requirement in Timor-Leste is 'a cop in the market not two guys in a patrol car.'⁷⁵

3. The JTF CIMIC Concept for IDP Reintegration

The urban displacement dynamic, the growing militancy of the larger heavily politicized camps, and power struggles within the camps which resulted in key individuals controlling food deliveries and access to services, hastened the need to facilitate the return, reintegration or resettlement of the IDP population. The impact on the daily lives of IDPs and Dili residents had tragic consequences in a number of cases. Access to the National Hospital was reduced due to the presence of the IDP camp in the hospital grounds and frequent attacks occurred on those seeking medical services thus discouraging many from seeking medical help. In several cases this resulted in the unnecessary deaths of infants in child birth, resulted in discussions around the establishment of a “safe corridor” or “humanitarian corridor”.⁷⁶ In other instances, hospital ambulances refused to attend incidents for fear of attack. Movement across Dili was also restricted as civilians feared crossing gang boundaries as the contest for territory across Dili captured a significant proportion of the population.

Ongoing instability underpinned the refusal by many IDPs to leave the camps. Concerns ranged from issues of justice, impunity, weapons amongst the civilian population, unresolved land and property issues, and the influence of these issues on east-west tensions. The IDPs and receiving communities sought a ‘security guarantee’ from the Government and the ISF resulting in the development of ‘police posts’⁷⁷ in key neighborhoods similar to those that existed during the Indonesian occupation.

From June to August 2006 the JTF 631 CIMIC team became actively involved in seeking a solution to the IDP crisis. The head of the JTF CMOC unit sat on the high-level inter-agency working group tasked with resolving the IDP crisis.⁷⁸ In response to a call by the Minister for Labour and Community Reinsertion, Arsenio Bano, for a national plan to assist the safe and voluntary return or relocation of IDPs, the JTF submitted the *CIMIC Concept for IDP Reintegration*.⁷⁹ The JTF Concept Paper recognised that IDPs would not return home without the restoration of basic security and intended to convey five central messages: IDPs needed to return home for the country to move forward; IDP camps are difficult to provide security for without the normal community structures that support positive law and order outcomes; the return to the traditional village structure to support security and stability is paramount; IDPs are creating inequitable distribution of food, water, sanitation and health support; and the longer IDP camps remain, the harder it will be for IDPs to return home.⁸⁰

The JTF approach for reintegration had two critical elements. First, the approach shifted the focus from the IDP camps back to the communities. This contradicted the humanitarian response which centralised around the camps. The CIMIC team recognised that normalisation needed to occur at the community level and that continued humanitarian assistance (such as food distribution) to the camps would further protract displacement.⁸¹

Second, the JTF approach recognised the role of traditional authority in maintaining law and order⁸² and identified that the politically-charged IDP camps were subverting community-based power structures. The introduction of democratically-elected IDP Camp Managers – an NGO initiative – ignored existing traditional power structures amongst the IDP populations and amplified the politicisation of the camps.

The JTF approach, and specifically the assistance and direction of the CIMIC team, was critical in the success of the initial pilot IDP return exercise.⁸³ The Metiaut IDP Camp on the eastern outskirts of Dili was chosen as the first camp to “return home” under the Timorese Government’s “Simu Malu e Fila Fali” (Mutual Acceptance and Return) policy for return, reintegration or relocation.⁸⁴ The selection of the camp was both political and practical. Located metres from then Prime Minister Jose Ramos Horta’s residence, the camp housed a

small number of IDPs (approximately 368), the IDPs originated from one neighbourhood and there were few security incidents although security concerns did remain strong. By September-October 2006, Metiaut IDP Camp was the first of the 56 camps in the capital to close. All the IDPs had voluntarily returned home or relocated to the districts. The pilot was considered a success however the lack of adequate protection monitoring of returnees undermines the premise that the long-term outcomes of the pilot were either sustainable or a success.

The humanitarian community's reaction to the JTF's CIMIC Concept Paper and subsequent involvement was mixed. Initial objections arose out of fears that the ISF was encroaching on humanitarian space which would militarise humanitarian assistance and potentially compromise the neutrality of the NGOs.⁸⁵ NGOs were concerned that the JTF was seeking a military-centric solution to the IDP crisis which would counter and potentially undermine protection principles.⁸⁶ There was a widely held perception amongst the NGOs that the ISF regarded the IDP camps as a security issue not a protection issue.⁸⁷ The level of goodwill and cooperation that was established between the JTF CIMIC team and their humanitarian counterparts was largely due to personal relationships. Involvement of the ISF decreased from September 2006 onwards following the departure of the head of the CIMIC team.

There was also initial concern within the ISF that the CIMIC initiative was mission creep and there was a strong reluctance to encroach on humanitarian activities as "that was seen as the role of the UN agencies and international humanitarian community."⁸⁸

4. The Evolution of Protection Practice on the Ground

The absence of large-scale violence in Timor Leste during 2006 and 2007 should have afforded those deployed with the opportunity to better learn and integrate the lessons of protection in a low-intensity urban conflict with the protracted internal displacement of tens of thousands. In a number of cases, however, opportunities to capture lessons were lost and the practice of protection failed to evolve further contributing to the lack of protection preparedness and awareness.

In one such example, following the breakdown of relations between the ISF (primarily the Australian military and police), and the Airport IDP Camp – one of the largest epicentres for neighbourhood versus camp violence – an Australian police officer championed civil-policing relations and led weekly meetings with the Airport IDP Camp managers. The meetings ceased at the end of the Australian police officer's rotation, however, and relations deteriorated to the extent that, in early 2007, Australian police officers were ambushed at the Airport IDP Camp.

5. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

a. A Protection Mandate and Clear Operational Guidelines

The ISF was deployed without an explicit protection mandate and clear operational guidelines on how to protect civilians. Without a mission-wide strategy on protection, there was a lack of coherence between the ADF and AFP's protection activities and a lack of coordination with other protection actors and agencies on the ground. This is particularly important where there is an absence of common doctrine between the ADF and AFP.

b. Develop Joint ADF-AFP 'Doctrine' or 'Guidelines' on Protection of Civilians

Cooperation and interoperability between the ADF and the AFP in response to the protection of civilians would be better enhanced by the development of a shared doctrine or field guidelines that can be operationalized, explains the capabilities and responsibilities of each institution, creates a shared protection language, and relates a joint-agency approach to the activities and responsibilities of other protection actors. This would better enhance complimentary cooperation between the AFP and ADF. There is a key requirement for ADF and AFP to work closely together. Their ability to work collaboratively becomes very transparent on operations, especially when mixed messages emanate from their respective HQ or staff. This can be a source of exploitation by protagonists as well as those who wish to criticise JTF operations.

c. A Whole-of Government, Whole-of Agency Approach to Protection

The effective fulfilment of a protection of civilians mandate requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-agency approach that integrates the "3Ds" (defence, diplomacy and development). On the ground, coordination between the ISF, DFAT and AusAID was disparate. Australian diplomatic representatives and AusAID officials rarely attended the humanitarian coordination or protection working group meetings. Despite existing bilateral programmes in the defence, justice and policing sectors, there was no integration of existing knowledge or creation of a common strategy to achieve the ISF's objectives despite the fact that the capacity building of key sectors ran parallel to the ISF's mandate.

In 2010 the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) recommended that AusAID develop a whole-of-government policy on the protection of civilians and establish a dedicated Humanitarian Protection Unit within AusAID stating that the Australian Government needs to have a broad understanding and consistent, whole-of-government approach to Protection of Civilian (PoC) issues.⁸⁹ An integrated protection plan that coordinates military, policing and civilian activities under a coherent objective with clear guidelines.

d. Strengthened CIMIC Capabilities

The JTF 631 CIMIC team's positive engagement with the Timorese Government and humanitarian actors in developing a viable solution to the IDP crisis demonstrates the importance of strengthening ADF CIMIC capabilities. CIMIC capabilities in the ADF should be mainstreamed rather than remain as a predominantly reservist capability. Embedding civilian protection specialists with CIMIC teams

e. Understand the Local Context and Localise Protection

The ISF lacked critical knowledge about the local context which had implications for the ISF's ability to develop proactive and preventive protection strategies. At the operational

level, the ISF lacked language skills, cultural awareness, and an understanding of the key players and conflict dynamics. There was insufficient knowledge transfer between rotating contingents.

Protection of civilian activities must be localised in recognition that community engagement and ownership is essential. Communities are often viewed as 'objects of protection, rather than agents of protection.'⁹⁰ Local ownership of community-based protection strategies is critical to ensuring support.

Greater understanding of the local context will also enable forces to engage with the most influential local actors. These actors are not always the most obvious ones. Nor are the necessarily the most palatable.

f. Engaging with Non-Governmental Organisations Is Essential

NGO and IO are often well integrated and accepted members of local communities. They have often well-established networks and a thorough understanding of local nuances that enable them to better understand consequences of well-intended actions. Military forces need to appreciate and respect their status as members of local communities. Their engagement can be just as important as dealing with local authorities. In some cases they may offer a more neutral and balanced perspective of local situations.

g. Sustainable Protection

Soft protection measures are integral to durable solutions to sustainable protection. Sustainable protection refers to the safety of civilians *after* the mission's departure. This means that the ultimate end state objective of a peacekeeping operation should include protection mandates that assist in creating an enabling environment for the host nation to protect its citizens without international intervention.

h. Specialised expertise in urban conflict environments and the specific POC requirements

It is highly likely that the ADF and the AFP IDG will be increasingly engaged in urban conflict environments with a mandate for protection of civilians. It is critical therefore to develop or engage with specialised expertise on the specific POC requirements and dynamics that are unique to the urban conflict environment. This has implication for Humanitarian and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations also.

END NOTES

- ¹ Martin Fischer, Issue Paper: Protection of Civilians in the Context of Peace Operations, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, June 28, 2011, p. 3.
- ² Australian Defence White Paper, 2013, p. 25.
- ³ Ban Ki Moon, Cyril Foster Lecture: "Human Protection and the 21st Century United Nations," Oxford University, 2 February 2011.
- ⁴ Andrew Harrington argues that property grievances underlie the east-west divide stating that 'while perceived injustice regarding land and property... can be very dangerous, it becomes even more so when merged with issues unrelated to land'. See Harrington, 'Ethnicity, Violence and Land and Property Disputes in Timor-Leste,' *East Timor Law Journal*, 2. 2007, (7), p.10. Harrington describes the mobilisation of regional identities during the crisis as a phenomenon of 'vehicling' in order 'to carry out alternative purposes not per se related to such identities.' The issue of land and property rights became a central factor preventing IDPs from returning home.
- ⁵ International Crisis Group, *Resolving Timor-Leste's Crisis*, 2006, pp. I & 1.
- ⁶ President Xanana Kay Rala Gusmao, Palace of the Ashes Speech, 23 March 2006.
- ⁷ 'Alarico Ximenes: Political leaders should be careful with statements,' *Timor Post*, cited in UNOTIL Daily Media Review, 25-27 March 2006.
- ⁸ Martin Fischer, Issue Paper: Protection of Civilians in the Context of Peace Operations, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, June 28, 2011, p. 3.
- ⁹ Figures based on UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates as of 13 June 2006. UNHCR did not undertake a standardized registration of IDPs immediately following the establishment of the IDP camps. IDP numbers continued to fluctuate throughout 2006 and early 2007 following spikes in violence. The lack of accurate data caused many problems for the delivery of services to the camps, such as food distribution. The ADF conducted their own assessment of IDP numbers at night which provided a more accurate estimate of the number of camp inhabitants.
- ¹⁰ International Crisis Group, 'Resolving Timor-Leste's Crisis', Crisis Group Asia Report No. 120, 10 October 2006, p.16.
- ¹¹ UNMIT Security Briefing, Joint Operations Centre, 14/02/2007.
- ¹² Colonel John Hutchison, The Lessons of 2006. Army Operations in East Timor and the Solomon Islands, *Australian Army Journal*, Vol IV, (2), pp.97-98.
- ¹³ Email communication with Superintendent Grant O'Fee, 15 November 2011.
- ¹⁴ MAJGEN Mick Slater interview, "Point Blank – An Interview with Brigadier Mick Slater, Commander JTF631", *Australian Army Journal*, Volume III, No 2 Winter 2006, p. 12.
- ¹⁵ Interview, Finn Rieske-Nielsen, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMIT, Dili, 5 September 2011.
- ¹⁶ Protection Working Group Meeting, Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion, Dili, 28 September 2006.
- ¹⁷ Telephone Interview, Australian Federal Police Officer, 7 September 2011.
- ¹⁸ Interviews with Timorese and international government and non-government actors, Dili, October-November, 2011. As a former advisor to the Timorese Government in 2006 stated: "we may not have liked the Australians coming...but we also knew the situation would have got much worse if they hadn't." Interview, Dili, 15 November 2011.
- ¹⁹ On 24 May Timor Leste's then Foreign Minister, Jose Ramos Horta, requested assistance from the Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and the following day President Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister Alkatiri and the President of the National Parliament, Francisco "Lu Olo" Guterres, formally requested Australian military intervention ensuring the deployment's legality and legitimacy.
- ²⁰ Arrangement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Timor Leste ("the Arrangement") for the Deployment of Visiting Personnel to Timor Leste, set out in a note from the Government of Australia to the Government of Timor Leste dated 26 May 2006, constituting the Status of Forces Agreement for the deployment. The letter accepting the note and Annex constituting the Status of Forces Agreement ("the Arrangement") was signed by Foreign Minister Jose Ramos Horta and provided to the Government of Australia on the same day, 26 May 2006.
- ²¹ Interview, Michael Pezullo, former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence, Canberra, 23 September 2011.
- ²² Interview, Australian Defence Force official, Canberra, 22 September 2011.

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- ²³ ACM Angus Houston, CDF, Update on Operation Astute, 1200 hrs Friday 26 May 2006, Media Briefing.
- ²⁴ Interview, Michael Pezullo, former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence, Canberra, 23 September 2011.
- ²⁵ Fulfilling the Promise of Protection, p.11.
- ²⁶ Arrangement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Timor-Leste ("the Arrangement") for the Deployment of Visiting Personnel to Timor-Leste, set out in a note from the Government of Australia to the Government of Timor-Leste dated 26 May 2006, constituting the Status of Forces Agreement for the deployment.
- ²⁷ Interview, Captain Robert McLaughlin, Canberra, 24 September 2011.
- ²⁸ Interview, former defence official, Canberra, 23 September 2011.
- ²⁹ Interview with former defence official, Canberra, 23 September 2011.
- ³⁰ Interviews, Canberra, 23 September 2011.
- ³¹ MAJGEN Mick Slater interview, "Point Blank – An Interview with Brigadier Mick Slater, Commander JTF631", *Australian Army Journal*, Volume III, No 2 Winter 2006, p 10.
- ³² Interview with former Australian Defence Force legal advisor, Canberra, 24 September 2011.
- ³³ Interview with former Australian Defence Force legal advisor, Canberra, 24 September.
- ³⁴ Interview with former Australian Defence Force legal advisor, Canberra, 24 September.
- ³⁵ Mick Keelty cited in Peter Hartcher, 'No quick fix: police in Timor to stay, says Keelty,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, June 6, 2006,
<http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/police-in-timor-to-stay-keelty/2006/06/05/114935.htm>.
- ³⁶ MAJGEN Mick Slater, "Point Blank", p. 10.
- ³⁷ CIMIC NOTES, KAMPUNG ALOR, 18 JULY 2006.
- ³⁸ CIMIC NOTES, KAMPUNG ALOR, 06 AUGUST 2006.
- ³⁹ Interview with former ISF member, Dili, 18 November, 2011.
- ⁴⁰ 'Fighting forces Dili Airport to close', *ABC News Online*, 25 October 2006,
<http://www.abc.net.au/newsitems/200610/s1773244.htm>.
- ⁴¹ Guide Post Magazine, 'The ISF Is Neutral,' Advertisement, International Stabilisation Force, Edition 4, Dili, Timor-Leste, December 2006.
- ⁴² Jerry Norton, 'International police in East Timor neutral – commander,' *Reuters*, Dili, 14 August 2006.
- ⁴³ International Crisis Group, *Resolving Timor-Leste's Crisis*, 2006,p.19.
- ⁴⁴ Briefing Note, Minister of Labour and Community Reinsertion, RE: Recent Attacks on Jardim / Seaport IDP Camp, Dili, 01/09/2006.
- ⁴⁵ In one incident, gang members shouted 'Aussies go home,' as they stoned the Australian force's vehicles. Lindsay Murdoch, 'Dili gangs turn on Australian forces,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 October 2006, <http://www.etan.org/et2006/28/27/dili.htm>.
- ⁴⁶ Cited in UNMISSET briefing, Dili, Timor-Leste, September 2006.
- ⁴⁷ Anne Barker, 'Anti-Australian sentiment felt in Dili,' *ABC AM*, 28 October 2006,
<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2006/s1775713.htm>. Murdoch, 'Australia has failed: Timor army chief.'
- ⁴⁸ Anne Barker, 'Anti-Australian sentiment felt in Dili,' *ABC AM*, 28 October 2006,
<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2006/s1775713.htm>.
- ⁴⁹ Murdoch, 'Australia has failed: Timor army chief.' That month, the President of the Parliament, Francisco 'Lu Olo' Guterres called for Australian troops to be replaced by UN forces. 'Top E Timor MP demands troops out,' *The Australian*, 31 October 2006.
- ⁵⁰ Anne Barker, 'E Timorese campaign against Aust troops,' *ABC Online*, 1 November 2006. Anti-Australian sentiment was also driven by comments such as those by retired Portuguese General Alfredo Assuncao, former chief of staff of the 2000-2001 UN Mission in Timor-Leste, who described Australia as 'the main enemy of the country [Timor-Leste]'. The General claimed that 'what interests the Australians most is oil and gas. So what better way to control these enormously rich resources than to be physically present and control the country's political system.' 'East Timor's main enemy

Aust: General,' ABC Online, 24 June 2006,
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200606/s1670775.htm>.

⁵¹ The quick deployment of Australian troops in May was seen as evidence that Australia was behind the coup to remove Alkatiri from power. International Crisis Group, *Resolving Timor-Leste's Crisis*, 19.

⁵² Major Michael Stone, 'The Peacemaker,' ABC Story 2007.

⁵³ Interview with Keryn Clark, former Country Director, Oxfam, Dili, 11 September 2011. Oxfam provided the Airport IDP Camp with water.

⁵⁴ Briefing Note, Minister of Labour and Community Reinsertion, RE: Simu Malu - Beto Community Meeting, Dili, 27/08/2006.

⁵⁵ CIMIC NOTES, KAMPUNG ALOR, 18 JULY 2006.

⁵⁶ ABC Online, 'Troops to use 'appropriate force' in E Timor,' ABC News Online, 26 May 2006, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200605/s1647898.htm>.

⁵⁷ Major Michael Stone interviewed in 'The Peacemaker', *Australian Story*, ABC, 9 April 2007, transcript, <http://www.abc.net.au/austory/content/2007/s1893449.htm>.

⁵⁸ Telephone interview with Australian Federal Police officer, 5 September 2011.

⁵⁹ Vandra Harris and Aaron P. Jackson, "Learning from Each Other's Language: Doctrine and AFP-ADF Interoperability," *Security Challenges*, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Summer 2011), p.106

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Australian Department of Defence and Australian Federal Police, *Memorandum of Understanding on Interoperability between the Department of Defence and the Australian Federal Police*, signed 26 September 2008.

⁶² ABC News Online, "More police needed in E Timor, Ellison says," *ABC Australia*, June 2, 2006. Available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitem/200606/s1654264.htm>. Notably, in his article 'Helping a Friend. An Australian Military Commander's perspective on the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands,' (*Australian Army Journal*, 11, (2), Autumn 2005, p. 49) the former Commander of the third rotation of the CTF, Lieutenant-Colonel John Hutcheson noted, 'the RAMSI approach was designed along single agency lines, with civil, police and military planning staffs not situated together ...the resulting 'stovepiping' of information and activity created significant interoperability issues.'

⁶³ Interview with Finn Rieske-Nielsen, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMIT, Dili, 5 September 2011. In 2006 Rieske-Nielsen was the UN Resident Humanitarian Coordinator.

⁶⁴ 'Brigadier rules out 'kicking arse' in Dili,' ABC Online, 5 June 2006.

⁶⁵ The AFP took over security patrols from 31 August with the JTF in support.

⁶⁶ This includes the 'JTF Hotline' which frequently went unmanned and was eventually replaced by the 'NGO Hotline' following extensive complaints that calls for assistance went unanswered. Interview with former CARE NGO worker, Dili, 10 October 2010.

⁶⁷ CIMIC CHATREP G12 1810451 JUL 2006. At several community meetings, village chiefs expressed disappointment that there was no police (AFP) presence with the CIMIC team given that the problems being faced were "police-type problems".

⁶⁸ Commander Steve Lancaster, *Hansard*, 25 July 2007, p. 9.

⁶⁹ Ian McPhedran, 'Mobs battle on Dili's main road,' *Herald Sun*, 1 June 2006, <http://www.heraldsun.news.com.au/printpage/0,5481,193232268,00.html>.

⁷⁰ Lieutenant-General Ken Gillespie, *Hansard*, 24 July 2007, p.23.

⁷¹ Email communication with Superintendent Grant O'Fee, 15 November 2011.

⁷² Telephone interview with Australian Federal Police officer, 4 September 2011.

⁷³ Telephone interview with AFP Superintendent John Ballantyne, former Dili District Commander, November 2011.

⁷⁴ *International Police in Timor-Leste. Transitional Community Policing Plan Phase 3*, Dili, 20 October 2006.

⁷⁵ Interview with Australian defence analyst, Canberra, 25 September 2011.

⁷⁶ Protection Working Group Meeting, Dili, 17 August 2006.

⁷⁷ Project 'SER', *Selective Enforcement to Restore Public Security And Facilitate the Resettlement of IDPs*, United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), 12 October 2006.

⁷⁸ The Working Group on the Coordination of the Safe and Sustainable Return of IDPs. The WG was chaired by the Minister for Labour and Community Reinsertion and included a representative from IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, INGOs, the Church, national NGOs, and the ISF.

⁷⁹ Concept papers were also submitted by IOM/CICR, UNHCR and Austcare.

⁸⁰ *CIMIC Concept for IDP Reintegration*, Concept Paper, Joint Task Force 631, Dili, 20 June 2006. Involvement of the ISF dwindled from late 2006 onwards reflecting the level of frustration felt by the ISF who increasingly began to question the legitimacy of the IDPs.

⁸¹ Interview with Keryn Clark, former Country Director, Oxfam, Dili, 11 October 2011.

⁸² A diagram illustrating the tensions between the traditional village structure and the IDP Camp / village structure can be found in Colonel Brian Cox, *A Concept for IDP Reintegration, Fila Fali Ba Uma Ho Pas (Returning Home Safely)*, PowerPoint presentation, 2006.

⁸³ Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion, *Action Plan for the Working Group on the Coordination of the Safe and Sustainable Return of IDPs*, Dili, 15 July 2006.

⁸⁴ *Simu Malu and Fila Fali, Policy Framework for the Return of IDPs in Timor-Leste*, Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Dili, August 2006.

⁸⁵ Interview with Finn Rieske-Nielsen, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMIT, Dili, 5 September 2011; telephone interview with former NGO country director, 9 September 2011.

⁸⁶ Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion, *Humanitarian Coordination Meeting Minutes*, Dili, 27 July 2006.

⁸⁷ Interview, UNMIT, Dili, 5 September 2011. A common complaint amongst NGO participants at the weekly humanitarian coordination meetings was that the ISF and IPTL representatives would leave immediately after giving the security briefing.

⁸⁸ Interview with Australian Defence Force personnel, Canberra, 22 September 2011.

⁸⁹ Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), *Evidence Brief 2. Ten Essential Steps Towards Development Effectiveness*, 2010, pp.13-14.

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Protecting civilians in an urban conflict lessons learned from Australia's deployment following the Timor Leste crisis 2006-2007

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