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New Survivability Systems Validated for US Armed Forces Vehicles, But Unsafe MRAPs, HMWWVs Still Being Deployed

The US military has now confirmed the viability of low-cost, life-saving systems to protect troops in military vehicles facing insurgent attacks. This means that vehicles currently being shipped to combat forces in Iraq and Afghanistan without the vital upgrades may now face the urgent necessity for in-theatre retrofitting of the technology, and the removal of systems which actually compound the dangers being faced by the troops.

Studies by the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA) — the publisher of *Defense & Foreign Affairs* and the Global Information System — over the past year have urged consideration and incorporation of the new systems to protect troops against the effects of blast, and the new tests now confirm absolutely the accuracy of the ISSA analysis.

US Army and US Marine Corps (USMC) officials in late January and early February 2008 validated, through a mandated series of scientific tests, internal military vehicle systems which would help save ground force personnel from grievous injury and death, and substantially mitigate the level of injuries, from enemy attacks using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) against vehicles.

One vehicle seating and harness system was shown to dramatically improve chances of survival and to avoid injury in vehicle accidents. However, the two separate tests also showed clearly that most existing systems being fitted in US military vehicles actually exacerbated the danger to troops and

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compounded the prospect of death or injury when their vehicles were subjected to blast or crash.

Despite this, many new armoured vehicles, and particularly the mine-resistant, ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles, and lighter HMMWV ("Hummer") vehicles, were still, as of mid-February 2008, being shipped to US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan without the now-validated safety system. The only system to pass the two sets of tests was the CCOPS *Cobra* system¹, which had been highlighted by independent analysis of the ISSA through 2007 and 2008.

Analysts at the ISSA contended in their findings that reductions in deaths and in the seriousness and pervasiveness of injuries received in Iraq and Afghanistan combat situations would have profoundly altered the strategic framework of the US-led "war on terror". ISSA President Gregory Copley noted that the possibility of perhaps halving US military deaths and catastrophic injury in the wars — which may have occurred had the life-saving technology been deployed from the beginning of combat operations in 2003 — would have had a profound impact on US political and public support for the wars and would have thus hastened its successful conclusion.

Mr Copley said that the scope of potential savings of lives and the prospect of massive reductions in both the occurrence and levels of injuries to troops was of "truly strategic proportions".

He noted: "There is little doubt that had such savings in lives and reductions in the frequency and levels of injuries occurred during the early stages of the Iraq deployment, in particular, then the US would have been politically empowered to have undertaken the type of decisive tactical and doctrinal approach to urban conflict subsequently taken during the 'surge' led by Gen. David Petraeus, commander of the Multi-National Force - Iraq (MNF-I), much earlier in the war. This would have led to a very different outcome for the US, the Coalition, and for Iraq."

The ISSA had been conducting an investigation into the lack of safety systems for US Army and USMC vehicles deployed in urban warfare systems since early 2007, and major omissions in survivability systems, highlighted in ISSA White Paper Reports of June 11, 2007, June 21, 2007, July 3, 2007, and October 8, 2007, had begun to be addressed by the US Army and USMC by October 2007. It took until February 2008, however, for scientific tests to be completed to validate the problems as outlined by the ISSA reports.

Tests on the seating and restraint systems for the MRAP were conducted at the highly-regarded Calspan Corporation test facility in Buffalo, New York, during the week of January 28, 2008, and at Penns Park, Pennsylvania, by the equally highly-regarded ARCCA Incorporated crash safety engineering test facility during the week of February 11, 2008. Testing for the HMMWV seats and restraint systems took place during the weeks of January 28 and February 4, 2008, at the NIAR Horizontal Accelerator test facility in Wichita, Kansas.

The crash portion of the testing on seats for the MRAP was undertaken by Calspan using a Hyge Horizontal Accelerator, and the blast and slam-down

¹ The CCOPS *Cobra* seating system was developed under contract with the US Army National Automotive Center at the Detroit Arsenal and is currently produced by Global Seating Systems LLC, of Exton, Pennsylvania. See earlier ISSA White Papers on Personnel Survivability for more complete details. Some additional details available at www.globalseating.com.

testing was performed at the ARCCA facility using a state-of-the-art drop tower. All tests were conducted using a 50th percentile Hybrid III anthropomorphic test device (a test dummy).

The new series of tests absolutely validated earlier ISSA allegations that most of the seating and restraint systems used in the MRAP and HMMWV were lethally dangerous to vehicle occupants, often posing as great a threat to the life of troops in combat or training operations as occurs from enemy-initiated blast action. Moreover, the test results sent many of the MRAP vehicle manufacturers rushing to correct the problem, even though they had, in many instances, ignored the ISSA warnings that their failure to act was exacerbating the situation.

Copley noted: "These test results not only validate the ISSA finding that only one seat and restraint system being fielded was up to the task of minimising battlefield losses of personnel to death and injury, but also validate the view that up-armouring vehicles is in itself an insufficient response to the fluidly-changing threat environment from insurgent-initiated blast."

The official test results have not yet been published by the US Army and US Marine Corps, but sources close to the tests said that, for example, the tests on the seats used in the Force Protection, Inc. MRAP vehicles — seats made by Seats Inc. — produced "the worst results ever seen" in such tests, and resulted in three simultaneous hardware failures. As well, the seats made by MasterCraft used on the Armor Holdings MRAP vehicles saw the failure of a key component during the tests.² Significantly, the Seats Inc. and MasterCraft seats and restraint systems used by some MRAP manufacturers were not built for military vehicles or a combat environment, and appear to have been chosen by MRAP manufacturers merely on cost grounds alone.

Tests were conducted for frontal (30 mph), lateral, and rear (just under 20 mph), and drop situations, as well as for blast. The Seats Inc. and MasterCraft seats both failed catastrophically in the tests,³ with the exception that the MasterCraft seat passed the lateral test. Only the CCOPS *Cobra* seating, made by GSS specifically to address the two-stage effects of blast, as well as crashes and rollovers commonly occurring in military vehicles, passed all of the tests, and did so unequivocally. A new seat from each vendor was provided for each of the three tests.

The ISSA White Paper of October 8, 2007, urged that:

² The seat made by MasterCraft (which also provides seats for many military vehicles throughout the world) suffered significant failure in the front vertical and rear tests. This seat was, for the tests and in its use on MRAPs, installed on a commonly used blast box which failed during the frontal and rear tests, bringing into question the use of a blast box and whether or not the many blast boxes in existence today are suited or properly tested for their environment. During the frontal test, the blast box and the seat tracks failed and the test dummy slid underneath the seat belts, which were improperly anchored. Had this been a human in the seat, the injuries would have been catastrophic. During the rear test, the blast box also failed, causing the dummy to slide up the seat back and strike its head. Had this crash occurred in a moving vehicle, the driver would have been forcibly shifted away from the driving position and unable to control the vehicle.

³ The seat made by Seats Inc. (which provides seats for many military vehicles throughout the world) failed the frontal test (at only 30mph) so emphatically that officials at the test facility ranked it as the ugliest test that they had ever seen. It was reported that the dummy was completely ejected from the seat in the frontal test, and that there were a large number of parts that just simply broke. During the rear test, the seat structure collapsed backwards causing partial ejection of the dummy. The side test could not be run on this seat due to fear of damaging the test facility.

1. US Congressional oversight functions begin to enquire more closely into manufacturer compliance with the intent and letter of MRAP specifications for seating and restraint systems which demand attention to blast attenuation and crash survivability, and to consider the legal liability of manufacturers whose systems place vehicle occupants at unnecessary risk;
2. The US Department of Defense elevate the priority of retrofitting of in-theatre M1114 HMMWV vehicles to the same level as the provision of new MRAP vehicles; and
3. The Department of Defense and the MRAP program office insist on full testing of all seats — driver, commander, and personnel seating — to be installed in MRAP and other military vehicles, to ensure that the seating meets the anticipated threat levels, not only with regard to direct effects of blast, but also addressing two-stage blast attenuation, frontal collision, and roll-over.

These recommendations led to ongoing pressure for testing to validate the internal systems of US military vehicles.

Significantly, the MRAP vehicles made by BAE Systems⁴, and currently being deployed in Iraq, all carry the CCOPS *Cobra* system in the front seat positions, although the company is now being urged to consider the seating for all positions in the vehicles to afford the same safety levels for all occupants.

ISSA Pres. Copley noted: "There is now absolutely no excuse for continued shipment of MRAPs or HMMWVs into combat or training operations unless they have the CCOPS *Cobra* system fitted. It is clear that some vehicle manufacturers persisted in the fitting of unsafe seats merely to improve profit margins, even though the MRAP specifications clearly stated that the seats and restraint systems had to be blast resistant. Some of the seats would not have even passed normal, civilian FMVSS (US Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards) requirements, and even those standards are totally inadequate to address the threat posed to life and limb by blast and crash situations."

He said that the long delays in getting the US and other defence forces to consider the vital role of appropriate seating and restraint systems in addressing the two-stage impact of blast, and in saving lives and the health of occupants during combat accidents and incidents, was reminiscent of the reluctance of navies in the Age of Sail to accept proven remedies for scurvy.

Delays, for reasons of bureaucratic obstinacy or for money-saving, in accepting life-saving approaches to dealing with scurvy, literally transformed the global strategic environment in the 18th Century, causing massive and unnecessary loss of life and dramatically slashing operational effectiveness. The failure to address scurvy in a timely and logical manner shaped modern history.

Today, we have seen the loss of life and the levels of injuries in the Iraq conflict – and elsewhere – mount to the point where the strategic picture has been impacted, quite apart from the massive human and financial cost entailed by failing to adopt new and proven approaches to dealing with the effects of combat blast on troops in military vehicles. With the latest evidence highlighted in the recent tests, there is now no valid excuse for

⁴ BAE Systems in 2007 acquired Armor Holdings, and now produces MRAP and other vehicles under both the BAE and Armor Holdings brands.

deploying military vehicles which incorporate components which actually increase the risks to personnel in combat and training operations.

The ISSA called for Congress to consider the legal liability of manufacturers who have knowingly installed untested and unsafe seats in MRAP, HMMWV, and other military vehicles, despite being warned of the dangers posed to troops.

**-Defense & Foreign Affairs Special
Analysis, February 16, 2008**

AKEL Leader Christofias Takes Cyprus Presidency

Cyprus communist party (AKEL: Progressive Party of the Working People, formerly the Communist Party of Cyprus) chief Demetris Christofias, 61, was officially declared the winner of the February 24, 2008, second round of elections for President of the Republic of Cyprus. Mr Christofias received 53.36 percent of the vote, defeating Ioannis Kasoulides who secured 46.64 percent. Outgoing Pres. Tassos Papadopoulos was eliminated on February 17, 2008, in a first round of Greek Cypriot elections. In thanking the Turkish Cypriot leaders who had congratulated him on his election win, President-elect Christofias said: "I extend a hand of friendship and cooperation to the Turkish Cypriots and their political leadership." He then added, "I invite them to work together towards our common goal for the good of Cyprus and its people." The inauguration of the new President will take place at a special session of the House of Representatives on February 28, 2008.

**-Defense & Foreign Affairs Special
Analysis, February 25, 2008**

US Satellite Interception Designed to Make Strategic Statement

There seems to be no escaping the strategic perception that the US Navy's successful intercept of a dying intelligence satellite has implications in the gradual repositioning of the major military powers with regard to the militarisation of space. Indeed, despite the careful public relations build-up to the missile interception, there was no evidence that the US Government wished to dissuade foreign observers from noting the readiness of US Ballistic Missile Defenses (BMD).

A Raytheon RIM-161A *Standard* Missile-3 (SM-3) heat-seeking missile launched from the US Navy Pacific Command (USPACOM) *Ticonderoga*-class cruiser USS *Lake Erie's* (CG-70) Mk. 41 Vertical Launch System (VLS) on February 21, 2008, at 22:26 hrs US EST, intercepted and destroyed a disabled US intelligence satellite (US 193), 130 miles above the Pacific ocean as it was losing orbit and falling towards Earth with a fuel tank of 1,000lb. (454kg) of toxic hydrazine. Most of the debris was expected to burn within 24 to 48 hours as it re-entered the Earth's atmosphere. The remaining fragments were expected to fall within 40 days.

The crippled satellite had no heat-generating system so the sun was used to raise its temperature sufficiently to allow the missile to find the spacecraft. A Lockheed Martin investor release⁵ described the mission involving "the SPY-

⁵ Ross, Ken: "Modified Lockheed Martin Aegis Weapon System Successfully Destroys Errant Satellite: Aegis Versatility Helps Avert Potential Disaster", LMC Investor Relations, February 22, 2008.

1B radar on the cruiser to detect the satellite during its orbit, and through the capable equipment and computer programs comprising the *Aegis* Weapon System, computed a targeting solution to guide an SM-3 missile to intercept the satellite". The statement went on to say that "the modifications to the *Aegis* systems on USS *Lake Erie*, USS *Decatur* and USS *Russell* made for this specific mission will now be restored to their normal Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) multi-mission configuration."

The decision by the US to proceed with this plan began several weeks earlier, as the satellite began to de-orbit. US Deputy National Security Advisor Amb. James F. Jeffrey announced on Thursday, February 14, 2008, that "President George W. Bush had instructed the Department of Defense to proceed" using a missile to destroy the satellite that began to lose power and communications soon after it was launched in December 2006 but that now had become uncontrollable.⁶

Anticipating that this decision would trigger reaction in some international circles, the planned intercept was broadly publicised well ahead of time. Covered extensively by US and foreign press, writer Marc Kaufman reported in *The Washington Post* (February 16, 2008, A2) that "The State Department sent cables to all US embassies [Friday, February 15, 2008] to instruct foreign governments how the upcoming attempt to shoot down an out-of-control spy satellite is different from China's destruction of one of its orbiting satellites early in 2007". The relatively low altitude of the hit was ostensibly designed for environmental and humanitarian reasons to avoid increasing space debris and prevent a potential crash into a populated area.

People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russian establishments were vocal in their criticism. Without mentioning its own successful anti-satellite missile test in 2007, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao "urged Washington to fulfil its international obligations and avoid threatening security in space and the security of other countries".⁷ The Itar-Tass news agency said that "speculations about the danger of the satellite hide preparations for the classical testing of an anti-satellite weapon," adding that "such testing means the creation of a new type of strategic weapon." "The decision to destroy the American satellite does not look harmless as they try to claim, especially at a time when the US has been evading negotiations on the limitation of an arms race in outer space."⁸

The issue of the futility of such a treaty against space weapons has been amply argued before and in a recent Opinion column of *The Wall Street Journal*, by Ashley Tellis, senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The recent PRC-Russia draft treaty focuses on "the wrong threat: weapons in space. There aren't any today, nor are there likely to be any in the immediate future." As to why Russia and the PRC would have proposed such a treaty, Tellis writes that "(t)hree hypotheses come immediately to mind". They — Russia and the PRC — either "genuinely fear an imminent American deployment of space weapons", want to use the treaty "to engage in some eye-catching histrionics" or hope "to draw

⁶ Amb. James Jeffrey, quoted by Marc Kaufman, in *The Washington Post*, A2, February 16, 2008.

⁷ Liu Jian Chao. quoted by Lague, *The New York Times*, A10, February 19, 2008.

⁸ Itar-Tass News Agency, quoted in BBC News, February 17, 2008.

international attention away from [the PRC's] own growing counterspace program".⁹

Whatever the underlying intentions of the US test, the message is clear, as John Tkacik of the Washington, DC-based Heritage Foundation pointed out, that the PRC and Russian leaderships would view it "as further indication that the US intends to develop its abilities to intercept incoming ballistic missiles that travel through the atmosphere and briefly through space".¹⁰

**-Dr Joan Vernikos, Defense & Foreign Affairs
Special Analysis, February 25, 2008**

Recent Timor-Leste Security Measures Suggest Larger Issues for Reform

On February 17, 2008, the Timor-Leste Government moved to temporarily place the nation's police force, the *Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (The National Police of East Timor: PNTL) under the command of the Army, the *FALINTIL-Forca Defesa Timor-Leste* (The FALINTIL Force for the Defence of East Timor: F-FDTL). The move was initiated in response to the attack by Alfredo Reinado and other rebel troops on President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão. The incident resulted in Pres. Ramos-Horta being shot twice and requiring evacuation to Darwin, Australia, for emergency medical treatment, and the death of Reinado and number of other rebels.¹¹

The creation of a combined security force raises a number of issues regarding security reform in Timor-Leste, the future viability of the state security apparatus, and the stability of the Timor-Leste Government.

The specific motivations for the attack on Pres. Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão remain unclear, as does the sequence of events leading up to the near fatal shooting of Ramos-Horta. While news sources have speculated on a possible coup, or an attempt to kidnap the leaders in exchange for a set of ill-defined demands to be met, the attack was unexpected by Western and Timorese analysts. However, as noted in a previous FDI analysis, published two days prior to the February 11, 2008 attack¹², Reinado's continued freedom of movement throughout the nation was a significantly larger problem than either the Timor-Leste or Australian Government would publicly admit, with indications suggesting that the Reinado issue would not resolve itself. Indeed, as Reinado's relationship with the Government, and in particular Prime Minister Gusmão, declined, it was likely that the impact which Reinado would have on government and social stability would only increase.

As investigations into the assault on Prime Minister Gusmão and Pres. Ramos-Horta begin, it is likely recent meetings between Reinado, and

⁹ Ashley. Tellis, Opinion column, *The Wall Street Journal*, A15, February 22, 2008.

¹⁰ Tkacik, John, quoted by Kaufman, *The Washington Post*, A2, February 16, 2008.

¹¹ Reinado was the leader of a faction of "petitioners", disgruntled former members of the F-FDTL who were sacked in March 2006 after they deserted their barracks to protest against perceived discrimination.

¹² FDI analysis stated: "While Australian and Timor-Leste Government personnel suggested that Alfredo Reinado and the petitioners were little more than a nuisance, this was likely a tactic to reduce their popularity in Timorese society. The reality is that they have the potential to create greater instability in Timor-Leste." *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*: February 9, 2008, Volume XXVI, No. 7: *Timor-Leste Rebels Continue to Act as a Destabilizing Influence*.

political and military officials will be raised. This will include casting light on the subject of discussions between Reinado and Ramos-Horta in the weeks prior to the attack, and a rumoured meeting between Reinado and a number of political parties, including *Associação Social-Democrata Timorense* (Timorese Social Democratic Association: ASDT); *Partido Social Democrata* (Social Democratic Party: PSD) and *Partido Democrático* (Democratic Party: PD). This meeting occurred on February 8, 2008, the date which FDI sources reported Reinado arriving in Dili. In the past, Reinado has enjoyed support from these parties, particularly PD, a primarily youth-focused party.¹³ This has been a segment of the population in which the "petitioner" cause has found much traction, and PD's rôle in the current governing alliance was likely a limiting factor in how the Reinado issue had been dealt with previously.

The move to temporarily combine the military (PNTL) and police (F-FDTL) was initiated at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers, which authorised the creation of a joint command for the two organisations. The integrated force exists under a government-declared state of siege (effectively a declaration of emergency and martial law), which was due to last until February 23, 2008, having been extended a further 10 days from an initial period of 48 hours immediately following the attacks.

Concerns have been raised that the current arrangements under which the integrated force would operate were unconstitutional.¹⁴ Under Timor-Leste constitutional law, the F-FDTL is required to serve under the command, and in support of, the PNTL. Additionally, in operational matters, the PNTL is under the command of United Nations Police (UNPOL), which retains executive policing rights within the nation, until security reform is complete, or at least until the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste's (UNMIT) mandate has expired. Claims are emerging that the F-FDTL is acting in a policing capacity, making arrests and searching premises, powers that in a state of siege are beyond their mandate. The assumption of a constabulary role by the F-FDTL was also a trend which emerged prior to the current crisis, where the F-FDTL has often provided security in civilian contexts that are generally the mandate of the PNTL or UNPOL.

A unified PNTL/F-FDTL belies the animosity which has existed between, not just the indigenous security organisations, but also international forces. All security forces have suggested that the other organisations could have prevented the attacks on the Pres. Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Gusmão from occurring.¹⁵ Tension has existed between the PNTL and F-FDTL since their creation, and animosity between the groups is often

¹³ Notably, these three parties form a large proportion of the governing coalition, the Alliance of the Parliamentary Majority (AMP). The other major party in the coalition is Prime Minister Gusmão's *Conselho Nacional de Reconstrução do Timor* (National Congress for the Reconstruction of East Timor: CNRT).

¹⁴ Wilson, B; Joint Command for PNTL and F-FDTL Undermines Rule of Law and Security Sector Reform in Timor-Leste, February 19, 2008.

¹⁵ The United Nations Police (UNPOL), have fended off claims that they were in the vicinity of where the initial shooting of Ramos-Horta occurred, and refused to assist the wounded President. UNPOL in turn countered that they were responsible for fending off the attackers. F-FDTL, under Brig. Taur Mata Ruak, has come under criticism for a failure to provide adequate perimeter security at the President's residence, claimed that this was, in fact, the job of UNPOL. The ISF has also been criticized by Brig. Ruak, and former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, for its inability to prevent the attacks from occurring in the first place. He also levelled similar accusations against UNPOL, and notably the PNTL.

blamed for the violence that during the petitioner crisis in the March to May period in 2006. Relations further soured between the two organisations on May 25, 2006, when eight unarmed PNTL members were killed by the F-FDTL.

Many of the current problems with East Timor's indigenous security forces can be traced to their creation. Particularly with the F-FDTL, the strategic objectives of the organisation were unclear at its inception. Created as a sovereign iteration of the *Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste* (The Armed Forces for the National Liberation of Timor-Leste: FALINTIL) guerilla force which had fought the Indonesian *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Armed Forces of Indonesia: TNI) during the period of Indonesia's annexation, the F-FDTL primarily existed as a vehicle to employ many of the ex-resistance guerilla's. Poorly funded and trained, and relying on lines of command that resembled resistance cells rather than a professional military organisation designed for sovereign defence. The F-FDTL eventually fractured in early 2006.¹⁶

The current commander of F-FDTL, Brig. Taur Mata Ruak, a key figure not only in security reform but also in Timor-Leste's political environment, was himself previously commander of FALINTIL (succeeding Prime Minister Gusmão in the rôle), and has remained effectively Chief of Army despite the 2006 petitioners crisis and a number of international observers questioning the rigidity and professionalism of his command and senior officer core. Ruak receives unanimous support from most East Timorese political factions, is considered a national hero and has functional, if not close relationship with the UN and ISF.¹⁷

The temporary fusing of the PNTL and F-FDTL has a number of implications. Within the population, it further erodes the distinction between external and internal security. By effectively engaging in joint operations with the ISF, it also creates a perception that the Timor-Leste's security apparatus is under the command of international forces.

Recent operations in the west of Timor-Leste to hunt down the fugitive rebels¹⁸, have resulted in a rural population which is increasingly becoming dissatisfied with the current Government's response to crisis. Parts of western Timor-Leste, including the Ermera district, which are currently the

¹⁶ As noted in the FDI *Weekly Global Report* on May 5, 2006: "Domestically, the F-FDTL competes with the PNTL for funding and areas of operation. Increased spending on the police force at the expense of the national defence force is increasingly becoming a source of tension between the executive and legislative arms. The PNTL is better armed and equipped, and is home to a number of special units, including a rapid response anti-terrorist unit. This is in contrast to the F-FDTL, which is housed in many cases in temporary barracks and is poorly equipped. According to Timor-Leste's budgetary plans, the PNTL will received an increase in its allocation, while the F-FDTL is likely to remain at the same levels for the next three years. This represents a decision by the Government to focus on internal security to a greater degree than national defence. However, a base level of funding is required to allow the F-FDTL to operate as an effective organisation."

¹⁷ Ruak is also considered to be a chief architect of the *Force 2020* defence white paper launched in the latter half of 2007. Notably, Australian input into the document was minimal, with significant involvement from Portuguese, and to a lesser extent, Indonesian advisers. FDI sources have also noted that a lack of government representation during the documents launch suggests that the government either chose to distance itself from the paper, or had little input into its creation.

¹⁸ Gastão Salsinha is currently the *de facto* leader of the petitioners, although his specific role in the attacks on the government, and the nature of the dynamic between himself and Alfredo Reinado within the petitioners' leadership structure is unclear.

focus of the manhunt, were a strong area of support for Reinado and his followers.¹⁹ Many of the petitioners who were sacked from the FDTL originated from western regions, and still harbour resentment against those within the FDTL and PNTL. While the current deployment and operational mix of the combined force is unclear, bringing these two parties into conflict could exacerbate the situation. An increased presence of international troops could potentially result in broader civil unrest. In such a scenario, violence could extend beyond Dili and into the rural regions.

How Timor-Leste recovers from this latest crisis and proceeds forward with security reform over the next year is of critical importance to the nation's future. The creation of Reinado as a rebel figure and fugitive, the petitioners crisis in March 2006, the broader violence which followed in May 2006, and the latest attack on government figures, are all derived from the failed management of the F-FDTL and PNTL. Additional training and reform has been implemented within the F-FDTL and PNTL by the UN and ISF, and, in the PNTL's case, operational control has been handed back to indigenous command in a number of districts. However, the quality of this training is an issue, with UNPOL often a fractured and divided force itself due to poor communication and competing operational issues, a function of the broad range of participating countries that form its ranks.

In the short-term, the threat from the rebel petitioners will be low. It is unlikely rebel leader Gastão Salsinha and the current fugitive rebels will enjoy the leniency from the Government which Reinado enjoyed.²⁰ Nor is Salsinha likely to replace Reinado as a romantic revolutionary figurehead for the petitioners. The Timor-Leste Government does not intend to wait for Salsinha to turn himself in peacefully, as it did with Reinado. Recent comments by Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith reinforced this.²¹

Politically, the Timor-Leste Government is entering a critical phase, with the opposition *Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente* (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor party: FRETILIN) party renewing calls for a parliamentary election, and, if Pres. Ramos-Horta proves unable to adequately carry out his duties as President, presidential elections.²² The internal dynamics of the governing AMP coalition remain unclear, with current Prime Minister Gusmão politically weakened by Reinado's assault. Potential exists for one or a number of parties to leave the AMP, depending on how the issue of the remaining rebel fugitives is dealt with. The parties most likely to depart the coalition would be PD or the ASDT/PSD coalition, potentially resulting in dissolution of government, and either parliamentary elections or the formation of a new government, with

¹⁹ As stated in an earlier FDI analysis: "Reinado [was] popular among many Timor-Leste residents, particularly in the West of the county..., due to petitioners protecting the community against gangs which destroyed houses and other property in late 2007." *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*: February 9, 2008, Volume XXVI, No. 7: *Timor-Leste Rebels Continue to Act as a Destabilizing Influence*.

²⁰ The Timor-Leste Government declined to arrest Reinado due to a desire to prevent further civil unrest and engage in peaceful negotiation with him. The President had also issued a freedom of movement letter to the rebel, cancelled arrest warrants against him, and requested the ISF refrain from capturing the rebel.

²¹ Australian Broadcasting Corporation, "Timor Should Reflect on Negotiation Policy: Smith", February 17, 2008.

²² Former Prime Minister and current FRETILIN leader Mari Alkatiri has suggested that Pres. Ramos-Horta was on the verge of declaring parliamentary elections in the days prior to the attack. The factuality of this remains unclear.

the FRETILIN party (which currently holds the most seats in the national parliament) forming a coalition government.

While Western news sources remain focused on the specific events leading up to Pres. Ramos-Horta's wounding, the real issue for Timor-Leste remains security reform. It is not yet understood whether Timor-Leste, in its current stage of economic and political development, can sustain, or requires, the two separate security forces of the PNTL and F-FDTL. In the short-term, it is seems unlikely that Timor-Leste would be able to field a military focused on national defence which would not be easily overwhelmed in a conventional conflict, and unlikely in the current global political climate that such an event would occur.

-Barry Patterson, FDI Research Fellow

Singapore Navy Commissions New Frigates

Singapore's Navy commissioned three new French-designed (DCN) 114m *Formidable*-class frigates — RSS *Intrepid*, *Steadfast*, and *Tenacious* — on February 5, 2008. They are part of an order for six of the class which were ordered, and are now Singapore's largest combatant vessels. The lead ship, RSS *Formidable*, already in service, was built by Direction des Constructions Navales (DCN) in France, with the follow-on ships being built in Singapore. The ships had been ordered in March 2000, with an anticipated in-service date of 2009, so the early commissioning of the ships, based on the 110m, 3,000 ton disp. *La Fayette*-class design, was a bonus for Singapore. The 25 kt vessels, powered by four MTU diesels, were to be equipped each with eight *Harpoon* SSM launchers, VLS for 32 *Barak* SAM, a single 57mm/70cal DP main gun system, and four 21 inch torpedo tubes.

-Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis, February 22, 2008

New Australian Government Initiates Border Security and Defence Reviews

The incoming Australian Government of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has, as anticipated, initiated major reviews of its border security and its defence and national security directions, although in the case of the proposed new *Defence White Paper* the Government has opted for what seems like a "business as usual" team.

The Prime Minister's office on February 22, 2008, issued a statement that the Australian Government would undertake a comprehensive review of homeland and border security arrangements in Australia, and that the review would be led by Rick Smith, the Secretary of the Department of Defence from 2002 to 2006, and, earlier, Australia's Ambassador to Indonesia and also to the People's Republic of China. The Review will draw on expertise from across Australian Government agencies with responsibility for homeland and border security, and would report to the Government by June 30, 2008.

Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon also said on February 22, 2008, that the proposed *Defence White Paper* would come under the direction of Michael Pezzullo, the Deputy Secretary of the Defence Department and former Deputy Chief of Staff to former Labor (ALP) leader Kim Beazley. Defence Minister Fitzgibbon also named think-tank researchers Ross Babbage, Mark

Thomson, and Maj.-Gen. (rtd.) Peter Abigail as his key advisors on the development of the White Paper. Maj.-Gen. Abigail had served as Australian Land Commander, and was currently executive director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). Dr Thomson is a former theoretical physicist who now heads ASPI's Budget and Management Program.

**-Defense & Foreign Affairs Special
Analysis, February 22, 2008**

Indonesian Army Defence Acquisition Budget Increased

The Indonesian Army in February 2008 won an increase in its acquisition budget by 6.4 percent to Rp 1.86-trillion (\$218.2-million) for FY2008, in response to an urgent need to replace much of its ageing equipment. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Agustadi Sasongko announced at a hearing in early February 2008 with House of Representatives Commission I on defence, security and foreign affairs, that the Army had raised its overall budget to around Rp 16-trillion (\$1.86-billion), but Rp 12.73-trillion (\$1.45-billion) of that money would go to improving the welfare of personnel. The Army raised the salaries of its 298,500 troops by 20 percent in 2008.

Agustadi estimated that repair and overhaul of Army systems in the forthcoming fiscal year would cost some Rp 116.6-billion.

Meanwhile, it was revealed in Jakarta on February 5, 2008, that the Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between Indonesia and Singapore had been cancelled. Defense Minister Juwono Sudarsono said that the bilateral agreement which had originally been signed at the Tampaksiring Palace in Bali in February 2007 was now invalid along with Singapore's assumption that understandings on legal extraditions between the countries were not logical. Singapore's objection, according to Minister Juwono, had been clearly seen when Singapore's Mentor Minister Lee Kuan Yew visited Indonesia in July 2007. He noted: "They dropped the DCA when Lee came." Minister Juwono had said in late 2007 that the DCA would be reformulated in 2008, separating it from the bilateral extradition agreement, but now indicated that since the two understandings were "strongly related", reformulation of the DCA was "impossible".

The House of Representatives Defense Commission, he said, considered that pursuing Indonesians wanted for corruption, who were in Singapore, could still be accomplished without the extradition agreement.

In other defence matters, Indonesian defence sources said that they were encouraged that US Pres. George W. Bush had, in February 2008, proposed US\$186-million (\$200.8-million) in bilateral assistance to Indonesia in 2009, including some US\$16-million (\$17.3-million) for military funding. The total amount was down US\$4-million (\$4.9-million) from 2008, but the military aid level remained roughly the same. Significantly, Pres. Bush also requested nearly US\$16-million (\$17.3 -million) in military aid for Myanmar, up from some US\$5-million (\$5.4-million) for 2008, ostensibly in order to encourage change in Myanmar.

**-Defense & Foreign Affairs Special
Analysis, February 22, 2008**

No Progress on Reinstating Philippine Acquisition of Attack Helicopters Following Bid Cancellation

Sources in Manila indicated on February 22, 2008, that there had been no progress as yet in getting the procurement process back on track for attack helicopters following an announcement in late January 2008 by the Philippine Department of National Defense that it had rescinded the P1.2-billion (\$31.9-million) contract for night-capable attack helicopters following alleged irregularities in the bidding process.

The Defense Department recommended that Asian Aerospace Corp. (AAC), the supposed winning bidder, be barred from joining future biddings involving the acquisition of military hardware. AAC is the local partner of US company McDonnell Douglas, which had ostensibly won the order for six MD-530F attack helicopters.

Defense Undersecretary Ariston de los Reyes, head of the fact-finding team that investigated the matter, said proper bidding procedures for six MD-530F attack helicopters were not followed. Undersecretary de los Reyes said the fact-finding team found that AAC was the only bidder which pre-qualified, but that it made some "alterations" or modifications in the specifications of the MD-530F helicopters. He noted: "If there had been consummation of the acquisition of the helicopters, we could have ended up with helicopters that were not the ones intended by the department to be acquired." The Air Force had wanted an attack helicopter which had a minimum payload of 3,000lb, inclusive of the pilot's weight. However, AAC made it appear that the MD-530F met that payload requirement, which turned out to be false.

Mr De los Reyes added that Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. had directed the fact-finding team to dig deeper and conduct a more detailed investigation to identify who will be held liable for the irregularities in the bidding process. The Defense department's Bids and Awards Committee is chaired by Defense Assistant Secretary Roberto Nuqui, and its members include Directors Edna Gueverra, Gladys Cagadoc and Jerry Jalandoni. Its provisional members are Lt.-Gen. Antonio Romero and Maj.-Gen. Ike Insierto. The Undersecretary said that Asian Aerospace could be also held liable for misrepresentation, when it said in their bidding papers that their aircraft complied with the minimum payload requirement set by the Air Force.

The investigation on the bidding stemmed from a complaint filed by PZL Swidnik SA, a Poland-based company which had claimed that the bidding "favoured" Asian Aerospace. Swidnik was offering an advanced version of the Russian-made Mi-2 Plus attack helicopters, known as *Kania* or *Kitty Hawk*. Agusta-Westland was disqualified from the bidding after it could not guarantee that it could deliver its helicopters within a 12-month period. The bidding for the acquisition of night-capable attack helicopters was opened in September 2007.

**-Defense & Foreign Affairs Special
Analysis, February 22, 2008**

Kosovo UDI is Start of Major Strategic Schism, Well Beyond the Balkans

Hostile Spanish reaction on February 15, 2008, to comparisons by Russian Pres. Vladimir Putin of the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) by the Albanian group controlling Serbian province of Kosovo with the Spanish Basque and Catalan separatist movements highlights the fragility of US encouragement for the breaking up of a European country. It also demonstrates – as was the clear intent of Pres. Putin – that the UDI of Kosovo is not *sui generis* (ie: totally unrelated to anything else) as the US Department of State has contended.

The Russian Government, however, is not the only key administration concerned with the broader disruptive ramifications of the UDI by Kosovo. The Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is monitoring closely the reaction among the pro-independence Taiwanese movements to see how much leverage they may attempt to gain from the Kosovo example, and there is concern that Beijing may take pre-emptive action to definitively end the ambiguous nature of the Taiwanese independence thrust. This may well have been one of the triggers of the statement, in late January 2008, by PRC Premier Wen Jiabao that the PRC in 2008 faced "a most difficult year".

The major areas for which political movements, almost all externally-supported, have already begun to use the Kosovo UDI example include, for example: Taiwan; the Russian regions of Chechnya (plus Dagestan and others); Moroccan Sahara; Kurdish areas of Iraq, Iran, Syria, etc.; Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh; northern Cyprus; Trans-dniestr; Xinjiang; Indonesian Western Papua; Republica Srpska in Bosnia-Herzegovina; and so on. That does not include the other areas which the Kosovo Albanians are trying to "liberate" in Southern Serbia, Montenegro, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and parts of Greece. A number of governments around the world, then, are bracing for an upsurge in secessionist activity, both political and physical.

The Prime Minister of the Serbian Province of Kosovo and Metohijia, Hashim Thaci, on February 17, 2008, announced the independence of the province, a gesture followed by ratification by the region's Parliament. Thaci said that Kosovo would pursue statehood in accordance with the UN plan drawn by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, but rejected by the Republic of Serbia.

Significantly, the UN Secretary-General had ordered an independent investigation of allegations by the German intelligence service, the BND, revealed by *GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, that Ahtisaari had taken massive bribes from Kosovo figures to promote independence. The UN investigative office contacted *GIS/Defense & Foreign Affairs* on the matter, but refused to take the matter forward in a timely manner which would have drawn attention to Ahtisaari's corruption, as a UN official, before Kosovo could use his "plan" as a basis for declaring independence.

Thaci said that the secession of Kosovo "marks the end of the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia", but this is wishful thinking, attempting to give legitimacy to the State Dept. rationale.

Quite apart from the reality that the Kosovo Albanian leadership will now promote the final "ethnic cleansing" of Serbs from Kosovo ("ethnic

cleansing" is historically a Croatian term, and was promoted during World War II as a Croatian strategy), it is now probable that the Bosnian Serb community in the enclave of Republica Srpska will now move for independence from Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the same time, the key US lobbyist for Albania and Albanian Kosovo, former US Congressman Joseph Diogardi, has already begun pushing for the secession, presumably to join Kosovo, of the Serbian municipalities of Bujanovac, Medvedja, and Preševo, which face Kosovo's eastern border, possibly reviving the "Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedja" (UCPMB in Albanian) which fought and lost an insurgency war in 2000-2001.

It was not surprising, then, to find, amid the flags being waved of the Republic of Albania at "independence celebrations" in the Kosovo regional capital, and that some new flags, ostensibly vying for acceptance as the official flag of an independent Kosovo, showed five stars, and in some cases six stars, on their flag to represent Kosovo, southern Serbia, Montenegro, FYROM, Greek Chameria, and Albania, despite the fact that the present Kosovo leadership has said that it did not seek union with Albania. Indeed, there is some suggestion that it seeks eventually to subsume Albania.

It is likely that the UDI will indeed be seen as a precedent for further actions around the world – not just in Europe – in defiance of the State Department's order that the Kosovo declaration be seen as "*sui generis*". The European Union (EU), which has had no option but to essentially accept the US State Dept. position encouraging the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) to seize control of Kosovo and declare independence, will now be left to clean up the immediate situation through the injection of policing, but the US, in the political paralysis always evident in the final, "lame duck" year of an eight-year presidential term, will do little but attempt to put pressure on the Republic of Serbia to accept the UDI as a *fait accompli*.

But the Kosovo UDI is only the opening round of the Kosovo/Albanian moves, and the decision to push for an expansion of Kosovo, to seize more of Serbia's territory as well as parts of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and parts of Greece is already underway with a campaign literally orchestrated by former US Congressman Diogardi, and fully supported by such key international actors as Iran, which has remained constantly engaged in the training and arming of Islamist-*jihdist* groups (even those which are ostensibly *salafist*/Wahhabist) since the beginning of the 1990s.

The foreign ministries of the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and the US will immediately move to recognise the independence claim of Kosovo, but rather than ending the matter, the recognition by these NATO leaders will more likely merely exacerbate the growing disintegration of several major multinational institutions, such as the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It will certainly play a distinct role in the growing polarisation of power *blocs* into the growing "New Cold War" situation. The irony of the State Dept.-led UDI by Kosovo is that the action mirrors the trigger for the outbreak of World War I, which also occurred in the Balkans, in Sarajevo, which is literally adjacent to Kosovo. And even though, for example, the UK Government has supported Kosovo independence, the UK Government is aware that the situation is now explosive in Kosovo. The UK Government, which already has 150 troops in Kosovo as part of the largely ineffective NATO-led, 15,000 strong K-FOR peacekeeping force, had, by February 18, 2008, placed an additional 600

troops on readiness for deployment to Kosovo. This substantially impacts Britain's capacity to upgrade peace enforcement activities in Afghanistan, for example.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus – along with two other EU states, Slovakia and Romania – declared, even during a critical Presidential election process, that it would never recognise an independent Kosovo, and while the US and EU may find it easy to dismiss the views of Cyprus, this in turn leads to the follow-on reality that the Kosovo situation has already led to the empowering of those in charge of the breakaway area of northern Cyprus, who should be expected to now push more vigorously for recognition of their own "independence", supported by Turkish military force.

Pres. Putin noted on February 15, 2008: "Aren't you ashamed, you Europeans, to have double standards to solve the same issues in different regions of the world. ... What's the use of encouraging separatism? People don't want to live in a Spain in the heart of single state. Well, let's support them then!" His reference was clearly to the separatist movements in Spain northern Basque Country and eastern region of Catalonia, and it sparked an obvious reaction from Madrid. Not that Spain favours the US-led initiative on Kosovo. Spanish Secretary of State for EU Affairs Alberto Navarro said in Bratislava in early February 2008 that Spain would not recognise the Kosovo UDI.

The US State Department, however, has made it clear that it would work to make acceptance of Kosovo a *de facto* reality, despite the fact that the Department has yet to articulate how this move furthers US interests in the Balkans other than, perhaps, to sow discord in the EU, which is not an acknowledged US policy. Moreover, the aggressive promotion of Kosovo independence supports only the State Department's known advocacy of Turkish interests in Europe, given the Turkish legal and criminal links with the Kosovo leadership which remains, effectively, a KLA movement.

But the US State Dept. action does, in fact, support the longstanding actions of the Iranian clerical Government, which benefited in November 2007 by the State Department's pressure for a Washington-Tehran accord which effectively cedes hegemony over the Persian Gulf and Northern Tier region in exchange for a "safe" US withdrawal from Iraq. Iran's clerics have begun to consolidate a Westward strategic thrust which takes Tehran's power projection through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon to the Mediterranean coast and effectively into the heart of Europe through Kosovo and Bosnia.

Again, the State Department has yet to explain why its support of the Iranian clerics benefits long-term US or Western interests, other than facilitating short-term avoidance of confrontation and the encouragement of the spread of oil and gas pipelines from Iran and through Iran from the Caspian to the Indian Ocean, a policy which directly supports some US investors. But this comes at a time when the global economy is moving – over a period of perhaps the next 30 years or so – toward a reduction of the economic impact of petroleum as a key determinant in strategic policy.

In reality, the State Department is operating on a momentum built around strategic priorities determined in the 1930s and through the mid-20th Century, rather than on an understanding of 21st Century strategic determinants and geopolitics. It could be argued that the State Department is still attempting to usurp Britain's 20th Century geographic projection and control of petroleum resources – closing the stable door after the horse has

bolted – while in fact new realities have emerged which should have changed its priorities. But, then, foreign ministries are not noted for their prescience on understanding the future, but rather in reinforcing *status quo* situations which, in fact, no longer apply.

Meanwhile, in a reaction to the Kosovo declaration, beginning on February 17, 2008, many Greek citizens (including some public figures) initiated the collection of signatures (through the Internet) to support the independence of northern Epirus in Albania. The ethnic Greek Mayor of the Greek-populated city Himara, in Albania, announced on February 17, 2008, that if Albania would not return the properties/assets of Greeks dispossessed by the Albanian Government, he would declare northern Epirus an autonomous state. This has become a major issue in Albania.

The unforeseen consequences, in the Balkans and elsewhere, of Kosovo's UDI have already begun to emerge. Even so, this writer and this Service have written since the early 1990s of the possible outcomes of the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. Those forecast outcomes are now coming to fruition with great clarity, even though they were widely attacked over the past two decades.

- Gregory R. Copley, FDI Director & Chairman of
the Research Committee

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