



PRIME
MINISTER

**ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SWEARING-IN OF THE
MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY
OF THE FIFTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT**

**22 October 2012
Presidential Palace
Dili**



Palácio do Governo,
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,
Dili, Timor-Leste

Your Excellency the President of the Republic,
Your Excellency the Speaker of Parliament,
Your Excellency the President of the Court of Appeal,
Your Excellency Dr José Ramos-Horta, former President of the Republic,
Your Excellency the Chief of the Defence Force,
Your Excellency the Commander-General of the PNTL,
Your Excellency the Commissioner of UNPOL and the Attaché of UNMIT,
Your Excellency the Commander of the ISF,
Dear Ambassadors,
Dear Government Members,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addition to causing a great internal divide in Timorese society, the crisis that broke out in Timor-Leste in 2006 also triggered confrontations between the PNTL and F-FDTL, resulting from pent-up distrust among the two. This worsened the social instability that destroyed many homes throughout the country, particularly in Dili.

Therefore, in August 2007, the new Government established the most adequate mechanism for increasing the motivation of both forces, particularly in terms of the coordination of their operations. The Ministry of Defence and Security sought to be the answer to the circumstances in which the country was living.

Meanwhile, due to their involvement during the crisis, both forces became operationally immobilized to give time to correct the problems they had at the institutional level.

The tragic event of 11 February 2008 created an incredibly dramatic situation. On one hand the State itself was threatened because the victim of the attack was the President and, on the other hand, there was no clear and prompt response immediately following that tragedy. It was simply unacceptable and unforgivable that the two security forces of the Nation, with their responsibility for ensuring the defence and security of the State, the country and its people, would remain inactive. This made security forces aware of their duties and it became a unique opportunity to put an end to the immaturity which existed in the relationship between the F-FDTL and the PNTL.

The joint operation by F-FDTL and PNTL was a success in every area. After that, we had an atmosphere of full cooperation in terms of providing for the security and wellbeing of the entire population.

In addition to its vital role of enforcing the constitutional principle of the subordination of both forces to the democratic State under the rule of law, the Ministry of Defence and Security also then started the difficult and lengthy process of reforming both institutions, particularly the PNTL.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After that five-year cycle, today I am now sworn-in as the Minister of Defence and Security. The Fifth Constitutional Government seeks to continue the policies that were started before, to continue correcting institutional weaknesses, to improve programmes and to be innovative in the different missions for serving the people and the country.

We all have another five years of work in front of us. This will require our effort, our professionalism, our discipline and our integrity.

I will continue to demand that F-FDTL soldiers perform their duties in a disciplined manner, both inside and outside the barracks. I will tolerate no abuse against military ethics and no offense against the F-FDTL uniform. I will not tolerate situations in which military personnel meddle with politics. The senior officers are responsible for looking after the good name of the institution at all times, by way of mechanisms to control the discipline of their subordinates. Officers should no longer continue using a “laissez-faire” attitude, as this means that soldiers will be less apt when called upon to perform any mission.

F-FDTL must improve the financial management of their budget, as well as improve in terms of managing resources and maintaining assets.

I will continue to require great discipline from the PNTL officers, both during service and outside of service. I shall tolerate no abuse against the police ethics and no offense against the PNTL uniform. I will not tolerate situations in which police officers are linked in one way or another to political parties, which regrettably continues to happen today. PNTL senior officers are responsible for making all officers aware of their duties, their commitment to serve, and their faithful compliance with their obligation to the people.

The PNTL Command is responsible for looking after the financial management of their budget, improving resource administration and ensuring asset maintenance.

Both institutions have the year 2013 to correct what needs to be corrected in terms of management and administration. Good governance does not concern Government members alone – it is a subject for all those who are trusted with State money to manage. Good execution requires proper planning. Good planning does not mean ‘thinking about many things to do at the same time’ so as to give the impression of being busy, because the outcome would then be failing to accomplish all required tasks.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I make these recommendations because the ISF and UNMIT are departing and with the belief that we are truly prepared to carry out our mission of ensuring the security of our assets and the safety of our People.

Looking back, we must underline the valuable and immediate offer of support by Canberra, as well as the contribution we have been enjoying through the ISF. The Australian Government and the Australian People have our utmost gratitude.

Also within this context, we must highlight the concern by the United Nations Security Council and the fact that it responded to our request for assistance, so that we would not become a failed State. We must also praise the commitment by the Governments of Portugal and Malaysia, which offered to send police officers to Timor-Leste immediately when needed.

We thank UNMIT and all the countries that sent police officers to Timor-Leste, at the time we needed them the most, for helping to restore internal stability in the country and particularly for the monitoring and capacity building of our PNTL, making our police officers true servants of the Timorese people.

All those men and women who worked in UNMIT and UNPOL have our respect and our deep gratitude.

Thank you very much.