



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

**ADDRESS BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER  
DR. RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE**

**Dili  
25 April 2015**



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

Your Excellency, Ambassador Jonathan Schwass

Your Excellency, Ambassador Peter Doyle

Royal Australian Navy Rear Admiral Mark Purcell

It is a special honour to speak at this Dawn Service on the 100th Anniversary of the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli.

Today we commemorate the sacrifice of Australian and New Zealand soldiers that fought and died in battle.

We remember their sacrifice in the name of freedom and liberty in our region and around the world.

In Timor-Leste we know from personal experience the bravery and the professionalism of Australian and New Zealand soldiers through our shared military history.

In the Second World War around 300 Australian commandos displayed remarkable resilience and courage in waging a guerrilla campaign against 10,000 Japanese soldiers in our country. They were helped by many Timorese who risked their lives in support of the Australian soldiers.

On the birth of our nation, Australia and New Zealand soldiers came here as part of INTERFET and helped secure peace so we could begin to build our country.

And again in 2006, Australia and New Zealand responded to our time of need and sent forces as part of the International Stabilisation Force.

Today we remember their efforts and give thanks to our Australian and New Zealand friends.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we gather on this narrow strip of land – between the sea and the steep hills of Dili – we are reminded of the fate of those brave young men that landed at Gallipoli 100 years ago today.

As we honour their stories we reflect upon not only the sacrifice of Australian and New Zealand soldiers but on our own Timorese veterans who fought and died in our struggle for independence.

At the invitation of the National President of the Australian Returned and Services League, today over 50 Timorese veterans will be walking at ANZAC Day marches in every Australian capital city.

Timor-Leste is deeply honoured by this sign of respect and solidarity. We know that this is a way for Australians to remember the brave Timorese who supported their soldiers in World War II. It also reflects the deep and special relationship we have with the Australian people.

The Australian RSL will also help us to build our own national veteran's organisation, the Council of the Combatants of National Liberation. And we will learn from the extraordinary way Australians and New Zealanders honour and support their veterans.

Today is a day of reflection to remember those who have given their lives so that we may be free.

And we honour the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who have served in Timor-Leste and around the world in the name of freedom.

Thank you very much.

25 April 2015

Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo