

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



**March 8, 2012
Dili, Timor-Leste**

Timor-Leste creates precedent in improved coordination for the transition phase of UN Missions

In the last week of February a high level delegation from Timor-Leste including the President of the Republic, the Minister of Finance and the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs were involved in presentations at the United Nations Security Council in New York. On the afternoon of the 22nd of February His Excellency Dr. José Ramos-Horta addressed the Council outlining the busy year ahead in Timor-Leste and confirmed the proposition that the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) would not be required after the 31st of December 2012.

The head of UNMIT, Ameerah Haq briefed the Council on recent developments in the country and passed on the Secretary General's request for an extension of the UNMIT mandate till the 31st of December 2012. She anticipated a gradual drawdown of the Mission following the parliamentary elections in June and the new Government's formation. The following day the Security Council unanimously extended the mandate of the Mission at current levels until 31 December and endorsed its phased drawdown in accordance with the Government's wishes, conditions on the ground and following the successful completion of the 2012 electoral process. It is therefore expected that there will be no uniformed United Nations personnel in Timor-Leste beyond 2012 although some United Nations agencies will remain to continue their work in contributing to the country's ongoing progress.

Among the Security Council members Timor-Leste was recognized as being well on the way in a new stage of self-reliance with many noting that remarkable progress had been made in recent years. Even though the mission is to withdraw by the year end the United Nations and the International Community indicated their desire to continue in their support and partnership. In response to the Security Council presentations the United States representative noted that there had been a "truly impressive" level of collaboration between UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste in developing a transition plan for the Mission's withdrawal by the end of 2012. New Zealand's representative said her country had been impressed with the meticulous planning, tireless effort and the spirit of partnership with which the Mission and the Timorese Government had prepared for the transition.

In an associated Member States meeting called by head of the UNDP Helen Clark and Timor-Leste, Minister of Finance Her Excellency Emilia Pires made a presentation of the Joint Transition Plan, recognized as a groundbreaking collaboration between UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste. Focused on what is needed to ensure a smooth transition, the plan seeks to take into account lessons from the past and ensure proper country input, thereby setting a new precedent for better coordination between a leaving mission and the national Government. This one year process in Timor-Leste was a new way of doing things for the United Nations and involved in depth joint work on identifying what the UN projects were unfinished and who would take over, planning around mission assets and evaluation and management of the economic withdrawal of the mission.

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Spokesperson for the Government of Timor-Leste, Secretary of State Ágio Pereira passed on “congratulations to the hardworking members of the Government and Civil Service who along with the United Nations staff have invested in producing a comprehensive Joint Transition Plan.’ He noted that ‘Again Timor-Leste has made a conscious decision to improve practices in international engagement which will benefit not only the people of Timor-Leste but our fellow members of the g7+ and other countries who in the future may require the presence of United Nations missions.” **ENDS**

Ágio Pereira+670 723 0011

E-mail:

agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl

or

govtlmedia@gmail.com

Website:

www.timor-leste.gov.tl