



PRIME  
MINISTER

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE,  
DR RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
NATIONAL POLICE OF TIMOR-LESTE**

**Police Training Centre, Dili  
28 March 2016**

Your Excellency the Vice President of National Parliament

Your Excellency the Minister of the Interior and Members of Government

Your Excellency the Chief of the Defence Force

Your Excellencies the Members of Parliament

Your Excellency the Commander-General of the National Police of Timor-Leste

Your Excellencies the PNTL Unit Commanders and Heads of Services

Your Excellencies the Officers, NCOs, Members and Civilian Staff of PNTL

Your Excellencies the Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps and of the Religious and Administrative Authorities

Gentlemen Veterans and Founders of the National Liberation Movement

We are here together to celebrate another year of operation by the National Police of Timor-Leste. As such, for these 16 years serving this people and this nation, I want to say: happy birthday, PNTL!

Congratulations to the institution itself and to all those who are part of it, from the Commander-General to the advisory and inspection bodies, such as the Police Superior Council and the Inspectorate-General, to the General Command, the various Units and Services and the Police Training Centre.

I also want to seize this moment to convey a word of gratitude and appreciation to the Minister of the Interior Mr Longuinhos Monteiro and to the Commissioner Mr Afonso de Jesus, to whom I have just bestowed the medal of the Order of Timor-Leste, as decreed by His Excellency the President of the Republic. Your performance, sense of mission, dedication and professionalism as Commander-General of the PNTL and Commissioner, which are two positions of great responsibility, are a credit to PNTL and have contributed to the development and consolidation of the Nation, the people as well as this institution.

The National Police of Timor-Leste has a vital role in maintaining order, protecting the citizens in general and the State at every level. The tasks performed by PNTL are essential to a democratic State, which is why it was necessary to carry out an institutional reform process. Although the latter has not been quick or easy, it has nevertheless enabled Timor-Leste to live today in an atmosphere of peace and stability.

With each passing year – and today makes 16 – the National Police of Timor-Leste continues to grow and to enhance its ability to perform its tasks. As such, it is increasingly able to ensure more of its duties in several areas, covering both the rights, liberties and guarantees of our citizens as well as the security of our country.

It was essential to respond to the institution's weaknesses, which included better planning and administration of resources in the various missions seeking to serve the Nation and its people.

Your Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen

PNTL is responsible for ensuring control by preventing and fighting crime, maintaining public order, upholding the law and ensuring security conditions that enable the normal operation of democratic institutions. It is also responsible for ensuring social protection by providing assistance and protection to those in need. Furthermore, PNTL protects human rights of over 1.1 million Timorese and other foreign citizens living in Timor-Leste.

PNTL does not condone wrongful conducts that would otherwise damage society and the State. As such, everyone must appreciate PNTL. The citizens must understand that PNTL and the other institutions that protect the State, human rights and the society affect everyone and work towards the wellbeing of all citizens and the security of the country.

As such, although we should continue to be aware that these are our own rights we must also be conscious that they are also our duties, not just the institutions. The community should also be called upon to take part in the implementation of security public policies by the law enforcement agencies, through that which we call community policing.

I recall that last year, at this event, I asked for greater involvement in areas such as community policing, control of land and sea borders and road safety.

We have been striving to bring the people closer to PNTL, not just so that they understand public safety is the responsibility of everyone but also to strengthen the relationship between the citizens and PNTL. Greater citizen awareness will enable better conflict resolution and ensure the proper administration of their *modus operandi*.

This is why the Strategic Plan of PNTL has created the VIP policing model – “Visibility” by the police, so that the community feels safer; “Involvement” by the community, so that it feels part of the security system; and “Professionalism” by the policy, which results in a happier community.

A key goal is reducing crime and increasing reporting. Only when crimes are reported the police is able to act in accordance so that it can lower the effective rates of reported crime, the rates of serious and violent crimes, the numbers of domestic violence and attacks against physical integrity, illegal immigration, drug trafficking and transnational organised crime, as well as crimes against nature, road accidents, attacks against public order and public peace, etc.

The effort and dedication of PNTL have succeeded in improving the institution’s credibility at national and international level. In today’s world, with several threats having become globalised, it is essential that citizens and the country itself feel safe about our security policies. Otherwise, we could be endangering the stable and secure atmosphere we have managed to create which has enabled our citizens to improve their living situations and our country to project an image of confidence.

National security, whose benchmarks are constantly evolving and changing, must always be our number one goal. It is to protect it that all of us – State, Government and Defence and Security Forces – must work with dedication and in compliance with the Constitution and the law.

Your Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Today PNTL is an institution whose path is evidence of the long strides taken towards its strengthening and consolidation. Nevertheless, it is also an institution that has a long way to grow and that needs to become more robust. Today the human resources of PNTL, which are its strength, are more skilled and much more educated. This has contributed significantly to the growth of the institution.

However, we must continue striving to improve PNTL. And we must do so without neglecting the rigour, discipline and professional performance required of those who are given such an important duty and responsibility as serving the State. It is necessary that each and every PNTL member continues to be a role model of professional ethics and honesty in the performance of their duties.

This is why the leaders of an institution like PNTL are so important. Only with strong leaders can PNTL present a united, steadfast, honoured and disciplined front that is ready to respond to the challenges that it faces each and every day.

About a year ago the Commander-General of the PNTL, Commissioner Júlio da Costa Hornay, and the Deputy Commander-General of the PNTL, Commissioner Faustino da Costa, were sworn-in and handed the mantle of leadership over this institution. These are very demanding positions that entail great responsibility and require enormous professional competence and rigour. As such, I would now like to wish the Commander-General and the Deputy Commander-General continued success in the performance of their duties.

About a year ago I acknowledged the spirit, effort and sacrifice by all PNTL members and conveyed to everyone my trust in this institution.

One year later, I am here today to acknowledge this spirit once again and to say that my trust in the PNTL has doubled.

I wish you great success!  
Thank you very much.

Dr Rui Maria de Araújo  
Dili, 28 March 2016