



PRESIDÊNCIA DA REPÚBLICA

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
PRESIDENT TAUR MATAN RUAK  
OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE  
TO THE 68<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

*New York, 25 September 2013*

Excellencies, Mr. President of the UN General Assembly  
Excellency, Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations  
Excellencies, Heads of State and Heads of Government  
Ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me to begin by conveying my vigorous condemnation for the recent terrorist attacks in Kenya, Pakistan and Iraq, which killed scores of innocent people. On behalf of the Government of Timor-Leste, I extend our deepest condolences to the bereaved families for the senseless loss of their loved ones.

Terrorism is contrary to every civilized value we hold dear and for which we have fought. It must be condemned in all its manifestations, regardless of its motives.

Excellencies,

This is the first time that I address this august Assembly of representatives of the international community as a whole. I take this occasion to once again thank the United Nations for its contribution to the realization of the right of the people of Timor-Leste to decide on our own future.

Timor-Leste's experience shows the great value of the United Nations and the importance of negotiated solutions, dialogue and diplomacy to international disputes.

This is the first year, since the Restoration of Independence of Timor-Leste, 11 years ago, without a United Nations mission in the country.

Our partnership with the UN, throughout the last decade, achieved remarkable successes. The Timorese people's yearning for stability and peace was decisive for the new circumstances, which allowed the Security Council to remove Timor-Leste from its agenda.

The results obtained are shared jointly by the international community – for the solidarity and pioneering effort in nation-building processes made in Timor-Leste; and by the Timorese people – for the maturity and firm determination to live in peace, which was repeatedly expressed in free elections with a high voter turnout.

I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the attention given to my country, which was again underlined by his visit to Timor-Leste, one year ago, which greatly honoured us.

The Timorese people now hold, in their own hands, the full responsibility for the construction of their future. The country faces the challenges with high hopes and optimism.

One such challenge is to focus the national development effort on the diversification of the economy, reducing our dependency on oil and promoting inclusive development for all Timorese people. Another is to consolidate our national institutions, strengthening their technical

capacities and ensuring the participation of the younger generation in managing the country.

The older generations have incumbency – and have the duty – of passing on to the youth the wealth of values generated during the liberation struggle, such as the respect for human dignity and the dedication and service to the country. These values are as necessary to build an equitable society and a united country today as they were, in the past, to solidify the unity of purpose of the Nation. The development of the country must not exclude any Timorese.

Mr. President, Excellencies.

Relations between Timor-Leste and the United Nations will continue to strength, and will increasingly focus on assisting with human, social and economic development efforts and the strengthening of institutions.

The international integration of the country continues to evolve at a good pace, guided by the goal of contributing to a peaceful and stable international system capable of promoting social and human opportunities for all peoples.

We participate in the development of new forms of dialogue between fragile States, by establishing the **g7+** group.

This group – which Timor-Leste currently has the honour of presiding – comprises 18 countries committed to promoting a new model of engagement between fragile States and other international stakeholders.

The *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*, promoted by the **g7+** group, has been well received by the United Nations, development partners and international organisations.

The initiative of the **g7+** – and the dynamic relationship of this group with development partners – contributes to the establishment of more innovative and effective international cooperation relations.

The latest MDG report states that most countries will not achieve all the Millennium Development goals and this is especially true in the case of fragile and conflict affected states.

The international community as a whole must draw lessons from this as we plan for the future. Many of the worlds poorest have been left behind, including around 1.5 billion people across the globe who live in areas affected by fragility and conflict.

This is why the **g7+** countries came together with this vital message: Without peace there can be no development and without development there can be no peace. And to add a further dimension to that, there can be neither without inclusive and responsive state institutions.

At the regional level, we have established relations of friendship with neighbouring countries in South-East Asia and the Pacific, in particular with Australia and Indonesia, our closest neighbours, with whom we maintain intense cooperation.

The process of reconciliation between Timor-Leste and Indonesia and the excellent relations that our two countries have developed represent a model containing lessons that are useful and relevant beyond our borders and outside our region.

Timor-Leste submitted its application for membership of ASEAN. We have developed relations of friendship with all member-states of this organization, which makes relevant contributions to stability in our region. Our country is a member of the *Non-Aligned Movement*, and a special observer of the *Pacific Islands Forum*. We play an active role in, and are committed to multilateral processes, which are important for regional stability and security.

The election of Timor-Leste to chair ESCAP, the Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific, unanimously by the countries that are part of this UN body, reflect my country's harmonious international integration.

As member of the *Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries* (CPLP) we will have the honour of chairing this organization in the 2014-2016 biennium.

Timor-Leste believes in making its voice directly heard in every multilateral *fora* pertaining to our national interest, and will submit an application for membership to the Commonwealth of Nations.

Mr. President, Excellencies.

Turning our attention to international matters whose urgency especially appeals to our conscience, my country witnesses with horror the growing violence in Syria.

We welcome the agreement that was reached to put Syria's arsenal of chemical weapons under UN control prior to its destruction. Timor-Leste rejects the use of chemical weapons in all circumstances.

We are in favour of dialogue in the search for negotiated solutions, with the involvement of the United Nations. Only negotiation may help save lives and alleviate the dear price that the Syrian people are paying, in human lives and in social upheaval, which has resulted in millions of internally displaced persons and refugees.

In Timor-Leste we know only too well the losses and traumas of war. We are committed to preventing violence in all its forms. Earlier this month, our Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmão, joined the 'Champions' Initiative to end Sexual Violence in Conflict, supporting the corresponding action initiated by the United Nations.

In a world rapidly transitioning to globalisation, the Security Council must perfect its ability to effectively respond and adjust its composition to better reflect the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

New powers, such as India, Indonesia and Brazil, among others, must be granted permanent member status in the Security Council.

At the same time, my country values the need for a better representation of medium-sized and small countries with relevant contributions to stability and peace. In this spirit, Timor-Leste supports New Zealand's candidature for a non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council for the term 2015-2016. New Zealand has actively worked with us for peace and security in Timor-Leste and we believe she will both enhance the voice of small states and be a constructive bridge-builder at the Council.

Excellencies,

On 30 August, Timor-Leste celebrated the 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the referendum, supervised by the United Nations, which allowed the realisation of the right of the Timorese people to self-determination and to independence.

By contrast, there are peoples who, after decades, continue to patiently wait for the realisation of their right to self-determination. This is the case of the Sahrawi people. A stable and lasting solution for Western Sahara cannot exist without the democratic expression of the will of its people.

We commend the decision of the leaders of the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to resume direct talks, under the auspices of the United States government.

Timor-Leste supports the right of the peoples of Palestine and Israel to live side by side, in peace, with dignity and in safety.

We hope that the peace-talk process already initiated may finally lead to a solution with two sovereign States coexisting in an environment of mutual respect and rejecting extremism and violence. We condemn the building of settlements in the occupied territories and all unilateral initiatives contrary to the resolutions of the United Nations.

We believe in dialogue, openness and inclusion as a means of strengthening confidence in international relations. Therefore, we call for an end to the embargo against the Republic of Cuba, an embargo that does not take into account the reality of today, of the country or of the Cuban people.

We also call on to President Barack Obama to act in accordance with his powers and release the four Cuban citizens, from an initial group of five, who remain incarcerated, for over a decade, in North-American prisons.

Allow me now address the situation in Guinea-Bissau, a sister nation to Timor-Leste in the Community of Portuguese-Language Countries, currently experiencing an easing of political and social tensions, which we hope may lead to the re-establishment of institutional normalcy and of democracy.

We welcome the efforts of the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) – led by my predecessor as Head of State of Timor-Leste, José Ramos-Horta – whose initiatives have contributed to increase the prestige of the United Nations amongst the people of Guinea-Bissau and to create an environment of greater trust and dialogue in Guinean society.

The problems of Guinea-Bissau can be solved. Timor-Leste will continue to support the patient effort of the Guinean people and of the international community aimed at intensifying the dialogue and reconciliation between the people of Guinea-Bissau and at promoting a democratic solution within an appropriate time frame.

Excellencies,

Amongst the momentous global challenges that humanity is facing today, I want to highlight the serious problem of malnutrition that affects hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

The twin challenges of improving food security and reducing malnutrition on a global scale require a new boost from us all, including development partner countries.

Without new coordinated initiatives and greater investment to promote the improvement of food security and fight against malnutrition, it will not be possible to progress rapidly and safely towards the Millennium Development Goals and the new objectives that will be defined in the Post-

2015 Development Agenda, launched, in due time, by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Timor-Leste follows with great interest the Post-2015 Development Agenda process and we are honoured by the invitation made to our countrywoman, the Minister of Finances of Timor-Leste, Dr. Emília Pires, to participate in the High-Level Panel that drafted a proposal for that Agenda at the request of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

--- X ---

The Timorese people's historical experience and the national liberation struggle in which we were engaged for 24 years show that only the values of tolerance, dialogue and mutual respect – which the Timorese Resistance repeatedly put forward and I have always defended – in short, the value of the respect for the dignity of the people, allow us to reach durable, stable solutions for the disputes between countries.

In a world where challenges are rapidly becoming globalised, requiring concerted and effective responses, the action of the United Nations is ever more essential to the stability of international relations.

Timor-Leste will continue to provide its committed contribution so that the United Nations may better respond to the challenges and yearnings of its Member States, bravely asserting the values of peace and mutual respect and strengthening the confidence in the international system.

Thank you.