



PRIME
MINISTER

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
DR RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
NATIONAL POLICE OF TIMOR-LESTE**

Police Training Centre of Comoro, Dili
27 March 2015



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

Your Excellency the Speaker of Parliament
Dr Vicente da Silva Guterres

Your Excellency the President of the Court of Appeal
Dr Guilhermino da Silva

Your Excellency the Minister of the Interior
Dr Longuinhos Monteiro

Your Excellency the Chief of Staff
Major General Lere Anan Timur

Distinguished Members of Parliament and Government
Distinguished Representatives from the Diplomatic Corps
Illustrious Guests

Your Excellency the Interim Commander-General of PNTL
Commissioner Afonso de Jesus
Distinguished appointed Commanders

Your Excellencies the PNTL Unit Commanders and Heads of Services

Officers, NCOs, Members and Civilian Staff of PNTL,

It is an honour and a privilege to be here at the ceremony celebrating the Fifteenth Anniversary of the National Police of Timor-Leste. This is an event that holds great importance for every Timorese citizen.

As such, I would like to start by congratulating PNTL!

I would also like to seize this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the work that has already been done in terms of developing and consolidating our PNTL.

Security is inseparable from a democratic society, since it is the key element for people to trust in the institutions, in the authority of the State and on the latter's ability to prevent and repress crime, within a setting of full respect for the freedoms, rights and guarantees of the citizens.

The main responsibility of the Security Forces is to ensure the protection of the Timorese, which is why they deserve our utmost respect. And while much has already been done in

these 15 years of the PNTL, we still need to further develop a solidary culture of security in which everyone has a role to play.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Security is an asset of everyone and for everyone!

We all must contribute in what regards public order and tranquillity, as well as crime prevention. This is a citizenship duty, whose intensity is naturally dependant from our role in society. The Government and the Ministry of the Interior, as the entities responsible for conducting the Security Policy, must ensure the proper organization and operation of the internal security system. Security Forces and Services must carry out the operational activities that are indispensable for maintaining the public peace.

Among the Institutions that guarantee the security of the Timorese, PNTL has a particularly important role to play in view of the nature of the broad tasks it performs everyday throughout the national territory.

As such, it is essential to be close to the populations and dedicated to the public cause. This means that its operation must always be cohesive and professional. Additionally, in order for PNTL to be credible and to convey a true feeling of peace and security to our society, it is necessary that every police officer displays political and social exemption and performs their duties in a rigorous and disciplined manner.

The State, and particularly the Government, is responsible for transferring skills and abilities, so as to provide our Defence and Security Forces with the means that they require. Over the last few years we have strengthened the institutional growth of PNTL and we have built a Police Force that is better able to carry out its missions. We want PNTL to give priority to prevention and to community policing, using force only when it is strictly necessary and in accordance with a previously set framework.

Indeed, in recent years PNTL achieved considerable results in terms of the operational product and of institutional valorisation, as a consequence of the need for development and consolidation, together with the increase in terms of skills and knowledge.

When we speak today of the reduction of reported crime, reduction of the more violent and serious types of crime, maintenance of public order, reduction of road accidents, innovative and successful projects for supporting women and children who are the victims of domestic violence and for punishing the offenders, participation in international missions, such as the one in Guinea-Bissau, providing security during electoral periods, and special programmes of community policing, we are speaking of the remarkable contribution by our PNTL in maintaining Timor-Leste as a country that provides guarantees of freedom and safety to our citizens and to all visitors.

Concerning participation in international forums, such as the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, we are also proud of PNTL for having held the Presidency of the Council of Chiefs of Police of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries. This is a position that PNTL will be resuming very soon.

However, these results would not have been possible without the exceptional commitment and the particular focus given by the former Minister of Defence and Security, Mr Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, the former Secretary of State for Security, Dr Francisco Guterres, and the new Minister of Interior, Dr Longuinhos Monteiro, to the entire process to develop and consolidate this Security Force during the First to the Fifth Constitutional Governments.

As such, I would like to give a special word of acknowledgment to Dr Longuinhos Monteiro for his excellent professional performance and for the extraordinary qualities and skills that he displayed during the nearly six years in which he held the important and complex office of Commander-General of PNTL, before he was recently called upon to become the new Minister of the Interior. I want to thank him personally and on behalf of the Government for the excellent service provided to PNTL and to the Nation. I am certain that his successor will be very successful in continuing the work done by Dr Longuinhos Monteiro.

I also want to praise Commissioner Afonso de Jesus for his remarkable dedication, complete availability and superior professional performance in rebuilding and developing PNTL.

I must also thank and praise the development partners, particularly the bilateral partners: your contribution is being very important for the process to develop and consolidate PNTL.

Officers, NCOs and Members of PNTL,

I want to convey to you my appreciation for the effort and sacrifice you have displayed in your tasks.

I want to highlight those who have based their personal and professional behaviour on a culture of professionalism, competence, commitment and dedication, built upon the values that should characterize the corporation – Discipline, Honour and Duty.

I thank those who were decorated today for the commitment, dedication and professionalism they have shown in the performance of their duties. Their good example should be followed and adopted by every PNTL member, so as to create a body that is homogenous, uniform, honourable and respected by the community to which it belongs.

I also want to seize the opportunity, on this anniversary of PNTL, to challenge you to continue improving in three key areas, namely Community Policing, Border Control (both on land and on the sea) and Road Safety.

The Organic Law states that PNTL will have the characteristics of a community police in terms of policing strategy and philosophy. This means that police officers must be well inserted in their local communities and in permanent contact with the populations, so as to enable proximity policing. This is essential for identifying the problems that affect people and communities, learning what conflicts constrain their safety and taking the proper measures for ensuring that everyone lives in peace and tranquillity.

Today we appointed the new Commander-General and Second Commander-General of PNTL, who were sworn-in at this ceremony. This is another step towards the development of PNTL and, more importantly, a sign of trust in the Senior Officers of this Institution, who are committed to providing a strong and disciplined leadership for PNTL.

To the new Commander-General Júlio Hornay and to the new Second Commander-General Faustino da Costa, I wish the utmost success in the important, demanding and difficult tasks that they have now been given.

Your success will be vital for everyone's safety.

I am sure that all PNTL members will continue displaying their abilities and dedication in order to ensure that Timorese citizens continue living in freedom and safety.

I have full confidence in PNTL and in its determination for assuring the neutralization of threats and compliance with their missions, as is required in a democratic society based on the Rule of Law.

I conclude by extending my warm congratulations to PNTL on their 15th anniversary. I am certain that the future of this institution will be a very bright one.

I congratulate you all and wish you great success.

Thank you very much.

Dr Rui Maria de Araújo
27 March 2015