



**P R I M E
M I N I S T E R**

**ADDRESS
BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE
AND SECURITY
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING WITH THE KOREA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
AGENCY (KOICA) REGARDING OCEANIC OBSERVATION AND
HYDROGRAPHICAL SURVEILLANCE**

**2 October 2013
Government Palace
Dili**

Your Excellency the Representative of KOICA, Ms Hyun Jin Joo,
Your Excellency the Secretary of State for Defence,
Your Excellency the Secretary of State for Security,
Your Excellency the Chief of the F-FDTL,
Your Excellency the PNTL Second General Commander,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since achieving independence, Timor-Leste has made it a priority to strengthen ties with the countries of our region. South Korea was one of the countries that, from the very beginning, offered to provide us with the assistance that we required to build our young State.

Our Korean friends were always with us during the multilateral cooperation undertaken under the banner of the United Nations. We can readily highlight their significant contribution towards peacebuilding in our country, with South Korea sending soldiers and police officers who played an important role in building our country. In performing their duties our South Korean friends showed great professionalism, discipline and advanced skill in the missions that were assigned to them.

Over the last few years bilateral cooperation between Timor-Leste and South Korea has strengthened further. In particular, I would like to note the importance of the Guest Worker Program, which has enabled over ten thousand Timorese citizens to work in South Korea and improve their knowledge in key areas of importance to our country, including fisheries, industry and agriculture. This program has proved extremely valuable in providing professional experience for Timorese citizens who seek to enter the labour market.

It is now time to implement effective cooperation in the area of Defence and Security, which is symbolised by the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Timor-Leste and the Korea International Cooperation Agency – KOICA.

KOICA has offered to train 15 F-FDTL and PNTL elements during the next three years in the areas of Oceanic Observation and Hydrographical Surveillance. These areas of expertise have enormous strategic importance for our Nation, in view of the size and value of our maritime zone.

The financial and human resources of the State of Timor-Leste are limited. As such, we must make the best use of the resources available to us and make sure that we do not waste any of the resources that are so valuable to us.

In view of this, we believe that the surveillance of our maritime coast, and the fight against crimes that have depleted a significant part of our maritime assets, should not be the sole responsibility of only one of our Forces, but should rather be shared by the defence force and the security force.

Therefore, the F-FDTL and the PNTL share missions that are both different and complementary. As such, it is necessary to set a clear border between the operational activities of each Force, so that their common goal may be fully achieved without unnecessary overlap or duplication that may otherwise lead to friction.

The joint training that our men and women of the F-FDTL Naval Component and of the PNTL Maritime Unit will receive in South Korea will make them better equipped to operate in the sea, as well as strengthen the already strong ties of operational cooperation between the institutions responsible for ensuring our national defence and internal security. With this support, we will also be in a much better position to efficiently protect the sea environment.

I would like to congratulate Ms Hyun Jin Joo, for your effectiveness as a representative of KOICA and for this valuable initiative. I would also like to thank you, both personally and on behalf of the Government, for this training program that South Korea is so generously providing to us. I trust that it will be a great success.

Please convey to your Government our recognition and our gratitude for this cooperation that will soon begin as well as for the ongoing support provided by your great nation to Timor-Leste.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão
2 October 2013