



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

**SPEECH BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE,
DR RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO,
AT THE
XVII MEETING OF THE CPLP MINISTERS OF DEFENCE**

**Dili
19 May 2016**



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

Your Excellencies

The Minister of Defence of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
The CPLP Ministers of Defence and their representatives
The CPLP Executive Secretary
Fellow Government Members
The Chief of the General Staff of the Defence Force
The Commander General of the National Police
The Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Defence Force
The Chief of Staff of the Defence Force

Distinguished

Directors of the National Defence Policy and Director of the CPLP Strategic Review Centre
Members from Member State Delegations and the CPLP Executive Secretariat
Representatives from CPLP Associated Observers
Representatives from the Diplomatic Corps and the Civil Society

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by welcoming you all and thanking our Minister of Defence for his kind words. It is a great satisfaction for me to be here today.

I would also like to praise the Minister of Defence and Sea of São Tomé and Príncipe, Mr Carlos Olímpio Stock, for his commitment during the period when he held the Defence brief of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries.

I also want to address the Ministers of Defence in attendance and the Chiefs of Delegation representing the illustrious ministers that could not be present. Here I would like to echo the words of our Minister of Defence wishing that normality and lasting stability would soon be restored in their countries.

The Meeting of the Ministers of Defence is the main Forum where we can come together to reflect on Defence issues and to share experiences and visions that strengthen us both as individual countries as well as a Community.

The defence policy of Timor-Leste is inserted within the paradigm of cooperative security that is linked to economic interdependence, the emergence of common normative frameworks and the strengthening of mutual trust between States. This increased bilateral and multilateral cooperation between States in terms of security reflects the trend over the last two decades.

In today's globalised world it is unquestionable that we are living in this new paradigm. We now have a system for organising the set of states, linked within a network by a series of formal and informal instruments and mechanisms of interdependence, and characterised by the growing institutionalisation of relationships between state and non-state agents. The new paradigm also includes the denationalisation of political guidelines, namely security policies.

Among our Defence and National Security goals within this new paradigm we can highlight the commitment of contributing to regional and international peace, security and stability, as well as the strengthening of relationships with our privileged partners and friendly nations, which is the case of the CPLP nations.

We also consider that the CPLP defence component is essential for meeting the goals and guiding principles of our Community, which was created with the purpose of consolidating ties of friendship and common values and interests between Portuguese speaking countries, as well as of promoting development and contributing to a more balanced and peaceful international setting.

The goals we share also increase the international projection of the CPLP countries. In addition to making us stronger, working together enables our Community to reach a higher plateau within the regional and global context.

Yesterday we had the III Ordinary Meeting of Ministers of Sea Affairs. The sea is very important for the identity, structure and strategy of the CPLP. As we are maritime nations with ample areas under our sovereignty and jurisdiction, it is our duty to defend our seas and to protect the natural resources that are part of its wealth.

Indeed, this is an obligation of all States! Protecting our seas against various threats that may arise from a myriad sources and being able to exploit the living and non-living natural resources of the seas in order to contribute to the wellbeing and the sustainable economy of our peoples and nations are strategic and vital issues that naturally cannot be dissociated from Defence and Security matters.

This is why I would like to highlight the development of Navies and Coast Guards in the CPLP Member States – in the case of Timor-Leste the Naval Component and the Maritime Police –, which are essential for ensuring maritime security and for protecting our maritime resources.

Consequently, it is vital that our countries cooperate closely in order to strengthen our maritime abilities.

Your Excellencies,

Timor-Leste acknowledges its inherent difficulties in protecting its seas, namely in what concerns the fight against illegal fishing, transnational crime and smuggling of illegal substances. As such, we have been taking steps to create a Maritime Authority that can respond to our country's challenges, needs and commitments.

We also acknowledge the need to work alongside our partners, particularly our regional partners, in the area of maritime security. Maritime diplomacy is an important component of the foreign policy of Asia-Pacific States, since many of them are maritime States. Additionally, the seas contain countless wealth and provide important communication routes in this part of the globe.

Timor-Leste wants its Forces to make an active contribution to the regional security of the sea and of maritime communication routes. Cooperation between our countries through our Community will surely assist us in strengthening the capacity of the Naval Component of the F-FDTL. This will represent a valuable contribution so that the Timorese State can achieve its goals and fulfil its regional commitments.

Furthermore, the Felino military exercise will improve the articulation between the Armed Forces of the CPLP member States and strengthen friendship and trust between our countries.

The modernisation and professionalization of the Armed Forces of the CPLP countries have contributed to their drive and credibility at regional and global level, being involved in humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping operations, as were the cases of the Missions in Lebanon and South Sudan.

Since we should look at each of us within the context of globalisation, I would also like to mention, in line with the solidarity principles expressed in the CPLP Cooperation Protocol in the area of Defence, the necessary political guidelines sustaining reflection around a coordinated response to disaster and emergency situations, thus contributing to the promotion of Human Rights and to the fulfilment of commitments that led to the creation of this Community.

Your Excellencies,

Before I conclude, I would like to congratulate our Minister of Defence, Mr Cirilo Cristóvão, for assuming the Defence brief for our Community. I am certain that he will carry out his duties with the utmost sense of responsibility.

Tomorrow, May 20th, we will be celebrating the 14th anniversary of the Restoration of our Independence. Our Independence was earned after a struggle in which we always relied on the unconditional support of the CPLP countries – even when we still were not part of this Community. As such, on behalf of the Timorese Government I would like to invite you all to attend the celebrations of this day that means so much to us.

I want to finish by wishing everyone great success in this meeting. I trust that you will make the most of it, so that together we may find answers to challenges that affect us all, even though in different ways to each of us. This is also why we are the CPLP!

Thank you.

19 May 2016
Dr Rui Maria de Araújo