



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE**

**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER**

**ADDRESS**

**BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER**

**KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE CEREMONY OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup>**

**ANNIVERSARY OF THE PNTL**

**27 March 2010**

**Government Palace**

**Dili**

Your Excellency the President of the Republic Mr José Ramos-Horta,  
Your Excellency the Speaker of the National Parliament Mr Fernando Lasama de Araújo,  
Your Excellency the Secretary of State for Security Mr Francisco Guterres,  
Your Excellency the Chief of the Defence Force, Major-General Taur Matan Ruak,  
Your Excellency the Representative of the Secretary General of the UN, Ms Ameerah Haq,  
Your Excellency the Commander of the United Nations Police, Superintendent Luís Carrilho,  
Illustrious Members of Government,  
Illustrious Members of Parliament,  
Representatives of the Diplomatic Body,  
Your Excellency the Commander of the PNTL, Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro,  
Officers, NCOs and Members of the PNTL,

Precisely one year ago, at this same location, when we were celebrating the ninth anniversary of the National Police of Timor-Leste, I listed three major challenges that the Police would face and for which they would have to prepare.

The first was appointing a new Commander and a new Deputy Commander, which entered into office at that ceremony. This was a movement towards strong leadership and discipline in the PNTL.

The second concerned the entry into force of the new Organic Law for the PNTL, which included a new police model that was rather different from the previous one.

The third concerned the proximity of the moment when the executive responsibility for the Country's internal security would start to be transferred from UNPOL to the PNTL.

I have no doubt whatsoever, and I think no one else does, that choosing Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro to lead the PNTL was an excellent decision.

In very little time, Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro managed to integrate himself in the spirit of a Police Body and to earn the respect and admiration of the men and women placed under his command.

Under Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro, the PNTL started a process of reorganization and restructuring, and it is clear that in the past year they have acquired rather satisfying levels of operational and intervention capability. These are indicators that they are on the right path.

The last police operations in which PNTL members were included, namely the ones that recently took place in the Districts of Cova Lima and Bobonaro, putting an end to a surge of violent crime that threatened to cause panic among the populations, showed that our Police are ready to take on new responsibilities.

Under the leadership of Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro, who was in direct command of the operations in the field that led to the capture of the criminals, the PNTL showed the naysayers that they are able to ensure the safety of the populations according to the limits set by Law and in compliance with the most elementary rights of citizens.

I would like to congratulate the Commander for this first year at the helm of the PNTL, and I hope you will continue to be as successful in the future.

The new Organic Law for the PNTL set a new police model based essentially on three aspects: chain of command, hierarchy and discipline.

This last year has shown us that this model is undoubtedly the best for our Police.

The existence of a clearly defined chain of command where the power to make decisions and the accountability for their execution is attributed directly to the leader in the various echelons of command has given to the PNTL the necessary internal cohesion and esprit de corps needed to meet challenges with greater promptness and efficiency.

A more rigorous discipline, which is consented rather than imposed, as well as accepted and desired by the overwhelming majority of its members, where all those who would soil the good name of the Institution they serve are punished in an exemplary manner, also contributed decisively to make the PNTL stronger and more credible.

I am fully aware that there are still serious disciplinary problems that have been affecting negatively the image of the Police before society. We are aware that the behaviour of a single police member may put into question the credibility of all his comrades, which is why these cases must be dealt with in an accurate and prompt manner.

Situations like the one we saw late last year, where regrettably a human life was lost a result of the irresponsible actions of a single police member, should not be used to question the capability of the PNTL to take on the responsibility for the Country's internal security.

These are isolated cases that also take place often in security forces of other countries, namely those that present levels of development and stability that cannot even be compared to the ones seen in a State like Timor-Leste, which has only been effectively independent for eight years.

I would like to seize this opportunity to make a request to all PNTL personnel, in particularly the officers who are responsible for the behaviour of their subordinates. The Organic Law also states that the PNTL have the characteristics of a community police in terms of policing strategy and philosophy.

This means that a police member must be well integrated in the local community, favouring proximity policing, i.e. in permanent contact with the populations that he is responsible to keep safe.

Patrols cannot be done just by car, as it becomes difficult to take notice of problems this way. It is necessary that police members walk all quarters and distance locations on foot, making direct contact with the local populations.

Only through this close contact it is possible to identify the problems affecting the communities, to learn what conflicts constraint their safety and to take the proper measures to ensure people to live in peace and tranquillity.

Changing mentalities takes more than merely approving a law. This is the major task that is now given to the hierarchy of the PNTL: to make all officers, NCOs and members understand that they need to change radically the patrolling philosophy that has been followed up until now, replacing it with effective and permanent proximity policing.

We also hope that UNPOL members will commit to this goal, not only by favouring this type of policing approach against the routine car patrols, but mostly by ensuring its implementation in the district commands still under their charge.

Finally I wish to speak of the ongoing process for transferring the executive responsibility for the Country's internal security from UNPOL to the PNTL.

In this last year the PNTL have resumed the mission given to them by the Constitution in the district commands of Lautem, Oecussi, Manatuto and Viqueque, in addition to the Maritime Unit, the Police Training Centre and the Police Intelligence Service.

Going against the voices heard in some sectors that systematically put personal and corporative interests above national interests, insisting in conveying the message that our Police are not yet ready for the new challenges they have to face, the PNTL have been displaying high standards of professionalism, competence and dedication to the public cause in the Units and Services that are now under their responsibility.

Timorese police elements have given us all a lesson in humility and civility, as despite the scarce human and logistic resources available to them they have performed their tasks without complaints and have been successfully completing the tasks given to them.

Throughout 2010 we hope that all policing tasks and powers will be bestowed upon the PNTL, which will make the responsibility for the internal security of our Nation to rest inclusively in our hands, in the hands of the Timorese.

I wish to seize this opportunity to convey my deep regret for the early disappearance of the person who coordinated with the Government this entire task transferring process on behalf of UNMIT.

Mr Takahisa Kawakami, who has left us when we were still in need of his services, is responsible for a good part of the success that the PNTL have shown in resuming their tasks as a security force.

Mr Kawakami knew how to speak with us. He understood and respected us, and always acted with intelligence and sensibility. We shall miss him

I trust that UNMIT, for which this loss is deeply painful and heartfelt, will be able to find another agent soon. This agent, working in close cooperation with the Government, must be able to complete the mission his or her predecessor started.

Officers, NCOs and Members of the PNTL,

My final words are for you.

Today completes the first decade in the history of the Institution o which you are proud to belong.

Right from the start, the IV Constitutional Government has vowed to carry out the necessary reforms for strengthening the various Institutions of the State, including the PNTL.

And one of the factors for reforming and strengthening the Institutions was clearly a proper legal framework.

Following this, the Council of Ministers approved on 13 December 2008 the Regime for Promotions in the PNTL, which was subsequently promulgated by the President of the Republic and published as Decree-Law no. 16/2009, of 18 March.

This Decree-Law set new categories, subcategories and positions for the PNTL, which until then only had:

- Inspectors;
- Sub-inspectors;
- Members.

The Decree-Law also set the rules to be followed in a normal promotion process, from article 5 to article 35.

In the future, promotions shall follow these rules. And I trust that all PNTL elements will study and understand the procedures that rule your professional lives.

The reason I say this is because I have received several complaints and several unjustified comments, in addition to some recommendations, regarding the current promotion process.

Officers, NCOs and Members,

Let us never forget the reasons that required UNPOL's presence here in Timor-Leste.

UNPOL came in 2006 because we were not able to safeguard the integrity of the PNTL as a professional, non-partisan and solidary State body and Institution.

We are all living with the pressure of having to re-evaluate you, both individually and as an Institution. This is why we are yet to complete the handover process in the Districts, including Dili.

And this is why chapter V of Decree-Law no. 16/2009 set a transitional Promotion Regime.

Articles 36 to 48 set all procedures with which you and we have to comply.

Throughout the evaluation and testing process set in this transitional Regime, I can guarantee you that there was not the slightest political interference or intervention from anyone.

Therefore I must say that the promotion process was the best we were able to draft, both for the good of all PNTL members and for the credibility of your Institution.

And this process is not over. There are over 300 pending cases waiting for a solution, which we all hope will come soon.

There are also promotion possibilities according the General Regime, as stated in article 7 and following of Decree-Law no. 16/2009.

For this purpose, the Council of Ministers approved on 24 March, at its last meeting, a Resolution creating a Commission to Monitor the PNTL Promotion Process, which will support:

- The implementation of the promotions already approved;
- The resolution of pending promotions;
- The resolution of cases of PNTL elements who have not been attributed positions;

- The entry into force of the Commission for General Regime Promotions, under article 29 of Decree-Law no. 16/2009, article 7, which sets the following promotion modalities:
  - a) Seniority;
  - b) Selection;
  - c) Appointment;
  - d) Exceptional nature.

Officers, NCOs and Members,

I am aware that there have been meetings where discontent people would speak about everything but the results they got in each test.

I want to remind you that the Civil Service Commission was created to ensure the rights of civil servants, but also to strengthen their awareness regarding their duties. The State is implementing meritocracy, so as to put an end to cases of nepotism and promotions resulting from party influences.

And I wish to use this opportunity to publicly convey the Government's appreciation for the integrity, effort and performance of the members of the Evaluation Commission and of the Secretariat for PNTL Promotions.

It is their work that is clearing the path for a professional and non-partisan PNTL that is conscious of its duties.

What I hope from you, what we all hope, is that you will honour the uniform you wear and prove yourselves worthy of the trust the populations have placed on you.

To all those who serve in the PNTL, I congratulate you for this anniversary.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão

27 March 2010