



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE**

**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER**

**SPEECH**

**BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER AND  
MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY**

**KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO**

**ON THE CEREMONY OF THE TRANSFER OF  
EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FROM UNPOL TO THE  
PNTL IN THE DISTRICT OF LIQUIÇÁ**

**7 September 2010**

**Liquiçá**

Your Excellency the Secretary of State for Security, Mr Francisco Guterres,  
Your Excellency the Commander-General of the PNTL, Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro,  
Your Excellency the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ms Ameerah Hak  
Your Excellency the Commander of UNPOL, Chief Superintendent Luís Carrilho,  
Your Excellency the Commander of the PNTL in the District of Liquiçá, Superintendent Natércia Martins,  
Your Excellencies the Representatives from the Diplomatic Corps,  
Honourable guests

Officers, NCOs and Members of the PNTL,

My first words are directed to the People of Liquiçá, who have embraced with heart and soul this ceremony for the transfer of responsibility for the security of this district from the United Nations Police, UNPOL, to our Police, the PNTL.

The Police serve the People, and their main task is to defend the People. Further, the members of the PNTL are also part of the People, which is why their behaviour must always be irreproachable and why they must abstain from any actions that would offend the community in which they are based.

In order for public safety to be effective, it is vital that people cooperate with the Police and that they view officers as men and women who have chosen to dedicate their lives to the public cause so that all may live in freedom and safety. These officers must also be role models.

Therefore, I urge all those who were born in the District of Liquiçá, or who have chosen to reside here, to have trust in the PNTL and to cooperate with it, so that harmony and social peace may be maintained.

The ceremony today also has a special meaning. This PNTL District Command is the only one in the Country that is headed by a woman.

From now on, Superintendent Natércia Martins will be the senior person responsible for the conduct of operations to ensure the safety of the people and the security of their goods within the jurisdiction of this Command.

She will head all offices that are deployed in the Liquiçá PNTL, and her primary task will be to maintain her subordinates as a cohesive, disciplined and hard-working group who are permanently available to perform the duties given to them.

I know that she will be able to undertake this function well. The fact that she is a woman will not limit her performance in any way. On the contrary, women play a critical role in Timor-Leste.

Around Timor-Leste women are undertaking leading roles in private businesses and many are employed in local commerce and especially the hospitality sector.

Women also have important roles in every part of the State: in the Government, where they lead some of the most important ministries; in the National Parliament, where women are a significant percentage of Members of Parliament; in the judiciary; in the management of bodies of public administration; and in the offices of the various bodies of sovereignty.

Women are also increasingly part of the F-FDTL as well as in the PNTL, which has 652 women, covering the categories of officers, NCOs and members, and representing 18% of the overall force. This is one of the largest percentages in the entire world.

And those who think that women are the weak link in our Police are quite mistaken; on the contrary, they have always been in the frontline, both in terms of administrative and operational duties. They have proven to be as competent and disciplined as men, and are qualified to perform the same tasks as men.

Women have also played a vital role in our Country's history. Without the effort, dedication, courage and sacrifice of Timorese women, the Resistance we fought for a quarter century would surely have failed.

Many women gave their lives for the cause of the Independence of Timor-Leste. Many others had to endure countless sacrifices, such as torture, hunger and the loss of loved ones.

This is why I made a point to be present at this ceremony, so that I could pay my sincere and heartfelt respects to Timorese women. I am sure that Superintendent Natércia Martins, who has now been given an office of great prestige, will be able to dignify and enhance the contribution of women in the story of our sovereign and independent Nation, by way of her action of command.

Officers, NCOs and Members of the PNLT,

I urge you to carry out the mission now bestowed upon you in a prompt and decisive manner.

We are building a Police force that is professional and able to ensure, independently, the safety of the people and preserve the integrity of our democracy and the rule of law in Timor-Leste.

This Police force must have a clearly defined chain of command, in which the Commander of every level is the only person responsible for making decisions. These decisions must in turn be obeyed by all subordinates.

Hierarchy must be respected at all times. No PNLT element, regardless of their post, may bypass it. On the contrary, they must report directly only to their respective Commander.

Discipline must be the main motto of the PNLT, with every element being bound to the obligation of executing the orders and regulations issued by the chain of command in a prompt manner and without resistance, subject to the application of severe disciplinary measures.

If these three principles, i.e. chain of command, hierarchy and discipline, are always respected by all elements, I am sure that we will have an effective and efficient PNTL that is able to carry out its mission with professionalism and competence. This PNTL will undoubtedly be a reason for pride for all Timorese citizens.

I wish all of you who serve at the PTNL District Command of Liquiçá great professional and personal success, and I expect from you that which the community yearns for, that you will ensure peace and tranquillity in all the areas under your responsibility.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão

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