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DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN TIMOR-LESTE: Reconciling the Local and the National

Edited by David Mearns

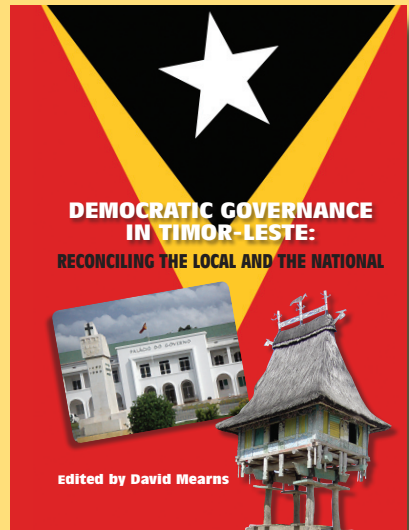
Three days after the Darwin conference from which this volume arose in February 2008, the violent attacks on the president and prime minister of Timor-Leste took place. President Ramos-Horta arrived in Darwin for treatment just as some of the authors represented here were leaving to return to their homes having participated in a two day discussion on the theme Democratic Governance in Timor-Leste: Reconciling the Local and the National. The timing of the conference seemed almost prophetic given the concerns raised by the delegates regarding the ongoing conflict and violence in Timor-Leste.

Contributors in some cases revised their conference papers for publication in light of the horrifying threats to the lives of Timor-Leste's leaders; others let their discussion stand as it had been presented. The result is an important collection of articles that provide highly pertinent insights into the current dilemmas of the government and people of the new republic to Australia's north. The book gives voice to East Timorese commentators as well as to Australian and other international scholars.

The volume explores the necessity to come to terms with the past in order to move on to a better future. It also considers the role of the state and parliament in the new democracy while seeking to set these against the cultural and social practices of the people that affect their development. Finally, it examines the role of agencies that have sought to assist in the country's transformation from a colonised to a post-colonial society with a sound economic future.

Contributors: Fernanda Borges, Fiona Crockford, Annette Field, James J. Fox, Mark Green, Damian Grenfell, Jill Jolliffe, Damien Kingsbury, Andrew McWilliam, Andrew Marriott, Akihisa Matsuno, David Mearns, Sara Niner, Yukako Sakabe, Dennis Shoemsmith, Pyone Myat Thu, Josh Trindade, Bu V.E. Wilson

Assistant Editor: Steven Farram



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ISBN: 9780980457834

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