

"National Unity" may be Dangerous in Government

Statement by La'o Hamutuk, 12 July 2012

La'o Hamutuk feels that a multi-party state is essential to genuine democracy, to give space for a variety of perspectives to be discussed and considered with public participation. Parliament is the logical place for that to happen, and we are disappointed that there will be fewer parties in the next Parliament than in the past one. We hope that there will continue to be a strong, active Parliamentary opposition, to critique and to propose alternatives to Government initiatives. This is necessary for transparency and public participation in setting the country's direction -- regardless of who the Prime Minister and governing parties are.

We share the determination of the authors of Timor-Leste's Constitution, who "Solemnly reaffirm their determination to fight all forms of tyranny, oppression, social, cultural or religious domination and segregation, to defend national independence, to respect and guarantee human rights and the fundamental rights of the citizen, to ensure the principle of the separation of powers in the organization of the State, and to establish the essential rules of multi-party democracy, with a view to building a just and prosperous nation and developing a society of solidarity and fraternity."

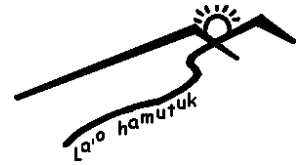
In a Government of National Unity, policy debates will take place in the Council of Ministers, behind closed doors. Citizens may be unable to follow or participate in important decisions. We hope that the new Council of Ministers will be more observable and accessible than the last one, but there are no guarantees.

With a President close to the Prime Minister, Timor-Leste will have fewer checks and balances than it has had during the last five years, when we had an independent President and a lively, pluralistic, Parliamentary opposition. Such checks called corruptors to account and prevented misguided initiatives like the Timor-Leste Investment Company and the proposed Land Laws, as well as improving policies and projects.

But in recent years, as the state budget has escalated rapidly, fewer people are setting directions, and they are making mistakes. We hope that when the election period is over, Timor-Leste's leaders will focus their energies on managing the country's resources, services, directions and priorities. We look forward to more serious policy discussions than we saw during the election campaign.

The issues are critical -- Timor-Leste's Fifth Constitutional Government may be the last one with significant oil wealth to spend. If we do not use the income from exporting these resources to build our non-oil economy, reduce import dependency, strengthen agriculture and build strong human resources to replace the oil, we will face disaster soon after 2017. A Government without institutionalized political opposition -- whether it is called "national unity" or "one-party-state" -- often makes poor decisions and ignores people's wishes, endangering the future of Timor-Leste's next generation.

Regardless of which parties are in Government, La'o Hamutuk and other civil society organizations will continue to try to represent the needs and desires of less powerful and more vulnerable people. We hope we will have allies in Parliament to work with.



“Governu Unidade Nasionál” sei Perigozu ba Demokrasi

Komunikadu husi La'o Hamutuk, 12 Jullu 2012

La'o Hamutuk sente katak estadu ida ho multi-partidáriu nudár elementu esensiál ba demokrasi loloos, hodi fó espasu atu diskute no konsidera perspetiva sira ne'ebé diferente ho partisipasaun públiku. Parlamentu nudár fatin loloos ba ida ne'e atu akontese, no ami triste katak iha ne'ebá sei iha partidu uitoan de'it iha Parlamentu tuir mai ne'e kompara ho lejislatura ida liu ba. Ami espera katak iha ne'ebá sei kontinua opozisaun Parlamentár ida ne'ebé forte, ativu, atu fó proposta alternativa ba inisiativa Governu nian. Ida ne'e nesesáriu ba transparénsia no partisipasaun públiku atu hili diresaun ba rai doben ida ne'e – la preokupa se mak Primeiru Ministru no partidu sira ne'ebé de'it mak forma Governu.

Ami konkorda ho determinasaun husi hakerek-na'in sira ba Konstituusaun Repúblika Demokrátika Timor-Leste ne'ebé “Hateten hikas ho solenidade nia determinasaun atu halo funu hasoru forma oin-oin tirania nian, opresaun, dominasaun no kaketak sosiál, kulturál ka tuir relijiaun, atu defende independénsia nasional, respeita no fó garantia ba direitus umanus, no ema sidadaun sira-nia direitu fundamentál, atu kaer metin prinsipiu haketak poder iha Estadu nia organizasaun no harii demokrasi sanak-barak nia regra prinsipál sira, hodi buka harii nasaun ida-ne'ebé justu no buras, hodi mós foti sosiedade ida-ne'ebé hakiak ema atu fó neon-laran ba malu nu'udar maun-alin.”

Iha Governu Unidade Nasionál ida, debates polítika sei halo iha Konsellu Ministru, iha odamatan ne'ebé taka nia kotuk. Sidadaun sira sei labele tuir ka partisipa iha desizaun ne'ebé importante. Ami espera katak Konsellu Ministru foun sei bele fó fatin atu hetan observasaun no bele asesu-ba kompara ho ida liu ba, maibé iha Governu Unidade Nasionál laiha garantia.

Ho Prezidente ida ne'ebé besik liu ba Primeiru Ministru, Timor-Leste sei iha *check and balance* uitoan duke durante tinan lima kotuk, bainhira ita iha Prezidente ida ne'ebé independente, no opozisaun Parlamentár ne'ebé moris, no pluralistiku. *Check* hirak ne'e mak bolu korruptor sira atu ba hatán no prevene inisiativa sira ne'ebé ladún matenek hanesan Kompañia Investimentu Timor-Leste no proposta Lei ba Rai, nune'e mós atu hadi'ak polítika no projetu sira.

Maibé iha tinan hirak daudauk ne'e, Orsamentu Estadu sa'e maka'as los, ema uitoan de'it mak hili diresaun sira, no sira mak halo duni erru. Ami espera katak bainhira periodu eleisaun ne'e liu tiha, Timor-Leste nia lider polítiku sira sei tau sira nia enerjia ba jestaun nasaun ida ne'e nia riku soin, servisu, diresaun no prioridade sira. Ami hakarak hare diskusaun polítika ne'ebé sériu liu duke saida mak ita hare durante kampaña eleisaun.

Asuntu sira ne'ebé kritikal -- Kintu Governu Konstitusionál dala ruma sei sai Governu ida ikus liu ho riku soin mina-rai ne'ebé signifikante atu gasta. Karik ita la uza rendimentu husi esportasaun mina-rai hirak ne'e atu harii ita nia ekonomia naun petróleu, hamenus dependénsia importasaun, haforsa agrikultura no harii rekursu umanu ne'ebé forte atu substitui mina-rai, ita sei hasoru dezastre lalais hafoin 2017. Governu ida lahó institucionaliza opozisaun polítika -- maski bolu “Unidade Nasionál” ka “Estadu ho Partidu Ida De'it” -- dala barak halo desizaun ne'ebé fraku no ignora povo nia hakarak, ameasa futuru jersaun Timor-Leste oin mai.

La preokupa partidu sira ne'ebé mak forma Governu, La'o Hamutuk no organizasaun sosiedade sivil sira seluk nafatin kontinua atu koko hodi reprezenta hakarak no nesiedade husi povu kbiit laek no sira ne'ebé vulneravel liu. Ami espera katak ami sei iha aliadu iha Parlamentu atu servisu hamutuk ba.