

# The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers and Official Spokesperson for the Government of Timor-Leste Ágio Pereira



December 13, 2009  
Díli, Timor-Leste

## Government says reforms have contributed to a new level of peace in Timor-Leste

The joint announcement that Australia would reduce troops by one third, (250 officers) was a clear indication that both nations are confident in the ongoing stability in Timor-Leste.

Secretary of State Ágio Pereira says that reforms across Government and improvements in security, combined with strong social policies and significant economic growth have all contributed to a 'new Timor-Leste'.

One of the most important reforms was Decree Law 31/2008, which established the organic structure of the Ministry of Security and Defense, thus uniting the two forces who had been divided in the past under one Ministry. In 2009, The Secretariat for Defense recruited 600 new personnel, training was completed for 100 sergeants and 500 received training for other ranks under the new career regime. The FdTL built the capacity to engage in exercises with friendly forces including the ISF and US Marines.

The PNTL have already resumed primary policing duties in Lautém, Oecusse, Manatuto, Viqueque and the Police Training Centre. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of December is the handover of the Maritime Unit and on December 18<sup>th</sup> the handover for the Strategic Information Department. One hundred police officers across the 13 districts have attended leadership training at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement and in 2010, some 300 new recruits will be inducted into the force.

Implementing career regimes based on a meritocratic system, pay increases, extensive technical and human rights training and mandatory disassociation with political affiliation has strengthened and professionalized the armed services; bringing a renewed confidence into the communities of Timor-Leste.

Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão has always stressed the relevance of economic development as a necessary foundation in ensuring national stability. When the Government took office the highly centralized systems had immobilized services, especially outside Díli, economic growth was in a downturn and poverty had doubled.

The Governments' arduous decentralization reforms across line ministries delivered more effective and efficient services to the people; particularly in areas like health, education, justice and finance. Pensions gave relief to the most vulnerable and even though in December 2008, Timor-Leste was included on Relief Web's Statement of Complex Emergency, titled Global Food Crisis (CE) - listing countries that could be severely affected by the Global food crisis emergency: the Government's efforts to purchase and subsidize food products, mainly rice, to ensure food security and the adequate delivery of supplies to Timor-Leste averted this crisis. The nation avoided the riots, looting and violence which occurred in many countries due to food shortages.

Secretary of State Ágio Pereira noted "As 2009 comes to a close, we must pay due credit to the discipline, dedication, and hard work of the men and woman of the armed services in Timor-Leste for taking ownership, responsibility and accountability of the nations' safety and future.'

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'We also pay due credit to members of the ISF who have supported Timor-Leste. The collective effort has brought to our people a 'new Timor-Leste'; a country that can now grow within a peaceful and stable environment.'

'Although our nation has a long journey ahead, the successes thus far in establishing a level of both economic stability and national security re- enforce the fact that the policies of the Xanana Gusmão Government are contributing to the betterment of the nation and the people.' ENDS

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