

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 19 October 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour, on instruction from my Government, to transmit a copy of the letter signed by José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, on multinational military forces in Timor-Leste (see annex). I would highly appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sofia **Borges**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



Annex to the letter dated 19 October 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

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Multinational military forces in Timor-Leste

On behalf of the people of Timor-Leste and the Government, I wish to take this opportunity to extend appreciation to you and the Members of the Security Council for having established the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and for having previously endorsed the multinational forces from Australia, Malaysia and New Zealand, along with Portugal's gendarmerie force, who came to our aid in May this year.

I note that in resolution 1704 (2006) of 25 August 2006, paragraph 2, the Secretary-General was requested to review the arrangements to be established between UNMIT and the international security forces, having consulted all stakeholders, including the Government of Timor-Leste, and present his views no later than 25 October 2006.

I refer to our letter of 18 August, where I stated the Timorese leadership's view on the subject matter; and I will now outline our current view of the Timorese leadership on this matter so as to properly inform you, having consulted and taken into account the best interests of the people of Timor-Leste and that of neighbours and the current issues facing the Security Council.

• Multinational-international security forces for Timor-Leste

In our letter of 11 June 2006, it was said that the multinational security forces known as Joint Task Force 631 (JTF 631) had quickly quelled the violence and stabilized the situation. They continue to do this in an exemplary manner and are providing a secure environment in which the Timorese leaders and UNMIT can undertake their respective governance and support and good offices roles.

This enables the Timorese leadership to focus on current priorities of nation-building focused on service provision, especially to the poor, assistance to internally displaced persons to resettle and return home through the "Simu Malu" programme in conjunction with our President's national dialogue initiative, and institution-building; and for the United Nations police, currently 700 strong, to carry out regular policing functions, while working in close collaboration with Timorese institutions and authorities to reconstitute the national police force of Timor-Leste.

The current arrangement of the United Nations police, through UNMIT, undertaking the State function of law and order, and the military forces Joint Task Force 631, with Australia's contribution, providing security, is working extremely well. The coordination has been excellent since day one of the deployment and this has now been consolidated with UNMIT.

Australia, with military forces that currently comprise approximately 1,000 troops, has advised us that it is willing to stay at least until the elections of 2007 and beyond that time, by negotiation, if needed.

The Australian Prime Minister John Howard MP, informed me on a visit to Australia on 12 October 2006, in addition to the above, that the number of troops now in Timor-Leste would remain close to that number until at least December, and beyond if needed, and that the minimum number of troops at any time would not be below battalion strength.

Other States have indicated that they will consider deploying troops to join the current arrangement, as part of a regional multinational security force.

I am very mindful, as are all Timorese, that at this time the Security Council is seized with many matters that are needing urgent attention and resources, and am further mindful not to be a resource drain, especially when we have neighbours able and willing to assist the Security Council.

I can therefore state that it is the wish of all institutions of State, including our President, for this current arrangement of the police forces being under blue berets and the military forces being under green helmets to continue, with the approval of the Security Council. This position best suits the situation in Timor-Leste.

(Signed) José **Ramos-Horta**
Prime Minister
