



REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE

**SPEECH BY
HIS EXCELLENCY PRIME MINISTER
AND
MINISTER OF DEFENSE OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE 11TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
NATIONAL POLICE OF TIMOR-LESTE**

Palácio do Governo

27 March 2011

Excellency,
President of the Republic

Excellency,
President of the National Parliament

Excellency,
President of the Court of Appeal

Excellency,
UN Under Secretary-General for PKO

Members of the National Parliament and
Members of Government

Special Representative of Secretary General

Ambassadors and representatives of the Diplomatic Corps

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today we commemorate the 11th anniversary of the creation of the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL), a day that will remain forever in the history of this institution as one of its most important.

During the last five years, UNPOL has had the responsibility of a police force, and also an equally important role of preparing the PNTL to assume this responsibility. And this time has arrived.

As of midnight tonight (28 March 2011), PNTL will re-assume total operational responsibility for the prevention and combat of crime, and to develop and undertake all activities that promote an environment of harmony and security to allow our people to live in peace.

Excellency
Under Secretary-General for PKO, Mr. Alain Le Roy

Welcome to Timor-Leste, particularly on this special occasion, not only for PNTL but also for UNMIT.

Today you are witness to the beginning of a new phase of the involvement of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, a phase that will demand, as it always has, an understanding of our needs and appreciation of the reality of our circumstances.

Excellency
SRSG, Mrs. Ameerah Haq

On this historic day, I must not forget to express, on behalf of the Government, a feeling I am certain is shared by all Timorese, of gratitude and recognition for the important role that UNMIT has been performing in the reform and continuous improvement of our PNTL.

I also wish to express my appreciation to your deputies and all your staff.

If we take today as the end of an important and difficult mission of UNMIT, then, tomorrow, we will together begin a new stage which is equally important, within a new relationship framework, to consolidate all that has been achieved and complete what still needs to be done.

Therefore, I appeal to you and to the Under Secretary-General, that where possible, UNMIT ensures that those who will assume an advisory role for the units, departments and services of our PNTL, possess the necessary technical and professional qualifications.

I am aware that the United Nations is not responsible for the nomination of the police officers posted to UNPOL, and it is in this sense that I appeal to the Ambassadors here accredited, and whose countries contribute their police members to UNMIT, that you convey our concerns to your respective Governments.

I also ask you, SRSG, to convey to His Excellency, the UN Secretary-General, our gratitude.

Superintendent Luís Carrilho
UNPOL Commissioner

I wish to express my appreciation to you, and this also extends to all your staff and colleagues, for the work that UNPOL has undertaken to ensure an environment of stability for the Timorese population.

Under your command, UNPOL successfully fulfilled the difficult and complex responsibility to restore and maintain public order in the country.

From tomorrow, UNMIT will have, through you and the UNPOL officers, another equally arduous task, which is to advise their Timorese colleagues to enable them to carry out their duties with rigour, professionalism and good judgment.

Five priority areas have been identified in which advisory support will be required, and include training, administration, legislation, discipline and operations. Progress in these areas will be subject to an evaluation mechanism that will measure achievements while identifying areas that require additional work.

I am certain that the success that our Police will achieve will depend not only on the adequate assistance provided by UNPOL but also on the commitment of PNTL.

We all agree that the activities that involve UNPOL, in their support to PNTL, will be developed in accordance with the Joint Action Plan that will effectively enhance the development of our Police.

Lastly, I would like to remind you here today that all operational support to be provided by UNPOL should be made in coordination and agreement with the General Commander of PNTL.

General Commander,
Commissioner Longuinhos Monteiro

Today marks two years since you were charged with the duty of preparing the PNTL to assume responsibility for the internal security of our country and to manage the transition period to allow for the gradual transfer of command to take place in the districts and in the various units. A further duty you were charged with was the implementation of the Organic Law of PNTL, which is currently being reviewed.

As the nomination of a civilian must have a legal basis, the Government established a transition period of two years or the period required to fill the positions under the PNTL Promotions Regime.

As we are all aware, there are constraints, or various difficulties, in the State building phase that impede us in accomplishing what we would like to achieve within the two years of the transition period.

Therefore, the Government decided to prolong or extend the transition period for a further two years, to correspond also with the extension period of UNMIT, with the following duties:

- to provide technical assistance in the areas the PNTL requires, and
- to provide support in the operational area, whenever it is required.

The Government believes that as the PNTL consolidation process is not yet completed, it is better that no change be made in regard to the PNTL General Commander, so as to guarantee continuation of the process and to build on the efforts of the last two years. Therefore, the Government decided to renew your position as PNTL General Commander as well as that of the Second General Commander.

I commend Commissioners, Longuinhos Monteiro and Afonso de Jesus, for carrying out their duties with professionalism, dedication and with a sense of responsibility and sacrifice.

You both have my personal trust as Minister of Defense and Security and, I believe, you have the trust of other State institutions and the people.

Officers, Sergeants and Agents of PNTL

If today we all celebrate because the PNTL has undertaken full responsibility for the security of our Country, today, once again, you have also assumed a heavy responsibility. Therefore, you must make a clear commitment to perform your duties with professionalism, as an exemplary police force and exemplary Timorese.

From today onwards, good or bad, your attitude and actions are in your hands.

I ask that you put behind you all that you went through in this lengthy process. What has passed should only have a place in our minds as food for reflection. Honest reflection, to look at ourselves, to see that actions that each one of us took in the past.

The past cannot keep emerging as an issue of argument between us, to make us compare each other, to suspect each other. Only by putting these issues behind us can we move forward with confidence. Confidence must start with each one of us, it must be nurtured within your units or departments, and it must spread across your whole institution.

I repeat my appeal to you, for you to make your best efforts to strengthen a non-politicised PNTL, as prescribed by the Constitution, to strengthen a PNTL that distances itself from practices that destroy its image.

The people will be watching you and, when you perform well, our people will believe and hold you in high regard, as you will truly identify yourselves as the people's sons and daughters.

Congratulations to PNTL!