



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE

ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE MEETING OF THE
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

22 FEBRUARY 2011

Your Excellency the President of the Security Council
Distinguished Members of the Security Council
Ladies and Gentlemen

First and foremost, and on behalf of the People I represent, please allow me to thank this great Council, its permanent members and all others who have walked through these halls for the generosity and concern that you have shown in your resolutions on Timor-Leste.

After more than 5 years, I must say it is a great pleasure to be back here at the United Nations Headquarters.

I must also recall that in May 2006 the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Dr Ramos-Horta, came before this Council to plead for the support that our people needed, at a time where intolerance trumped constructive dialogue, so that we might find proper solutions.

My presence here today follows that SOS we sent 5 years ago.

I am also pleased to be accompanied by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms Ameerah Haq, since thanks to her commitment and dedicated leadership at UNMIT the relationship between Timor-Leste and the United Nations remains strong as ever.

I am also honour bound to thank my good friend Mr Atul Khare for everything he did, in very trying circumstances, both for the Timorese and for the Mission he led. My friend Atul Khare always showed great responsibility and care in his work, as well as great understanding and cooperation, so that together we could achieve our duty: to restore confidence in the Timorese society.

Since UNMIT's establishment in 2006, both our President of the Republic, Mr Ramos-Horta, and the Vice-Prime Minister, José Luís Guterres, as well as Mr Atul Khare and Ms Ameerah Haq, in their due time, have been reporting to this Security Council on the progress achieved in Timor-Leste.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to underline a few of the steps we have made since the 5-party Coalition Government I lead entered into office on 8 August 2007:

- for the first two years, we focused our efforts on restoring peace and stability and solving most of the social and political problems created by the 2006 crisis, which continued up to 2008;

- we implemented and continue to implement structural reforms in regard to management of the administration of the State;

- we have been creating systems and structures in order to ensure good governance, continuing to provide support in building institutional capacity and that of the agents of the Justice sector ;

- we have been implementing social policies in order to reduce the imbalances in our society, taking into account the physical, moral and psychological damage caused by a war that lasted 24 years;

- we have been nurturing structured policies on education, health and agriculture;

- we have been promoting a coherent economic policy throughout the country in regard to our nascent national private sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The restoring of peace and stability in the Country was primarily a result of the reforms started in the PNLT and F-FDTL, which by 2008 finally ended the cycle of friction, overcoming the petty differences that divided both institutions. Since the Joint Operation in 2008, the PNLT and F-FDTL have been activated here and there to continue the exercise to restore normality in the Country, in full compliance with the values of a Democratic State under the Rule of Law.

While one of the main factors in the 2006 crisis was the inability of State Bodies to manage problems collectively, in February 2008, at a time of extreme gravity and threat against the constitutional order, we saw all State institutions working in a coordinated manner and in close collaboration, thereby meeting all legal and constitutional requirements for overcoming that prolonged crisis. The result was the creation of a political precedence of enormous significance and scope, which shows to the Timorese that there are proper instruments they can use to save the country from anarchy and disorder.

Nevertheless, I must acknowledge the extremely important role played by civil society, including the Church and NGOs, as well as the political parties, the youth and, most of all, our People, in this process for consolidating

National Unity and Stability. In 2009, the year marking the 10th Anniversary of the Referendum, this enabled the Government to issue a new motto: ‘Goodbye Conflict, Welcome Development’, which the people embraced with all their hearts.

Thus, on 31 December 2010, after the first decade in which the Timorese People were truly free, we saw off the year in a festive atmosphere, knowing that we are on our way to becoming a friendly and – most of all – tolerant and peaceful society.

It was in this mood that the fireworks in Dili greeted the 2011-2020 decade, during which we will be strengthening these values and starting a bolder development period.

Your Excellency Madam President
Ladies and Gentlemen

I did not come here to praise the progress made by my Government, so as to correct some reports on Timor-Leste that tend to sound more like verdicts. We regret those reports, but we try to understand their reasons. I also did not come here to underestimate the difficulties and the challenges that still lie ahead of us.

We are aware that we still have many needs as a nation. We are fully aware of the efforts we will have to take in order to build State and country. Still, we have not been alone in meeting these challenges, for we have benefited from the generosity and support of Nations from all over the world. And you, the distinguished members of the Council, you represent that generosity and support, because you represent those Nations from all over the world.

Hence we continue to strengthen and, little by little, to expand our ties of solidarity with friendly countries from various continents and with different histories, different beliefs and different ethnicities.

Most of all, we are taking our due place in our region. We are currently formalising our application for membership of ASEAN, during the Indonesian presidency of this regional forum. We believe that having Timor-Leste join ASEAN during the Indonesian presidency will have great symbolism not only for Timor-Leste and Indonesia, but also for all the members of this Association.

We are also continuing to strengthen our relationship with other friends in the Asia Pacific region, including China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New

Zealand, among others. Timor-Leste is also strongly committed to the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, which includes countries from the four corners of the world.

We also have ties of cooperation with India, where dozens of Timorese are studying in the areas of IT and Oil.

We are also fortunate to have strong support and assistance from the European Union and its member States. After this important visit to the United States, I will also be travelling to Cuba, where over 700 Timorese are studying medicine, as well as to Brazil, a country with which we are also cooperating in several areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Timor-Leste is truly committed to having dialogue with several countries so as to enable a critical review of processes. As a Nation, we have received much from the international Community; currently we hope to be able to reciprocate, in a genuine manner and within the same spirit of solidarity, by sharing experiences, both sweet and sour, with other fragile countries throughout the world.

As such, in April 2010, we had the honour of hosting the International Dialogue under the motto 'Peacebuilding and Statebuilding', with the participation of LDCs from the 'g7+', which is currently chaired by Timor-Leste. The general goal of the 'g7+' is to awake leaders and peoples so that they may reacquire ownership of their processes, viewed within a long term perspective without losing sight of the characteristics of each country and their priorities, and without forgetting to focus also on the need for a better control and adjustment over outside help, requiring greater transparency by donors and beneficiaries, so that the real impact of that support can be seen in the development of the countries.

The 'g7+' is enabling countries that are fragile and affected by conflicts to gather and to speak about themselves, to learn from their mutual experiences and to create new opportunities to face the future with determination and optimism. The 'g7+' currently includes 17 member countries representing 350 million people, from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Timor-Leste has also been involved for the 3rd consecutive year in the Bali Democracy Forum, which has been gaining participants every year. Countries like India, Iran, Bangladesh and others have also chosen to give their

important contributions to this Forum, showing that the world wants to discuss the subject of democracy.

I would like to convey my respect and admiration for my friend Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the President of the Republic of Indonesia. Under his leadership, the largest Muslim country in the world is taking steady steps towards consolidating democracy and has managed to gather representatives from various governments in Bali to discuss the values of peace, non-violence and tolerance, and particularly the connection between democracy and development.

Today we are witnessing an inevitable movement by societies and peoples who demand freedom of expression and fundamental rights. In all that is taking place, as well as in the 'g7+' and at the Bali Democracy Forum, people are becoming aware that they must be sovereign in terms of the decisions that concern them, rather than remaining subject to the imposition of programs of others and worse still, subject to the interests that are not their own.

While we Timorese fought alone for 24 years, we never lost sight of what was going on in the world. The objective awareness that the world was changing, both in our region of the world as well as others, was something that nurtured our aspirations to be free, even in extreme situations. And the world continues to change... fortunately! In all of this, the most important thing is that people are the masters of their own fate.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Changing topics, but remaining in this world we live in, the 'LDCs', of which Timor-Leste is one, are concerned with the continuous indecision by the large economies in drafting a new economic order. Time goes by and at best it generates anxiety, if not despair.

And this is the truth: time goes by, as it has done ever since the first alarms on climate changes, decades ago. Today, all over the world, it is meaningless to talk about preventive measures, since all that can be done is invariably to bury the dead and to calculate the amount of damage in order to create funds to mitigate the suffering of people.

Therefore, countries like Timor-Leste, which yearn for development so as to improve the living situation of their peoples, face one of the worst challenges: uncertainty – in view of the adverse effects of the world economic recession and the lack of coherence in terms of measures to save humankind from hunger, disease, misery and all things that derive from that.

Accustomed to enormous challenges during their lengthy Struggle for Liberation, the people of Timor-Leste are determined to focus on their development. After a thorough review of the needs and challenges, we are currently drafting the Strategic Development Plan, which will be submitted to Parliament for approval. We are hoping to launch it at the next meeting with our Development Partners, scheduled to take place in July in Dili.

In macroeconomic terms, the Strategic Development Plan is based on the following paradigm:

- production,
- production capabilities and
- productive employment opportunities

Only by creating employment can we improve the social and economic situation of our People, since only employment can generate income, and income results in the eradication of poverty.

For that, the Timorese State will have to invest boldly on core infrastructure and on human capital development.

Your Excellency the President of the Security Council
Distinguished Members of the Security Council
Ladies and Gentlemen

With your permission, I will go once more to the reasons that brought me here to New York.

On 25 August 2006, in response to a request by the then Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, the establishment of UNMIT was approved for an initial period of 6 months, with the possibility of renewal.

December 2006 saw the signing of the Supplementary Agreement on the restoring and maintenance of public order, which regulated the relationships between UNMIT and the State of Timor-Leste, transferring leadership over the national and international police to UNPOL. Support to the reform, restructuring and rebuilding of the National Police of Timor-Leste was also defined.

This enabled the start of the registration and certification programme for all PNTL elements, resulting in the final certification of all Police officers who did not have pending processes regarding crimes and human rights violations.

Meanwhile the PNTL Promotion Regime was also approved, which set a Promotions Committee with the goal of selecting PNTL officers and recommending them for promotion. The Committee was supported by senior police officers from friendly countries, enabling the creation of an international Jury to make the process more credible.

The transfer of executive responsibility from UNPOL to PNTL in the various districts began on 14 May 2009. This process should be completed by 27 March, the date of the 11th anniversary of the PNTL, with the handing over of the Dili District Command and the PNTL General Command. From that point on, PNTL will be responsible for conducting, leading and controlling all police operations in Timor-Leste.

I acknowledge the concerns stated in the Report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations regarding the final certification of the remaining PNTL elements. I only want to underline the Government's commitment to strengthening the leadership and control and to applying disciplinary procedures in a serious manner, so as to ensure the integrity of our Police.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Next year will be a very important year in the consolidation of the building of our young State. 2012 will be the year when we will hold presidential and parliamentary elections – the third democratic elections in our country. I am confident that they will take place in an atmosphere of tranquillity, as indeed they did back in 2007, when despite the recent crisis and a few isolated events the elections took place with greater normality throughout the national territory.

And for this to be possible, we are prepared to continue ensuring stability in the country. Here the PNTL will continue to require assistance by their colleagues at UNPOL, who will perform only advisory and capacity building tasks in various areas, according to the needs of the Timorese police and following the plan already drafted by its General Command. This matter should continue to be subject to consultation and coordination with the relevant Timorese authorities.

Allow me to remind that, in regard to legislation, training, administration, discipline and operations, it would naturally be ideal that the advisors to the PNTL have technical and professional skills in these fields. Also, if possible, we would like to see the advisors already cooperating in those areas to remain there until the end of their mandates.

Under the leadership of our President of the Republic, at High Level meetings involving UNMIT and the Government, we will continue to study the 'post-UNMIT' period, i.e. the period after the 2012 elections when UNPOL may start to withdraw.

In the election period, namely March and April for the presidential elections and in June for the parliamentary elections, we seek to draft a special agreement with UNMIT so as to enable UNPOL to participate alongside with PNTL in the maintenance of public order in the country. In addition to this, and with an advance of one year, I would like to remind that UNMIT will also be requested to provide logistical support to the elections, as it has always done, more recently in the 2009 elections for local leaders. We are counting on the presence of the International Community through international observers, which we hope will come in sufficient numbers to cover the 700 polling booths, in order to anticipate any irregularities that may emerge and which we want to avoid.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The UN has been present from the moment our Nation started to be built, and as such I urge you to remain with us in solidarity, so that we may fulfil the dreams of our people. Today, those dreams are about peace and development.

I thank the UN, the Security Council and the entire Community of Nations for their efforts and support for State building in Timor-Leste.

The Timorese People vow to continue working hard towards peace and stability in our Country. Only by doing so can we help the United Nations to provide due assistance to other countries in crisis that have a greater need for aid than Timor-Leste.

On behalf of all Timorese, I thank all those men and women who have left their families and their countries to be part of the noble mission to assist the building of Timor-Leste throughout these 5 long years.

I thank all Governments that, during these years, were part of this Council and deliberated on the support to Timor-Leste, in the spirit of true friendship and solidarity among peoples and nations.

Speaking of friendship and solidarity, I could not end without congratulating the Governments and peoples of Sudan for their intelligent adoption of non-violence during the recent referendum process. The People

of Timor-Leste, who have experienced the devastation of destruction and violence, hope that their Sudanese brothers and sisters, from both North and South, continue to engage in dialogue and in a pacific solution, which is the only way for the integrity and survival of both peoples.

2012 will also mark the 10th anniversary of the Restoration of our Independence and the realisation of our sovereignty. I would like to seize this opportunity to invite you all to take part in the celebrations, as we all did back on 20 May 2002.

In conclusion, I wish to thank His Excellency, the Secretary-General for his Report and for the recommendation to extend UNMIT's mandate for one more year. In the consolidation phase of PNTL, the reconfiguration of UNPOL is important and I have every confidence that the PNTL will be well assisted in the process of building institutional and human capacity.

However, during this time of anguish, it would be remiss of me not to express my sincere and deepest sympathy and solidarity with the People and Government of New Zealand for the earthquake that hit Christchurch for the second time.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão
New York, 22 February 2011.