

This multilingual collection of articles is in chronological order.

Miánmar espulsa Timor-Leste nia representante tanba kazu krime funu



Nasaun Sudeste Aziátiku ho ema millaun 50 resin hetan rahun tanba funu sivil, no sei laiha votasaun iha área sira ne'ebé kontrola hosi faksau rebelde sira. Imajen Franse 25/AFP.

DILI, 16 Feveiru 2026 (TATOLI) – Junta Miánmar iha Domingu, 15 Feveiru, fó-sai kona-ba ejesaun ba representante másimu Timor-Leste nian iha nasaun ne'e, hafoin grupu defensor direitu nian fó-sai katak Dili loke ona prosesu jurídiku hasoru militar tanba krime funu nian.

Militar Miánmar nian ne'ebé hadau poder iha golpe Estado ida iha tinan 2021, iha década barak nia laran hetan akuzasaun ba abuzu direitu sira, liuliu alvu ba minoria étnika sira nasaun nian.

Nasaun agora daudaun defende nia-an hosi prosesu iha Tribunál Internasionál Justisa nian tanba alegasaun sira jenosídiu nian hasoru minoria rohingia ne'ebé maioria musulmanu.

Maibé Organizaun Direitu Umanu Chin (CHRO) hatete iha fulan ne'e Timor-Leste loke ona nia kazu rasik hasoru junta tantu krime funu no krime kontra humanidade.

CHRO ne'ebé representa minoria étnika xineza Miánmar nian hatete katak “nomeia ona prokurador sénior timoroan ida hodi haree ba arkivu kriminal” ne'ebé apresenta hosi organizaun.

Deklarasaun junta nian hatete katak, nomeasaun prokurador ida ne'ebé fó-sai hosi Díli hodi investiga kazu ne'e hanesan “deziluzau boot ida.”

Hateten katak enkargu ba asuntu sira Timor-Leste nian konvoka ona iha loron-sesta ne'e no hetan semana ida hodi sai hosi Miánmar.

Tuir CHRO, kazu hasoru junta inklui “evidéncia irrefutavel” violasaun grupu nian, masakre ida ba ema na'in sanulu, omisídiu ba responsável relijiozu sira no atake aéreu ida iha ospital.

Organizaun ne'e hatama keixa tuir prinsipiu jurizdisaun universál, ne'ebé permite ba tribunál doméstiku sira atu julga ofensa internasionál sira.

Kazu ne'e tensaun diplomátiku ne'ebé aumenta halo nasaun rua iha bloku Asosiasaun Nasaun sira Sudeste Aziátiku nian (ASEAN, sigla inglés) hasoru malu.

Timor-Leste foin maka tama iha bloku ne'e iha Outubru 2025, sai hanesan nia membru ba dala-11.

Deklarasaun hosi junta akuza Timor-Leste viola artigu sira hosi karta ASEAN nian ne'ebé “subliña importáncia hosi defende respeito ba soberania no laiha interferéncia.”

Junta uluk espulsa diplomata prinsipál Timor-Leste nian iha fulan-Agostu 2023, tanba enkontru ida ne'ebé nia governu hala'o ho administrasaun sombra bandu ida ne'ebé harii hafoin golpe Estado.

Fonte: CNA

ASEAN sei la sertifika sondajen eleisaun iha Miánmar



Ministru Negósiu Estranjeiru Malázia nian, Mohamad Hasan. Imajen foti husi Kosmo.

DILI, 20 Janeiru 2026 (TATOLI) – Asosiasaun Nasaun sira Sudeste Aziátiku (ASEAN, sigla inglés) nian ho membru 11 sei la sertifika eleisaun etapa tolu ne'ebé hala'o ezérsitu militar iha Miánmar.

Nune'e mós sei la haruka observadór sira ba eleisaun etapa tolu ne'ebé hala'o daudaun iha Miánmar ne'ebé maka ukun hosi ezérsitu tanba ne'e sei la fó apoia ba sondajen, hatete hosi Ministru Negósiu Estranjeiru Malázia nian, Mohamad Hasan iha loron-terça ne'e.

Miánmar hetan destruisaun hosi konfliktu dezde militar sira halo golpe hasoru governu sivil iha 2021.

Eleisaun, ne'ebé hahú iha fulan-Dezemburu tinan liubá, hetan kritika hosi Organizasaun Nasaun Unida, nasaun osidental barak no hosi grupu direitu sira hanesan estratéjia ida hodi lejítima ukun militar liuhosi prokuradór polítiku sira – akuzasaun ne'ebé junta nega ona.

Iha partisipasaun ne'ebé ki'ik, votante sira vota iha etapa daruak hosi sondajen iha inísiu fulan ida-ne'e, ho Partidu Uniaun Solidariedade no Dezenvolvimentu ne'ebé aliadu ho militar lidera hafoin aseguira 88% hosi kadeira sira iha Kámara Baixa ne'ebé konkore iha faze dahuluk.

Ko'alia iha parlamentu, Ministru Mohamad Hasan hateten, ASEAN rejeita ona pedidu ida hosi Miánmar hodi haruka observadór eleitoral sira durante simeira anuál líder sira nian iha Kuala Lumpur tinan kotuk, maski Estadu-memburu individuál balun deside ona atu halo ida-ne'e rasik.

“Ami hatete ona katak ASEAN sei la haruka observadór sira, ho virtude ida-ne'e, ami sei la sertifika sondajen,” Mohamad hatete hodi hatán ba pergunta ida hosi deputadu sira kona-ba Malázia no pozisaun ASEAN nian kona-ba eleisaun.

Iha fatin ketak, Mohamad mós hatete katak ASEAN iha faze ikus sira hodi konklui kódigu konduta ida ne'ebé propoin kleur ona ho Pekin iha tinan ida-ne'e kona-ba atividade sira iha Tasi Súl Xina nian.

“Ami hein katak ami bele halo ida-ne'e iha tinan ida-ne'e,” nia hatete.

ASEAN no Xina kompromete iha 2002 atu kria kódigu konduta ida maibé lori tinan 15 atu hahú diskusaun no progresu la'o neineik.

Pekin reklama soberania iha maioria hosi Tasi Súl Xina nian, inklui parte sira hosi zona ekonómiku eskuzivu sira ho distánsia milla náutica 200 hosi Filipina, Brunei, Malázia, Taiwan no Vietnam, hodi komplika atividade sira peska nian no esplorasaun enerjético hosi nasaun sira-ne'e.

Fonte: Reuters

Timor-Leste's diplomat ordered to leave Myanmar within a week

Filomeno Martins

DILI, 16 february 2026 (TATOLI) — Myanmar's military authorities have ordered Timor-Leste's chargé d'affaires, Elisio do Rosario de Sousa, to leave the country following legal action in Dili accusing the Myanmar armed forces of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The diplomat was summoned on friday, february 13, and instructed to depart Myanmar within one week.

In a statement issued on sunday, february 15, Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Timorese envoy must leave Myanmar territory no later than 20 february 2026.

The expulsion follows mounting tensions after Timor-Leste engaged with the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) and accepted a criminal complaint filed by the group against the Myanmar Armed Forces.

Myanmar authorities had already condemned a january 14 meeting between Timor-Leste's leaders and CHRO representatives.

On 13 january 2026, Timor-Leste's judicial authorities formally received the criminal complaint submitted by CHRO. Dili subsequently opened legal proceedings against the Myanmar military leadership, including junta chief Min Aung Hlaing, on allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Myanmar authorities first summoned the Timorese chargé d'affaires on 16 january seeking clarification over Timor-Leste's engagement with CHRO. The junta reiterated its protest on 29 january during the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Cebu, Philippines.

Diplomatic relations between the two ASEAN countries further deteriorated after Timor-Leste formally accepted the criminal complaint and appointed a senior prosecutor to examine the file.

As of today, the Timor-Leste Government has not issued a formal statement on the diplomat's expulsion.

This is the second time a Timor-Leste diplomat has been expelled by Myanmar authorities. In 2023, Timor-Leste's chargé d'affaires, Avelino Pereira, was also expelled from the country.



Republic of the Union of Myanmar
National Unity Government
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Statement (3/2026)
16 February 2026

**Statement Condemning Intimidation of the Diplomatic Representative of
Timor-Leste**

1. The National Unity Government of Myanmar (NUG) strongly condemns reports that the terrorist military junta has pressured the diplomatic representative of Timor-Leste to leave Myanmar within seven days.
2. This act of intimidation against diplomatic engagement undermines the established framework of diplomatic relations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. While Article 9 permits a receiving State to declare a diplomat persona non grata, this authority must be exercised in accordance with established diplomatic procedures and international law. Any form of coercion or intimidation is inconsistent with the spirit of the Convention and the principles governing peaceful diplomatic engagement.
3. The NUG maintains regular communication with several ASEAN member states, including Timor-Leste. The Myanmar military's decision to single out Timor-Leste raises serious concerns regarding its respect for international diplomatic norms and practice.
4. The NUG expresses its sincere appreciation to all countries, including Timor-Leste, for their continued support for accountability in Myanmar, justice for victims, and the end of the culture of impunity. We respectfully call upon the international community to sustain and strengthen its assistance to the people of Myanmar during this critical period.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
National Unity Government

Myanmar's junta expels Timor-Leste diplomat fearing accountability

DVB, 16 Feb 2026 By James Shwe

On February 25, 2026 Myanmar's military-controlled Ministry of Foreign Affairs ordered Elisio do Rosario de Sousa, the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of Timor-Leste, to leave the country within seven days.

The junta invoked Article 9 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, framing the expulsion as a response to what it called Timor-Leste's "blatant violation" of ASEAN principles.

But a careful reading of the facts reveals something quite different: a junta lashing out at one of the few countries brave enough to pursue justice for its crimes.

This is not the first time the junta has expelled a Timorese diplomat. In August 2023, it ordered the previous Chargé d'Affaires out of Myanmar for Timor-Leste's engagement with the National Unity Government.

That Timor-Leste returned to the table — only to face expulsion again — speaks volumes about the junta's intolerance for any government that takes the side of Myanmar's people over its generals.

What actually happened?

On January 12, 2026 representatives of the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO), supported by the Myanmar Accountability Project (MAP), filed a criminal complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office in Dili.

The complaint documented a pattern of atrocities against the ethnic Chin people — including the gang rape of a pregnant woman, the massacre of ten civilians (one of them a 13-year-old boy who was among eight people who had their throats slit), the deliberate killing of a Christian pastor and three deacons, an indiscriminate aerial attack on a hospital that killed four medical staff and four patients, and a series of targeted attacks on Christian churches.

Two days later, on January 14, 2026 Timor-Leste President José Ramos-Horta — himself a Nobel Peace Prize laureate who lived through 24 years of Indonesian occupation — received the CHRO delegation.

Earlier this month, Timor-Leste's judicial authorities accepted the case and appointed a senior prosecutor to examine the file, making it the first ASEAN member state to open war-crimes proceedings against the Myanmar junta under the principle of universal jurisdiction.

The junta responded with escalating fury. It summoned the Timor-Leste diplomat on January 16, issued a public condemnation two days later, protested again at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Cebu on January 29, and finally ordered the expulsion by February 20.

The junta's legal claims do not hold up

The expulsion letter rests on two central arguments: that Timor-Leste violated the ASEAN Charter's non-interference principles, and that CHRO is an "unlawful organization." Neither claim withstands scrutiny.

CHRO is not unlawful. It is a long-established human rights organization that has operated openly for decades, documenting abuses against the Chin people.

It is not designated as a terrorist or criminal organization by the United Nations, ASEAN, or any country other than Myanmar's junta.

The unlawful label is the regime's own political invention — a tool it applies to any organization that exposes its crimes.

The ASEAN Charter does not prohibit what Timor-Leste did.

The junta selectively cites Articles 2(2)(a), 2(2)(e), and 2(2)(k) of the Charter, which address sovereignty and non-interference. But the very same Charter also commits all ASEAN members to "adherence to the rule of law, good governance, the principles of democracy and constitutional government" and to the "promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms."

There is nothing in the Charter or the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation that forbids a head of state from meeting a human rights organization, or that prohibits an independent judiciary from exercising universal jurisdiction over war crimes.

The junta's reading of the Charter is not just selective; it is cynical. It demands that sovereignty shield its leaders from accountability for mass atrocities, while ignoring the Charter's equal insistence on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Why Timor-Leste, and why it matters

Timor-Leste is the youngest nation in Southeast Asia. Between 1975 and 1999, approximately 200,000 Timorese were killed during Indonesia's military occupation — nearly a third of the population.

The country won its independence through a U.N.-supervised referendum, endured scorched-earth violence by Indonesian-backed militias, and built a democratic state from the ashes.

When CHRO filed its complaint in Dili, Executive Director Salai Za Uk explicitly invoked this shared history: "Timor-Leste's journey from oppression to a thriving democracy — rooted in the rule of law, an independent judiciary and constitutional respect for universal human rights — reflects a shared struggle against military repression."

Timor-Leste knows what it means to live under military boots. Its willingness to accept this case is not interference in Myanmar's internal affairs. It is an act of solidarity with the people of Myanmar — and a recognition that when international institutions like the International Criminal Court (ICC) are unable to act swiftly enough, other avenues of justice must be explored.

What the junta is really afraid of

The junta's furious response tells us more than its legal arguments do. The junta is not worried about a violation of ASEAN protocol. It is worried about the precedent it sets.

If Timor-Leste can open a universal jurisdiction case against Min Aung Hlaing and other senior commanders, then so can other countries. The evidence base is vast: the U.N. Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) holds a large body of verified evidence that can be made available to any national authority willing to act.

The ICC's own chief prosecutor requested an arrest warrant for Min Aung Hlaing in November 2024, and ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights have publicly commended Timor-Leste's initiative as consistent with regional accountability efforts.

By expelling the Timorese diplomat, the junta aims to punish and deter — to send a message to every other ASEAN government: cooperate with human rights groups at your peril. It also seeks to re-center ASEAN discourse on the non-interference principle while stripping away the Charter's parallel commitments to democracy and human rights.

And it continues its relentless campaign to present itself as “the Government of Myanmar,” conflating the state with the military leadership accused of mass atrocities and branding any opposition as “terrorist” or “unlawful.”

A message to the people of Myanmar

To the people of Myanmar: the junta expelled Timor-Leste's diplomat not because Timor-Leste attacked Myanmar, but because it supported you.

The criminal case in Dili is about holding specific military commanders accountable for specific crimes — rape, massacre, bombing hospitals, destroying churches. These are not acts committed in Myanmar's name. They are crimes committed against Myanmar's people.

The junta wants you to believe that international accountability efforts are an insult to national sovereignty. The opposite is true. Sovereignty belongs to the people, not to generals who seized power by annulling a democratic election.

Every nation that pursues justice for the crimes committed against you is standing with Myanmar — the real Myanmar, not the one the generals claim to represent.

A call to the international community

Timor-Leste — a small nation of 1.3 million people — has shown more courage on Myanmar accountability than most of the world's major powers combined. Its government has publicly condemned the expulsion and reaffirmed its solidarity with the Myanmar people.

Minister Agio Pereira stated that “Timor-Leste remains firm in its conviction that only through dialogue and respect for the will of the people can a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis in Myanmar be achieved.”

ASEAN and the broader international community now face a choice. They can allow the junta to punish and isolate any member state that dares to pursue justice, thereby rewarding impunity and hollowing out ASEAN's own Charter commitments.

Or they can stand with Timor-Leste, support universal jurisdiction as a legitimate tool for accountability, and make clear that the non-interference principle was never designed to be a shield for war criminals.

The people of Myanmar deserve justice. Timor-Leste understood that. The rest of the world should follow its lead.

James Shwe is a Myanmar-born democracy advocate and independent political analyst based in the United States.

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JUNTA MILITAR MYANMAR IGNORA TIMOR NIA HANOIN DI'AK ATU HAKOTU KRIZE

#Aniceto_dos_Reis iha Facebook, 17 Fev 2026

Relasaun entre Timor-Leste no Myanmar to'o iha pontu manas manas, depoiz Junta military Haruka enkaragadu negosiu timor-oan iha Myanmar atu sai husi neba antes loron 20 fulan Feveiru tinan ne'e. Dala ruma iha diskussaun iha media social, iha pro no kontra kona-ba pozisaun Timor-Leste nian perante konflitu iha Myanmar, maibe waihira ita halo leitura ba pozisaun Timor-Leste nian entende katak, ho esperiensa durante okupasaun mak, Timor-Leste pozisiona-an hanesan Defensor ba direitus humanus no apoia kualker medida rezolusaun konflitu ho forma pasifika.

Dezde tinan 2021, Timor-Leste hanesan nasaun ne'ebe mak kritika Junta Militar iha Myanmar no pozisaun Timor-Leste nian bazeia ba aspektu historiku kona-ba konflitu prolongada durante okupasaun Indonezia. Husi esperiensa moruk ne'ebe rezulta timor-oan rihun atus rua resin lakon vida, mak Timor-Leste firme atu sai Defensor direitus humanus no apoia rezolusaun konflitu ho dalan pasifiku. Maibe, Timor-Leste nia pozisaun ne'e kontra maka'as husi junta militar depoiz Prezidente Republika, Jose Ramos-Horta hasoru malu ho delegasaun husi National United Government – NUC.

Governu Unidade Nasional Republika Unitaria Myanmar – NUC mak governu exiladu ne'ebe mak forma husi Comitte Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw hanesan, grupu parlamentar ne'ebe mak eleje, inklui Liga Nasional Demokrasia – Partidu husi Aung San Suu Kyi, premiada nobel da paz, grupu rebelde etnika minoritaria no partidu kiik isra, ne'ebe hamonu ho golpe militar iha tinan 2021.

Golpe militar akontese iha loron 1 fulan Feveiru tinan 2021, waihira assessor estadu Aung San Suu Kyi, Prezidente Win Myint no lider husi partidu ne'ebe sai detentor ba ukun hatun husi militar Myanmar, hafoin militar aplika estadu emerjensia no entrega ukun ba komandante supremu, Min Aung Hlaing. Golpe ne'e hanesan sekuensia husi eleisaun iha loron 8 fulan Outubru tinan 2020 ne'ebe fo vitoria ba Liga Nasional Demokrasia ho kadeira 396 husi kadeira 476 iha Parlamentu, enkuantu Partidu Militar, Partidu Soliedaridade no Partidu Dezenvolvimentu iha de'it kadeira 33, hodi militar nega rezultadu ne'e no dun katak, akontese fraude eleitoral. Sosiedade Timor-Leste iha tinan 2021, kodena makas golpe military ne'ebe rezulta ema rihun ida resin mate, inklui ativista Ma Kyal Sin tinan 19 ne'ebe mate durante manifestasaun kontra Golpe Estadu Militar ne'ebe rezulta kondensasaun oi-oin husi comunidade internasional no insiste rezolusaun konflitu.

Tensaun entre Timor-Leste no Myanmar continua iha fulan Agostu tinan 2023, hafoin konsellu estadu Myanmar duni sai diplomata Timor-oan iha Myanmar, hanesan forma protestu ida hasoru Timor-Leste ne'ebe mak simu delegasaun husi NUC no iha fulan Dezembru tinan 2023, Prezidente Jose Ramos-Horta Jose Ramos-Horta apela ba soldadus husi Tatmadaw atu hamutuk no apoia anti-junta militar. Ho reajen ba ida ne'e, Konsellu Administrasaun Estadu ho hirus no emite artigu anti Timor-leste no publika iha media Estatal sira no grupu nasionalista ne'ebe mak apoia junta mos halo protest iha Yangon, hasoru pozisaun Timor-Leste nian, perante situasaun iha Myanmar. "Kodena gople militar iha Fulan Feveiru tinan 2021, ami husu junta miliár atu respeita legalidade konstitusionál no respeita

Liberdade no direito fundamental sira, liu-liu, pontu 5 ne'ebé sai konsensu ba nasaun sira husi ASEAN" tenik Presidente Horta iha tinan 2023.

Relasiona ho pozisaun Myanmar ne'ebé mak duni sai diplomata Timor-oan, governu Timor-Leste kondena maka'as, maibé apoia esforsu hotu husi ASEAN no ONU atu rekupera ordem demokrátika, apela junta militaar atu respeita direitos humanus no buka solusaun ne'ebé pasífika no konstrutiva. "Timor-Leste firme ho konvikasaun katak, diálogu no respeita aspeirasaun povu hanesan solusaun dame no sustentável ba krize iha Myanmar" tenik porta Voz Governu, Agio Pereira iha tinan 2023.

Hare ba apoiu konsistente husi Timor-Leste nian ba NUC, iha loron 2 fulan Jullu tinan 2025, Konsellu Administrasaun Estadu ne'ebé lidera husi Junta Militar keixa ba Malazia hanesan chairman ASEAN nian katak, Myanmar kontra maka'as adezaun Timor-Leste ba ASEAN. Maibé, Ministru Negósiu Estranjeiru no Kooperasaun, Bendito dos Santos Fretas tenik katak, pozisaun Myanmar ne'e la implika adezaun Timor-este nia ba ASEAN, tanba Timor-Leste kumpre prosedimentu tekniku atu sai membru ASEAN.

Iha fulan Outubru tinan 2025, Timor-Leste oficialmente sai membru ASEAN no hanesan memento históriku, hafoin aplikasaun formal iha tinan 2011 no sai hanesan observadór dezde tinan 2022. "Ba Timor-Leste ne'e la'os dei hanesan mehi sai realidade, maibé hanesan afirmasaun forte husi ita-nia perkursu ne'ebé marka ho reziliénsia, determinasaun no esperansa – Xanana Gusmão kona-ba ASEAN.

Konflitu diplomátiku entre Timor-Leste no Myanmar to'o iha pontu ne'ebé manas liu, hafoin autoridade militar ordena enkarradu negósiu atu husik hela Myanmar, mais tarde loron 20 fulan Fevereiro no antes desizaun ne'e foti Myanmar keixa ona durante enkontru Ministru Relasaun Externa ASEAN nian iha Cebu Filipinas iha loron 29 Fulan Outubru. Desizaun husi Myanmar ne'e relasiona ho keixa husi Chin Human Rights Organizations no MAP Foundations ba Prokuradoria Jerál Repúblika kona-ba alegasaun ba krime kontra humanidade no violasaun direitos humanus.

Hare husi faktus sira ne'e, Timor-Leste nia pozisaun firme katak, la'os halo interferénsia ba politika interna Myanmar nian, maibe defende rezolusaun konflitu ho forma pasífika, respeita Liberdade, direito fundamental sira no aspirasaun povu Myanmar, no pozisaun Timor-Leste nian, bazeia ba esperiéncia moruk iha passado, atu tulun nasaun seluk atu hakotu krize, no hari'l sosiedade inkluziva no duradoura, maibé saida mak ita bele kompriende husi pozisaun Junta Militar mak, ignora Timor-Leste nia hanoin di'ak atu hakotu krize.

Komunikadu Imprensa

Timor-Leste kondena espulsaun ba diplomata timoroan no reafirma ninia solidariedade ho povu Myanmar

Governu Konstitusionál IX kondena desizaun Junta Militar Myanmar ne'ebé espulsa/duni Enkarregadu Negósius timoroan nian husi país ne'e.

Timor-Leste iha liña ho pozisaun ne'ebé asume husi ASEAN no Nasoins Unidas, reafirma importánsia hodi apoia esforsu hotu-hotu atu filafali ba orden demokrátika iha Myanmar no hato'o ninia solidariedade ho povu Myanmar, iha tempu hanesan insiste/husu ba Junta Militar hodi respeita direitus umanus no buka solusaun ida ne'ebé pasifika no konstrutiva ba krize ne'e

Situasaun iha Myanmar sai ona preokupasaun globál husikedas golpe militar iha fulan-fevereiru tinan 2021. Junta Militar ne'e asume poder, hodi anula rezultadu hosi eleisoins demokrátikas no hamosu krize umanitária, ekonómika no política lubuk ida. Komunitade Internasionál, inklui Timor-Leste, kontinua apela hodi rezolve krize ne'e ho dalan ida ne'ebé pasifika no respeito ba direitu fundamentál sira povu Myanmar nian.

Portavós Governu Konstitusionál IX nian, Ministru Agio Pereira, hateten katak “República Demokrátika Timor-Leste nafatin firme ho ninia konviksaun katak liuhusi diálogo de'it no respeito ba vontade povu nian maka bele alkansa solusaun ida ne'ebé pasifika no dura iha krize Myanmar”. No na'i-ulun ne'e mós, reafirma “ha'u apela ba comunidade internasionál atu hamutuk iha esforsu sira hodi promove restaurasaun orden demokrátika no direitus umanus iha rejiaun ne'e”. **REMATA**

url: <https://timor-lestes.gov.tl?lang=tp&p=47361>

Timor-Leste condemns expulsion of Timorese diplomat and reiterates its solidarity with the Myanmar people

The 9th Constitutional Government condemns the Myanmar Military Junta's decision to expel the Timorese Chargé d'Affaires from the country.

Timor-Leste, in line with the positions taken by ASEAN and the United Nations, reiterates the importance of supporting all efforts for the return of democratic order in Myanmar and expresses its solidarity with the Myanmar people while urging the military Junta to respect human rights and seek a peaceful and constructive solution to the crisis.

Since the military coup in February 2021, the situation in Myanmar has been a cause for global concern. The military Junta took power, annulling the results of democratic elections and triggering a series of humanitarian, economic and political crises. The international community, including Timor-Leste, continues to call for a peaceful resolution to the crisis and respect for the fundamental rights of the Myanmar people.

The Spokesperson for the 9th Constitutional Government, Minister Agio Pereira, stated that “the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste remains firm in its conviction that only through dialogue and respect for the will of the people can a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis in Myanmar be achieved”. It reiterated its “appeal to the international community to join forces to promote the restoration of democratic order and human rights in the region”. **END**

url: <https://timor-lestes.gov.tl?lang=en&p=47361>

February 18, 2026 8:23AM EST | Dispatches

Myanmar Expels Timor-Leste Diplomat over War Crimes Case

Universal Jurisdiction Provides Path to Hold Perpetrators to Account

Shayna Bauchner

Researcher, Asia Division



The Timor-Leste embassy in Yangon, Myanmar, February 16, 2026. © 2026 Sai Aung Main/AFP via Getty Images

On February 13, Myanmar's military junta ordered the head of Timor-Leste's Embassy in Yangon to leave the country within seven days. The expulsion comes after Timorese authorities [opened legal proceedings](#) against Myanmar junta officials earlier this month for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The case, [filed by](#) the Chin Human Rights Organisation in January, accuses 10 members of Myanmar's junta, including commander in chief, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, of killings, rape, indiscriminate attacks, and other grave crimes. The case was brought under the principle of universal jurisdiction, which allows states to investigate and prosecute those responsible for grave international crimes regardless of where they were committed or the nationality of the victims and suspects.

Last October, Timor-Leste joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional bloc that includes Myanmar, as its first new member in over 25 years. President Jose Ramos-Horta made clear before joining ASEAN that his government supports the people of Myanmar's struggle to end military abuses. Given its [own history](#), Timor-Leste has also long supported international justice including by joining the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002.

The [United Nations](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), and others have documented the Myanmar junta's escalating [war crimes](#) and [crimes against humanity](#) [since the 2021 military coup](#). The military's atrocities have been fueled by [decades of impunity](#) and insufficient global efforts to end its violations and hold perpetrators to account.

The Timor-Leste case sends a powerful message of regional solidarity for victims of Myanmar military atrocities. Justice efforts underway at the [International Court of Justice](#) and the [ICC](#) are vital, but they are limited to crimes committed before the coup. Universal jurisdiction is one of the few avenues to hold the military accountable for post-coup atrocities as well.

ASEAN's response to the crisis remains feeble. While the junta has violated the [ASEAN five-point consensus](#) it committed to in 2021 and the binding [ASEAN Charter](#), which enshrines the principles of democracy, rule of law, and human rights, the bloc [has been divided](#) between governments trying to enforce the ASEAN obligations and those unwilling to do so.

ASEAN countries have rarely, if ever, sought to promote accountability by prosecuting officials from other states in the region. ASEAN should support Timor-Leste's willingness to hold those responsible for military atrocities in Myanmar to account.

MYANMAR - ASEAN Expulsion of East Timor Diplomats divides ASEAN over Myanmar

Naypyidaw's measure against the chargé d'affaires in Dili follows the opening of legal proceedings for alleged war crimes committed by the Burmese army. It is the first time that a court in a country belonging to the regional bloc has taken legal action against another member state. The affair highlights the deep divisions within the organization, split between those calling for greater pressure and those who want a rapprochement after the controversial elections.

Bangkok (AsiaNews, 19 Feb. 2026) - Internal divisions within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) over the Burmese crisis are becoming increasingly evident. The expulsion of the East Timorese diplomatic mission from Yangon, ordered by the Burmese military authorities, marks a new breaking point within the regional bloc, already deeply divided on how to manage relations with the regime after the 2021 coup.

Naypyidaw's decision comes after East Timor filed a complaint against the Burmese army for war crimes. According to several regional analysts, this is the junta's strongest diplomatic retaliation against another ASEAN country and a sign of the bloc's growing fragmentation.

The Burmese Foreign Ministry has informed Elisio do Rosario de Sousa, chargé d'affaires of the East Timor embassy in Yangon, that he must leave the country by February 20. State media have called Dili's initiatives "totally unacceptable."

At the root of the crisis is an initiative by the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO), which represents the largely Christian Chin ethnic minority. At the end of January, the organization's leaders traveled to Dili, where they met with various authorities, including President José Ramos-Horta, and filed a formal complaint with the Department of Justice.

The complaint accuses the Burmese army of war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated in the civil war that followed the 2021 coup. The allegations include gang rapes, the killing of ten civilians, including a journalist, the assassination of Christian religious leaders, and the bombing of a hospital and church buildings in Chin State.

The CHRO asked Timor-Leste to apply the principle of universal jurisdiction, which allows national courts to prosecute serious international crimes even if they were committed abroad. On February 2, the Timorese judicial authorities opened formal proceedings by appointing a prosecutor.

The Burmese military government reacted harshly, arguing that the decision sets a dangerous precedent in relations between the two countries. The CHRO explained that it chose Timor-Leste because of the independence of its judicial system and because the population is familiar with the suffering associated with occupation and violence.

A diplomatic clash of this kind between ASEAN members is rare. It is also the first time that the courts of one country in the bloc have taken legal action against another member state for human rights violations.

The matter is particularly sensitive because East Timor only became the 11th ASEAN member in October 2025. Myanmar had previously threatened to block its accession, contesting President Ramos-Horta's meetings with the Burmese National Unity Government (NUG), which the junta considers a terrorist organization.

East Timor then gave assurances that it would not allow NUG offices or anti-junta activities on its territory, but relations remained tense. The court case has taken the tension to a new level.

The Dili government condemned the expulsion of the diplomat and reiterated its support for “the return of democratic order in Myanmar,” expressing solidarity with the Burmese people and calling for respect for human rights.

The issue has arisen at a time when ASEAN is already struggling to maintain a common line on the Burmese crisis. The elections organized by the junta between December and January, deemed neither free nor fair by the opposition and international observers, have accentuated the differences.

Cambodia and Brunei have moved closer to the post-election Burmese government. Phnom Penh has maintained close contacts with Naypyidaw: former Prime Minister Hun Sen, for example, was the first foreign leader to visit the junta after the coup.

The Philippines and Indonesia, on the other hand, refuse to recognize the vote, arguing that the junta has not implemented the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus, the 2021 agreement calling for an end to violence, the establishment of inclusive dialogue, and humanitarian access. The Philippines has even proposed replacing the five-point consensus agreement, which it considers ineffective. Malaysia and Singapore have also expressed doubts about the legitimacy of the elections.

Recently, however, Thailand has stated that it hopes to bring Myanmar back into the organization. Bangkok “wants to be a bridge reconnecting Myanmar to ASEAN,” Thai Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow said yesterday after meeting with his Burmese counterpart in southern Thailand.

These divergent positions show an increasingly fragmented ASEAN, where national interests prevail over the cohesion of the bloc.

The case in East Timor adds to international pressure on the junta, already on trial at the International Court of Justice on charges of genocide against the Rohingya, brought by Gambia.

The CHRO's strategy, on the other hand, calls for intervention by ASEAN national courts, challenging the traditional principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states.

This is a major dilemma for ASEAN: defending non-interference risks appearing indifferent to the human rights of the Burmese people, but supporting the judicial independence of East Timor could, on the contrary, weaken a principle that has held the bloc together for decades.

It will now be up to Malaysia, which holds the rotating presidency for 2026, to manage the crisis.

Xanana Gusmão: “Ita respeita Myanmar nia desizaun”

DILI, 19 Feveiru 2026 (TATOLI)—Primeiru-Ministru, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, hateten Timor-Leste respeita desizaun ne’ebé Myanmar hasai hodi haruka Enkaregadu Negósiu Timor-Leste nian sai husi Myanmar no Timor-Leste laiha kbiit atu halo julgamentu ba kazu sira akontese iha Myanmar no nasaun seluk.

“Sira hasai desizaun, ita respeita, maibé ita mós tenke temi katak buat ne’e justisa nian. Maibé, ita sente katak ita laiha kbiit atu ba buat sira-ne’ebé akontese iha rai seluk,” Xanana hateten hodi responde ba pergunta husi Agência TATOLI iha Palásiu Prezidensiál, Nicolau Lobato, Dili, kinta ne’e.

Desizaun ne’ebé Governu Myanmar foti hodi hasai Timor-Leste nia diplomata iha nasaun referidu, tanba iha fulan rua kotuk ekipa ida husi Myanmar mai hato’o keixa ba Minsitériu Públiku (MP) Timor-Leste nian atu husu Timor-Leste halo julgamentu ba junta militár ne’ebé akontese iha Myanmar no violesaun direitu umanu.

“Espera katak, kazu ne’ebé hatama ona iha Prokuradoria Jerál ne’e arkiva tia de’it. Ha’u atu dehan de’it, ita laiha kompetensia atu julga,” Xanana tenik.

Xefe Governu ne’e esplika, bainhira Timor-Leste foti desizaun hodi la halo julgamentu ba kazu ne’ebé hatama ona ba Minsitériu Públiku Timor-Leste, mak representante Timor-Leste nian iha Myanmar sei hetan salvasaun no la fila mai Timor-Leste no kontinua halo serbisu hanesan baibain.

“Impaktu mak ne’e, mais ita dehan katak ita laiha kbiit atu halo julgamentu sira-ne’e. Entaun, sira rona no sira mós hatene,” Xanana dehan.

Jornalista : Hortencio Sanchez Editór : Cancio Ximenes

Myanmar nia desizaun la afeta ba estatutu Timor-Leste hanesan membru ASEAN



Vise MNEK ba Asuntu ASEAN, Milena Rangel. Foto / TATOLI

DILI, 19 Fevereiru 2026 (TATOLI) – Vise-Ministra Negósiu Estranjeiru no Kooperasaun ba Asuntu ASEAN, Milena Rangel, hateten desizaun Myanmar nian hodi haruka Enkarregadu Negósiu Timor-Leste nian sai husi país ne'e la fó impaktu ba Timor-Leste hanesan membru Asosiasaun Nasaun Sudeste Aziátiku (ASEAN, sigla inglés).

“Ita membru plenu ona, direitu goza previléjiu hanesan Estadu-membru ida hanesan mós ho sira seluk. Ne'ebé, buat hotu di'ak, negosiasaun no serbisu la'ó nafatin, laiha impaktu ne'ebé atu muda fali ita-nia estatutu. Ita kontinua membru ASEAN”, nia hateten hafoin halo audiénsia ho Komisaun B iha Parlamentu Nasionál, ne'ebé trata Asuntu Negósiu Estranjeiru, Defeza no Seguransa, ohin.

Governante ne'e dehan diplomata timoroan mak iha loron hitu nia laran hodi prepara filafali mai Timor-Leste, enkuantu relasaun entre povu nasaun rua kontinua mantein. Hodi dehan diplomata timoroan iha Myanmar ho kondisaun di'ak no iha kontaktu di'ak tebetebes.

Tanba ne'e, nia dehan, iha buat balun ne'ebé Estadu rua presiza ko'alia ba malu. “Maibé ita halo serbisu sira ne'e, ita kooperá di'ak ho maluk sira iha ne'ebá, diplomata mak fila lai, depois sei iha fali informasaun”, katak.

Relasiona ho asuntu ne'e, Primeiru-Ministru, Xanana Gusmão, hateten Timor-Leste respeita desizaun ne'e no país laiha kbiit atu halo julgamentu ba kazu sira akontese iha Myanmar no nasaun seluk.

“Sira hasai desizaun, ita respeita, maibé ita mós tenke temi katak buat ne'e justisa nian. Maibé, ita sente katak ita laiha kbiit atu ba buat sira-ne'ebé akontese iha rai seluk”, Xanana hato'o hafoin ramata enkontru regulár ho Prezidente Repúblika, José Ramos-Horta, iha Palásiu Prezidensiál, Nicolau Lobato, Dili, ohin.

Desizaun junta militar Myanmar foti hodi espulsa dilomata Timor-Leste nian iha nasaun referida, tanba iha fulan rua bá kotuk ekipa ida husi Myanmar mai hato'o keixa ba Ministériu Públiku Timor-Leste nian hodi husu Timor-Leste halo julgamentu ba junta militar ne'ebé akontese iha Myanmar.

Organizasaun Direitu Umanu Chin no Movimentu Akuntabilidade ba Responsabilide husi Myanmar hatama keixa kazu violasaun direitu umanu ne'ebé grave iha Estadu Chin ba iha Prokuradór-Jerál Republika Timor-Leste.

Keixa ne'e hato'o iha Prokuradór-Jerál Timor-Leste tanba ho intensaun katak kazu sira ne'e labele prosesa iha Myanmar no keixa ida-ne'e bele halo iha país sira ne'ebé asina tiha ona konvensaun kona-ba tribunál internasionál.

Organizasaun Direitu Umanu Chin no Movimentu Akuntabilidade ba Responsabilide husi Myanmar hatama keixa tolu junta militar nian ne'ebé komete kazu oho ema, violasaun seksuál ba inan grávida no labarik no atake padre sira.

Xanana hopes case against Myanmar's military junta will be dismissed.

Timorese Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão said today that he hopes judicial authorities, such as the court or the Public Prosecutor's Office of Timor-Leste, will close the case related to crimes that occurred in Myanmar (formerly Burma).

Lusa, 19 Feb 2026. Unofficial translation

If they make a decision, we respect it. We also say that justice is a matter for the justice system itself. But we feel that we do not have the competence to judge events that occurred in another country. Therefore, we hope that the Justice system or the Public Prosecutor's Office will dismiss the case," stated Xanana Gusmão.

The Prime Minister was speaking to reporters after concluding his weekly meeting with the Timorese president, José Ramos-Horta, at the Presidential Palace in Dili.

"The Myanmar case, at this moment, is not within our jurisdiction, so we are letting it run its course," said Xanana Gusmão, adding that Timor-Leste does not have the authority to conduct such a trial.

On February 3rd, the CHRO – which represents the Chin minority living in northwestern Myanmar, near the border with India and Bangladesh – announced that the Public Prosecutor's Office of Timor-Leste had initiated legal proceedings against the military junta.

"We welcome this initiative and look forward to collaborating with the Timorese authorities, as well as with civil society groups in Timor-Leste, to promote justice for the Chin people and for all the peoples of Myanmar," said the director of CHRO, Salai Za Uk.

Two weeks earlier, the organization had filed a criminal complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office of Timor-Leste against a group of soldiers from that country for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

According to Timorese lawyers representing CHRO, crimes against humanity are stipulated in Article 124 of the Penal Code, and war crimes are also defined in Article 125 of the Penal Code (war crimes against persons), crimes involving the use of prohibited methods of warfare (Article 126), and war crimes against property.

This was the first time that a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) had initiated such legal action against a member state of the organization itself.

Both Timor-Leste and Myanmar are members of ASEAN, an organization that suspended the former Burma in the wake of the February 2021 coup, when the military overthrew the government led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and plunged the country into civil war.

Data released by a human rights organization in the Chin state indicates that the military junta carried out more than a thousand air strikes in that region, which caused the deaths of 478 civilians, including 91 women and 79 children, and destroyed several health facilities, schools, and religious buildings.

According to the United Nations (UN), the violence in Myanmar has already killed thousands of people and forced more than 3.5 million to leave their homes. Approximately 20 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Xanana espera que caso contra junta militar de Myanmar seja arquivado

O primeiro-ministro timorense, Xanana Gusmão, afirmou hoje esperar que as autoridades judiciais, como o tribunal ou o Ministério Público de Timor-Leste, arquivem o caso relacionado com crimes ocorridos em Myanmar (antiga Birmânia).

Lusa, 19 Fev. 2026

"Se tomarem uma decisão, nós respeitamos. Também dizemos que a justiça é assunto da própria justiça. Mas sentimos que não temos competência para julgar acontecimentos que ocorreram noutro país. Por isso, esperamos que o tribunal ou o Ministério Público arquivem o caso", afirmou Xanana Gusmão.

O primeiro-ministro falava aos jornalistas após terminar o encontro semanal com o Presidente timorense, José Ramos-Horta, no Palácio Presidencial, em Díli.

"O caso de Myanmar, neste momento, não está sob a nossa competência, por isso deixamo-lo seguir o seu curso", afirmou Xanana Gusmão, acrescentando que Timor-Leste não tem competência para realizar aquele julgamento.

Em 03 de fevereiro, a CHRO - que representa a minoria de Chin, que vive no noroeste de Myanmar, junto à fronteira com a Índia e o Bangladesh - anunciou que o Ministério Público de Timor-Leste tinha iniciado um processo legal contra a junta militar.

"Saudamos esta iniciativa e aguardamos com expectativa a colaboração com as autoridades timorenses, bem como com os grupos da sociedade civil em Timor-Leste, para a promoção da justiça para o povo Chin e para todos os povos de Myanmar", afirmou o diretor da CHRO, Salai Za Uk.

A organização tinha apresentado, duas semanas antes, no Ministério Público de Timor-Leste, uma queixa-crime contra um grupo de militares daquele país por crimes de guerra e contra a humanidade.

Segundo os advogados timorenses, que representam a CHRO, os crimes contra a humanidade estão previstos no artigo 124 do Código Penal e os crimes de guerra estão tipificados também no Código Penal no artigo 125 (crime de guerra contra as pessoas), crimes por utilização de métodos de guerra proibidos (artigo 126) e crimes de guerra contra a propriedade.

Esta foi a primeira vez que um membro da Associação das Nações do Sudeste Asiático (ASEAN, na sigla em inglês) inicia uma ação deste tipo contra um Estado-membro da própria organização.

Tanto Timor-Leste como Myanmar são membros da ASEAN, organização que suspendeu a antiga Birmânia, na sequência do golpe de fevereiro de 2021, quando os militares derrubaram o Governo liderado por Aung San Suu Kyi, prémio Nobel da Paz, e mergulharam o país numa guerra civil.

Dados divulgados por uma organização de direitos humanos do Estado Chin indicam que a junta militar realizou mais de mil ataques aéreos naquela região, que causaram a morte de 478 civis, incluindo 91 mulheres e 79 crianças, e destruíram várias unidades de saúde, escolas e edifícios religiosos.

Segundo a Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU), a violência em Myanmar já matou milhares de pessoas e forçou mais de 3,5 milhões a abandonar as suas casas. Cerca de 20 milhões de pessoas necessitam de assistência humanitária.



Special Advisory Council for MYANMAR

Timor-Leste's Commitment to Accountability Marks An ASEAN Turning Point on Myanmar

23 February 2026: Timor-Leste has shown immediate leadership in the opening months of its ASEAN membership, meeting its [commitment to peace](#), says the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar.

In early February, Timor-Leste appointed a prosecutor to explore potential proceedings against the Myanmar military junta, including junta leader Min Aung Hlaing, for war crimes and crimes against humanity. According to the [Myanmar Accountability Project](#), it is the first time an ASEAN member has initiated such action against a fellow member, marking a turning point for the bloc.

Timor-Leste's universal jurisdiction initiative joins a growing list of efforts to put Min Aung Hlaing in the dock. Last February, an [Argentine Court](#) issued arrest warrants for 25 senior Myanmar officials, including Min Aung Hlaing, in connection with genocide and crimes against humanity against the Rohingya. This followed a November 2024 request by the [Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court](#) (ICC) for an arrest warrant for Min Aung Hlaing for the alleged crimes against humanity of deportation and persecution of the Rohingya. Just last month, the [International Court of Justice](#) held public hearings and heard oral arguments in The Gambia's case against Myanmar under the Genocide Convention.

Predictably, the junta's reprisals against Timor-Leste have been swift and petty. It has ejected Timor-Leste's chargé d'affaires from the country, complaining that Timor-Leste breached ASEAN's principle of non-interference in each other's affairs. But the military junta's flagrant atrocities and the regional crisis it has triggered deeply impacts all ASEAN members, individually and collectively.

ASEAN's response to Timor-Leste's initiative should therefore be straightforward – back Timor-Leste and crackdown on the junta. For more than five years, ASEAN has

endured relentless humiliation at the junta's hands. Its Five-Point Consensus lasted all of 48 hours before Min Aung Hlaing reneged on his commitments. The years since have seen the junta commit mass atrocities, weaponize starvation and natural disasters, block humanitarian aid, displace millions of people, and forcibly conscript tens of thousands of Myanmar youths to fight their own people. The junta has unleashed a multifaceted crisis that has bled across borders and enabled transnational crime to thrive.

The Philippines, now ASEAN Chair, showed its commitment to international law when it facilitated the arrest and transfer of [former President Rodrigo Duterte](#) to the ICC for the alleged crimes against humanity of murder, torture and rape. A hearing will take place in The Hague [this week](#) to confirm the charges against Duterte.

The Philippines must now lead ASEAN in these same principled steps on Myanmar. When the ICC – as widely expected – issues an arrest warrant for Min Aung Hlaing (assuming it has not already done so on a “Secret” basis), the Philippines should publicly confirm that it will cooperate with the Court in securing his arrest and transfer to The Hague. Timor-Leste will join them. Malaysia and Singapore must add their support. So too should Indonesia as current [President of the UN Human Rights Council](#), and given that its new Criminal Code (KUHP) provides for universal jurisdiction over the most serious international crimes, including genocide and crimes against humanity.

After holding firm in rejecting the junta’s fraudulent elections, ASEAN members must bring even stronger resolve to securing justice for the people of Myanmar.

Holding Min Aung Hlaing and his accomplices to account would open new opportunities for a future that fully respects the Myanmar people’s aspirations, interests and democratic will. It would also lift ASEAN’s standing and send a sharp warning to other power-hungry military men in the region.

The Special Advisory Council for Myanmar is an independent group of international human rights experts working to support the peoples of Myanmar in their fight for peace, genuine democracy, justice, and accountability.

Yanghee Lee is a former UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, who held the mandate from 2014 to 2020. During this time, she reported on the military’s deadly offensives against Myanmar’s ethnic and religious minorities, including the mass atrocities committed against the Rohingya in 2016 and 2017. In her final report she warned that the hard-fought democratic space in Myanmar was under threat and called for a national dialogue to bring the nation together.

Marzuki Darusman is former Chair of the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (FFM) and Chris Sidoti is a former member of the FFM. In 2018, the FFM called for the investigation and prosecution of Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his top military leaders for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In 2019, the FFM exposed the extent to which the Myanmar military uses its own businesses, foreign companies and arms deals to sustain its operations and called for immediate targeted sanctions and arms embargoes.

For media inquiries please contact:

Connor Macdonald, Advocacy and Communications Coordinator

Email: connor.jmac@specialadvisorycouncil.org

Myanmar and Timor-Leste quarrel

Susannah Patton in Lowy Interpreter, 24 Feb 2026

The conventional account of why Timor-Leste's membership of ASEAN is good for regional security goes something like this: Timor-Leste is a young, post-conflict, least-developed country. Membership of the region's premier regional grouping will give it access to economic opportunities, including trade and international assistance which flows to ASEAN as a group. It will also prevent Timor-Leste from being an orphan country – closer to Pacific Island countries in its level of development, but with a strong Southeast Asian identity. While Southeast Asian countries are highly diverse, ASEAN membership requires them to think not only of national interest, but of a wider regional interest.

A new falling out between Myanmar and Timor-Leste calls this conventional wisdom into question. Because while much analysis at the time of Dili's accession to ASEAN in late 2025 focused on the [development divide between Timor-Leste and other ASEAN members](#), what might have been overlooked is that the group's new member has a very different international personality from the other ASEANs.

This different personality has been on show in recent weeks when Timor-Leste appointed a prosecutor to investigate crimes committed by the Myanmar junta against Myanmar's ethnic Chin minority. This act has led Myanmar to expel Timor-Leste's senior most diplomat.

This expulsion has a precedent. In [2023, Myanmar expelled Timor-Leste's top diplomat because of Dili's engagement with the National Unity Government](#) (the NUG, Myanmar's government in exile) which went further than that of other ASEAN members who engaged only more quietly. Resenting Dili's approach, Myanmar tried to block the country from joining ASEAN, but was ultimately outweighed by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, the group's energetic chair in 2025.

The [ISEAS State of Southeast Asia Survey in 2025](#) showed that respondents from Timor-Leste placed a much higher priority on the Myanmar crisis than any other ASEAN country (except Myanmar itself). Respondents also supported independent dialogue with all sides rather than non-interference as the primary response to the conflict, and in responding to other survey questions, respondents from Timor-Leste were less concerned about the principle of non-interference than those from other ASEAN countries.

It's not hard to guess why: a country that suffered occupation and that owes its subsequent independence to international intervention and a UN peacekeeping mission will have a different outlook than, for example, Vietnam, whose national narrative emphasises sovereignty and self-reliance in liberating itself from historical occupiers.

This early stoush sends one clear message: Timor-Leste may be in ASEAN, but its leadership will not quickly assimilate the political culture of the group. Smaller ASEAN countries – and it's worth recapping just how small Timor-Leste is, with a population of just 1.4 million – have tended to align themselves with consensus positions in the group. But not so Timor-Leste.

It's hard to predict how these clashing political cultures will play out, but it's unlikely to permeate most issues on the ASEAN agenda. According to reports, [Timor-Leste has not participated in South China Sea Code of Conduct talks in 2026](#), suggesting it is likely only on issues prioritised by Dili's political leadership that the country will take a prominent role. In practical terms, Timor-Leste is expected to struggle to service the volume of ASEAN meetings and processes, meaning that its foreign ministry will need to be selective about the issues it chooses to take on.

On the other hand, observers who would like ASEAN to change – to be more forthright, more supportive of democracy and human rights, and less deferential to process and diplomatic customs – might hope that Dili's accession will shake the group up.