



PRESS RELEASE

VERIFICATION OF VETERANS DATA CONTINUES

Dili /25 January, 2005

The 'Comissão de Verificação de Dados' project, funded by UNDP RESPECT, officially launched at the Office of the President on Tuesday 25 January at 11am. President Xanana Gusmão, SRSG and UNDP Resident Representative, Dr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, and 18 veteran commanders who were sworn in to undertake the important work of verifying the list of Veterans will also attend. The Japanese Ambassador, Mr. Hideaki Asahi, representing the country that has provided most of the funds for RESPECT, also attended the ceremony as an observer.

The '*Comissão de Verificação de Dados*' (Commission for the Verification of Data) project is composed of 18 former Falintil cadres active during the resistance struggle, who were directly appointed by President Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão.

The new Commission has been tasked with the verification of the list of 'Veterans of Falintil' compiled by the former President's Commission for Falintil Veterans Affairs (CAAC/CAVF), as well as with recording the command structure during the armed struggle from 1975. The work of the Commission for the Verification of Data will subsequently form the base for the President of the Republic to formally recognise the contribution of the Veterans to the liberation of the country in accordance with the relevant laws approved by the Parliament.

Dr. Hasegawa, the UNDP Resident Representative welcomed the project. "Recognition and acknowledgement of those involved in the struggle for independence, is a very important step in ensuring future peace and stability in Timor-Leste and RESPECT is very happy to support the latest step in this vitally important process." He said.

A final report containing the list of the Veterans of Falintil will be submitted at the end of the programme to President Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão.

UNDP is the United Nations worldwide development network. It advocates change and provides countries with access to the knowledge, skills and resources their people need to improve their lives.

For more information please contact:
Kym Smithies, UNDP Media Officer on +670 724 4987 or kym.smithies@undp.org