



PRIME  
MINISTER

**ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME  
MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND  
SECURITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF  
TIMOR-LESTE KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO AT THE  
OPENING SESSION OF THE SEMINAR ON  
'TRANSNATIONAL CRIMES: AGAINST NARCOTICS  
AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN TIMOR-LESTE'**

**DILI CONVENTION CENTRE  
26 November 2013**

Chief of the Timor-Leste National Police, Commissioner Dr Longuinhos Monteiro

Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. M. Primanto Hendrasgoro,

I am very pleased to be here to speak at the opening session of this important Seminar on 'Transnational Crimes: against Narcotics and Human Trafficking in Timor-Leste'.

First, I would like to commend the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, M. Primanto Hendrasgoro, the Indonesian Government, and the Chief of the Timor-Leste National Police, Commissioner Dr Longuinhos Monteiro, for conducting this seminar on an issue so critical to the future of both our nations.

Since independence we have enjoyed remarkable progress in Timor-Leste. We are building core infrastructure, training and educating our people and pursuing inclusive and strong economic growth.

Our Strategic Development Plan provides a vision for our nation that builds on the foundations we have laid down since 2002. It sets out our vision to transform our country from a low income nation to a country with upper-middle income levels with a population that is secure, educated and healthy.

We all know, however, that our progress has only been possible because of our sustained stability and security. To continue on our path it is vitally important that we maintain order and peace and we tackle crime, conflict and division. Crime, including transnational crime, has the potential to put at risk what we have achieved and divert us from our goals as a nation.

Transnational crime includes human trafficking, people smuggling, arms and drug trafficking, and terrorism. Transnational crimes expanding, and is increasingly being carried out by organised criminal organisations that operate across borders. As Timor-Leste progresses as a nation, and our economy grows, we are more likely to be targeted by transnational criminal organisations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This seminar focuses on two types of transnational crime: narcotics and human trafficking.

In relation to narcotics, we are already beginning to see an increase in the confiscation of drugs that people have tried to smuggle into Timor-Leste.

Drugs not only destroy peoples' lives -they also steal their futures. Instead of becoming a responsible member of the community, and contributing to the progress of our country, drugs can wreck a person's life, and the lives of those around them.

Sadly, we have also seen the damage that drugs can do to whole nations. We see countries overwhelmed by extreme criminal violence, entire cities terrorised by drug traffickers and institutions of State weakened by the influence of organised crime.

While in the past most conflict and violence across the world was caused by war, including civil wars, today it is more and more the case that violence and national fragility are caused by organised crime and drug related crime. That is why fighting against drug trafficking is so important for our country's future.

We must protect our young people, our communities and our nation from the evils of drugs and to do this we must fight transnational drug trafficking.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Another crime that causes terrible human suffering and misery, and is a grave violation of human rights, is transnational human trafficking. This includes trafficking people for sexual slavery, forced labour and slavery. There are terrible examples from around the world, where men and women, and sometimes even children, are held against their will or forced to work in appalling conditions until they pay off a debt they never willingly incurred.

Regrettably, globalisation and the internet have helped human traffickers who use these new communication channels to prey on the most vulnerable people, including, most often women and girls.

We must fight against this terrible evil and make sure that Timor-Leste does not become a market for human trafficking. It is our responsibility to make sure that Timor-Leste respects human rights and protects victims. We cannot say we are developing as a fair and just nation if we do not take up the fight against human traffickers. We must act to end this crime and accept that a test of whether we are truly developing as a country is whether women and girls feel safe on the streets and in their homes.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At this seminar we must ask the question, what can be done to stop the trafficking of drugs and people. We know that these crimes transcend national borders and political sovereignty and, therefore, we must work together with our neighbours. Together we must assist each other to target the criminal networks that engage in these crimes.

It is also important that we strengthen our governance and security institutions to make sure that they are not corrupted by international criminal networks. We must be ever vigilant to make sure that agents of the State never work with criminal organisations. We must target transnational criminal organisations and make sure we have the laws in place to deal with drug and human trafficking.

An important part of our approach must be international cooperation between law enforcement agencies. This includes Timor-Leste working closely with our Indonesian friends. We cannot fight transnational crime alone. That is why seminars such as this one are so important.

I urge you to make the most of this seminar and to forge new ties and reinforce our shared commitment to fighting the evils of drug and human trafficking. I look forward to hearing the contributions this seminar makes to addressing this issue.

Thank you for your commitment to upholding the law, fighting transnational crime and securing our future.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão  
26 November 2013