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SECTION 1 OF 3

TEXT

SUBJ: INDONESIAN MILITARY MOTIVES IN EAST TIMOR (U)

DOI: 10 MAY 99 (AS OF 1000 EST)

TEXT: 1. (6) THE ARMED FORCES' DETERMINATION TO RETAIN EAST TIMOR IN INDONESIA UNDERPINS A POLICY OF SUPPORT FOR MILITANT TIMORESE INTEGRATIONISTS, ALTHOUGH THE VIOLENT EXCESSES OF THESE GROUPS HAVE FORCED CHANGES IN THE MILITARY'S APPROACH. THE STRONG ANTI-INDONESIAN FEELINGS PREVALENT IN EAST TIMOR SUGGEST THE MILITARY WILL BE HARD PRESSED TO PREVENT A PRO-INDEPENDENCE VICTORY DURING THE PLANNED UN REFERENDUM IN AUGUST. SUCH AN OUTCOME WILL CREATE FURTHER PROBLEMS FOR DEFENSE LEADERS WHO STILL SUPPORT THEIR TIMORESE ALLIES BUT ACKNOWLEDGE THE COUNTRY'S NEED FOR A STABLE AND COOPERATIVE EAST TIMOR.

2. (C) CLINGING TO EAST TIMOR. PRESIDENT HABIBIE'S SÜRPRISE OFFER IN LATE JANUARY - TO RECOMMEND EAST TIMOR'S INDEPENDENCE IF THE TIMORESE REJECT JAKARTA'S AUTONOMY - HAS LEFT A CONFUSED PICTURE OF INDONESIAN INTENTIONS. DESPITE A PERSONAL INTEREST IN JETTISONING THE TROUBLESOME PROVINCE, PRESIDENT HABIBIE, FACING PRESSURE WITHIN HIS

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POLITICAL BASE AND GROWING SEPARATIST DEMANDS ELSEWHERE, HAS BEEN FORCED TO ADOPT A TWO-TRACK APPROACH OF ACCOMMODATING FOREIGN DEMANDS FOR THE PROVINCE'S SELF-DETERMINATION WHILE BACKING MEASURES TO ACHIEVE A WINNING VOTE FOR AUTONOMY. LAST WEEK'S UN-MEDIATED AGREEMENT BETWEEN JAKARTA AND PORTUGAL, THE FORMER GOVERNING POWER, SET THE BASIC GUIDELINES FOR THIS PROCESS, INCLUDING THE UN-MANAGED "CONSULTATION" ON 8 AUGUST.

- 3. (C) THE MILITARY'S POLICY UNDERSCORES A STRONG DETERMINATION TO ENSURE A PRO-AUTONOMY VOTE, CONTINUING ITS 23-YEAR STRUGGLE TO RETAIN INDONESIAN SOVEREIGNTY. CRITICAL OF HABIBIE'S OFFER TO RELINQUISH EAST TIMOR, THE MILITARY HAS TURNED TO PROGOVERNMENT TIMORESE TO SPEARHEAD THE PRO-AUTONOMY CAMPAIGN. LOCAL COMMANDS HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN FOSTERING SUPPORT FOR NEWLY FORMED MILITANT TIMORESE MILITIAS, PROVIDING TRAINING AND SURPLUS ARMS FOLLOWING STEPPED-UP REBEL ATTACKS LAST YEAR. THE MILITARY STOOD ASIDE DURING THE MILITIA'S MONTHS-LONG CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE, INCLUDING A RAMPAGE THROUGH THE CAPITAL, DILI, ON 17 APRIL THAT LEFT MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE DEAD.
- 4. (5) NEW MILITARY APPROACH. MILITIA ATROCITIES HAVE HEIGHTENED THE PRESSURE ON ARMED FORCES COMMANDER GEN WIRANTO. SEEKING TO SILENCE CRITICS, WIRANTO ORCHESTRATED A TRUCE, AND LOCAL COMMANDERS HAVE SINCE ORDERED TROOPS NOT TO TOLERATE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND TO ENSURE A PEACEFUL UN VOTE. THE MILITARY IS NOW SEEKING TO RALLY NONVIOLENT PRO-INTEGRATIONIST FORCES TO CAMPAIGN FOR AUTONOMY, BUT ITS TOLERATION OF MILITIA PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND BRUTAL BEHAVIOR PERSISTS. CLASHES IN DILI ON 9 AND 10 MAY BETWEEN MILITIA GROUPS AND PRO-INDEPENDENCE YOUTH UNDERSCORE THE EXISTING TENSION, WHICH SECURITY FORCES HAVE YET TO DAMPEN.
- 5. (S) FUTURE UNCERTAINTIES. THE UN'S BROAD AUTHORITY TO MANAGE THE VOTE, COMBINED WITH INDONESIA'S COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN ORDER, WILL GIVE THE MILITARY STRONG INCENTIVES TO RESTRAIN MILITIA VIOLENCE. HABIBIE HAS ACQUIESCED TO A UN FORCE, INCLUDING CIVILIAN POLICE. THIS INTERNATIONAL FORCE SHOULD HEIGHTEN CONFIDENCE AND DISCOURAGE VIOLENCE BUT ALONE WILL NOT ELIMINATE FIGHTING OR POTENTIAL THREATS TO UN PERSONNEL. SECURITY RESPONSIBILITY WILL FALL TO THE INDONESIAN POLICE, WHICH WILL BE EXPANDED IN CONCERT WITH A TROOP DRAWDOWN. HOWEVER, CONSIDERING POLICE FEAR OF MILITIA RETALIATION, THE MILITARY'S CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT IN ENSURING SECURITY AND THE SAFETY OF UN PERSONNEL WILL REMAIN CRITICAL.
- 6. (C) A MILESTONE IN THIS PROCESS WILL BE THE DISARMAMENT OF THE WARRING TIMORESE GROUPS. ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO MOVE QUICKLY ON THIS FRONT, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SEEKS A TRANSFER CEREMONY WITHIN THE NEXT 2 MONTHS. NONETHELESS, A COMPLETE WEAPONS HANDOVER IS UNLIKELY IN VIEW OF THE SUSPICIONS THAT ABOUND. RUMORS OF HIDDEN STOCKPILES AND THE PREVALENCE OF TRADITIONAL ARMS FURTHER COMPLICATE THE SITUATION.
- 7. (C) ANOTHER UN CHALLENGE WILL BE ENSURING A FAIR VOTE, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE SHORT RUNUP AND PREVAILING TENSION. BOTH SIDES INTEND TO STEP UP EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE VOTE, WITH PRO-INTEGRATIONISTS PLAYING ON DEEP-SEATED FEARS OF A CIVIL WAR IF AUTONOMY IS REJECTED. THE UN FORCE WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY HALTING MORE SUBTLE COERCIVE MEASURES. THE MILITIAS ALREADY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DRIVING INDEPENDENCE SUPPORTERS UNDERGROUND IN SOME AREAS, BUT REBEL LEADER JOSE "XANANA" GUSMAO REMAINS CONFIDENT THE UN FORCE WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO ALLOW AN OVERWHELMINGLY PRO-INDEPENDENCE VOTE.
- 8. (8) POSTELECTION SECURITY IS NOW MUCH LESS CERTAIN, CONSIDERING

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THREATS BY MILITIA LEADERS TO WAGE A GUERRILLA STRUGGLE OR FORCE THE PARTITION OF THE PROVINCE IN THE CASE OF AN INDEPENDENCE VICTORY. THE MILITARY WILL BE UNDER STRONG PRESSURE TO DISCOURAGE THREATS AGAINST UN PERSONNEL OR A PRO-INTEGRATIONIST REVOLT HARMFUL TO JAKARTA'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. AT THE SAME TIME, JAKARTA IS LIKELY TO INSIST ON ADEQUATE PROTECTIONS FOR THOSE REMAINING IN EAST TIMOR. FAILURE OF THE TIMORESE RECONCILIATION PROCESS COULD ENCOURAGE LOCAL COMMANDERS . TO PRESS FOR FURTHER BACKING FOR THE MILITIAS, EVEN INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR PARTITIONING. STILL, JAKARTA PROBABLY WILL RETAIN INTEREST IN PROMOTING A STABLE TRANSITION, SECURING ITS BORDER, AND FOSTERING CORDIAL TIES TO WHATEVER POLITICAL ENTITY EMERGES IN EAST TIMOR. 9. <del>(C)</del> THE UN AGENDA. ON 5 MAY, INDONESIA AND PORTUGAL FORMALLY SIGNED A HISTORIC POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON EAST TIMOR, ENDING 15 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC WRANGLING. THE CENTERPIECE IS INDONESIA'S WIDE-RANGING AUTONOMY PROPOSAL THAT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE TIMORESE PEOPLE FOR APPROVAL ON 8 AUGUST. IF THEY REJECT AUTONOMY, PRESIDENT HABIBIE HAS PLEDGED SUPPORT FOR TRANSFERRING THE PROVINCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS. INDONESIA'S SUPREME PEOPLE'S CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY, CONVENING IN LATE AUGUST, IS TO MAKE THE ULTIMATE DECISION. 10. <del>(C)</del> JAKARTA AND LISBON ALSO FORMULATED SEPARATE AGREEMENTS ON SECURITY AND POLLING ARRANGEMENTS. THE UN WILL REMAIN EXTENSIVELY ENGAGED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. A UN ADVANCE TEAM HAS ALREADY ARRIVED, AND PLANS ARE BEING READIED FOR ABOUT 1,000 FOREIGN CIVILIAN PERSONNEL, INCLUDING 250 TO 270 CIVILIAN POLICE OFFICERS FROM UP TO 15 COUNTRIES TO ADVISE THE INDONESIAN POLICE AND SECURE THE BALLOT. SOME SIX COUNTRIES ALSO WILL ASSIST THE UN - AUSTRALIA, JAPAN, THE PHILIPPINES, GERMANY, THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND THE UNITED STATES. 11. (e) SECURITY PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO WORK OUT. LINGERING INSTABILITY AND CONCERNS FOR THE SAFETY OF ITS PERSONNEL

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