



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE

**ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION ON THE CEREMONY MARKING THE
TRANSFER OF EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FROM
UNPOL TO THE PNTL IN THE DISTRICT OF VIQUEQUE**

5 December 2009

Viqueque

Your Excellency the Secretary of State for Security, Mr Francisco Guterres,
Your Excellency the Commander of the PNTL, Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro,
Your Excellency the Deputy Commander of the PNTL, Commissioner Afonso de Jesus,
Your Excellency the Representative of the UN Secretary General, Mr Atul Khare,
Your Excellency the Commander of the United Nations Police, Chief Superintendent Luís Carrilho,
Your Excellencies the Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps,
Honourable Guests,

Officers, NCOs and Members of the PNTL in the District of Viqueque,

I would like to start by saluting you all on this day that represents the beginning of a new stage in your professional careers. You deserve congratulations, as the PNTL District Command of Viqueque has succeeded in meeting all the necessary and critical criteria for assuming full responsibility of operations within area of jurisdiction.

This was only possible as a result of your commitment to this public and to the noble cause that is police service, as well as to the willingness you have shown to acquire new skills and knowledge.

From today you have a new mission: the PNTL, throughout the entire district of Viqueque, holds executive responsibility for internal security, being charged with responsibility for the safety of people and their property and with ensuring that the community lives in peace and harmony.

We are all aware that this is not an easy task, but I have total confidence that you men and women of the PNTL in Viqueque will rise to the occasion, like your fellow officers have done in Lautém, Oecussi and Manatuto – the other districts where this transfer of responsibilities has taken place.

As the Head of Government, but most of all as a Timorese citizen, I am proud of our Police Force. Not long ago there was a difficult period which almost resulted in the PNTL's dissolution, but since that time you have succeeded in rising again to become an Institution that is worthy of the respect and trust of the Timorese people.

Without heeding the voices of the sceptics, who never believed that we Timorese were able to manage our own lives, the PNTL are standing ever taller as they receive from UNPOL missions bestowed upon it. The PNTL are now a professional and organized police force, fully prepared and presenting strong *esprit de corps* and internal cohesion.

And so, the Government is firmly committed to making 2010 the year when this process of transferring responsibilities is concluded. We are aware that some problems requiring prompt resolution still persist, particularly in terms of logistics and infrastructure, but we are determined to solve these matters as soon as possible.

Our police officers have already proved to be fully prepared for assuming the tasks that have been progressively bestowed upon them. The time has now come to place our full trust in them, and to enable them to assume responsibility for ensuring the internal security of the Country.

Dear Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General,
my good friend Atul Khare,

As we approach the end of your mandate, which you have always carried out with the utmost dedication and respect for the wishes and aspirations of the Timorese, I wish to publicly express my deep appreciation and gratitude for all that you have done for us.

You have dedicated to Timor-Leste all your expertise and experience, and have poured your heart and soul into the search for the best way forward to rebuild and redevelop our State.

I also believe that you will leave with us the necessary foundations to allow our goals to be achieved, without disturbance and with full cooperation and coordination with UNMIT.

UNPOL's role does not end with the transfer to the PNLT of the responsibilities they have been performing for the previous three years. On the contrary, we will continue to rely on their technical and professional expertise so that our Police Force is supported in this vital stage of their growth - as the security force responsible for protecting the Rule of Law.

My dear friend Atul Khare,

I wish you all the best in the new challenges that await you, both personally and professionally. I am aware that you have a difficult task ahead of you, but I know that you will manage it with the same dignity and competence that you have demonstrated in this land, which will also be yours forever.

PNLT officers, NCOs and members,

I would also like to leave you with the message I have been seeking to convey to the men and women of the other District Commands when we have held ceremonies identical to this one.

No Timorese citizen will accept it if the PNTL fails again. And no friendly Country, regardless of its support and respect towards Timor-Leste and its People, will be willing to spend human and financial resources in our security sector once more if the PNTL collapse again.

Therefore, this is our last chance to show the world, and especially ourselves, that we are ready to look after our own security.

Consequently, the Government has taken the measures we considered necessary so that the PNTL could remain as a cohesive and disciplined body, which is vital to ensuring it can carry out efficiently the various tasks attributed to it.

We have revised its Organic Law and the Career Regime, we are currently updating the wages of all PNTL men and women, so as to dignify the vocation they have chosen, and soon we will have a new Disciplinary Regulation.

The police model now adopted relies primarily on three basic principles: chain of command, hierarchy and discipline.

Chain of command means that every police member must obey his or her commander at all times, and that the commander is the only person to whom he or she must report.

A police member must not accept orders from anyone outside the chain of command, regardless of the position of the person who would seek to do so, including those with political responsibilities for the governing of the Country.

The responsibility for making decisions, decisions which must always be obeyed promptly, belongs solely to the Commanders.

Hierarchy means that the entire service must operate within a well defined chain of command, where all claims are submitted to the level immediately above.

Discipline requires that a police officer must obey promptly all lawful orders received and carry them out with effort, professionalism and total dedication, even if he or she disagrees with them personally.

Orders are not to be discussed, undermined or questioned. They are to be carried out immediately and in full.

I trust that you will fully embrace these principles, and that you will make an important contribution towards the creation of this new PNTL, a PNTL which must be strong and disciplined.

I wish all you PNTL officers, NCOs and members in the district of Viqueque the best of luck, and I am sure that you will prove yourselves worthy of the confidence we have placed in you.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão

5 December 2009