

**Transcript of briefing to the Security Council by
Ms Ameerah Haq
Special Representative of the Secretary-General
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Mr President. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zacarias da Costa. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), covering the period from 8 January to 20 September 2011. I would like to acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Zacarias da Costa.

The report describes a calm situation, where the overall trend is positive and the country continues to make progress towards sustainable peace and development. When UNMIT was established in 2006, Timor-Leste was marked by a fragile security situation and a weak PNTL institutional framework, and thousands of internally displaced persons in camps throughout the capital. Today, Timor-Leste is a very different place. Much has been achieved. Political leaders across the board are unequivocal about the need for continued peace, dialogue and stability. The PNTL has resumed responsibility for police operations throughout the country, and the UNMIT police has intensified its focus on providing support for further institutional development and capacity-building of the PNTL. Dili is a vibrant and safe city. With the Government's Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030, there is a long-term vision for the further development of the country. The electoral management bodies have significantly strengthened their capacity since 2006 and are spearheading preparations for presidential and parliamentary elections in 2012. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, including in the areas of institutional capacity-building, further strengthening of the security sector, and socio-economic issues like youth unemployment.

President José Ramos-Horta, President of National Parliament Fernando de Araújo "Lasama", Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, and Fretilin Secretary-General Mari Alkatiri deserve much credit for contributing to an environment in Timor-Leste of continued progress towards the consolidation of peace, stability and development. They and other political leaders from across the spectrum have consistently reiterated the importance of promoting tolerance, mutual respect, and commitment to the democratic process. Since the report's closing date of 20 September, I have held two of my regular meetings with all political parties, and one meeting with women party representatives. During these meetings, I was

heartened to hear party representatives describe their own responsibilities towards ensuring that this constructive political climate persists.

Mr President, as the Secretary-General's report notes, good progress continues to be made in all areas of UNMIT's mandate. Let me first focus on two key elements for continued peace and stability in Timor-Leste, which are also critical aspects of UNMIT's mandated support: policing and elections.

In the area of policing, PNTL's resumption of responsibility for the conduct, command and control of all police operations in the country on 27 March 2011 was a milestone. As mentioned above, since then, UNMIT police support has focused on strengthening capacity-building and training of the PNTL within the framework of the PNTL-UNMIT Police Joint Development Plan. The Plan sets out a comprehensive programme of capacity-building activities in the key areas of administration, discipline, legislation, operations, and training. The UNMIT police have also been providing operational support to the PNTL as required and requested, and will maintain this capacity throughout the electoral period. UNMIT police are already supporting PNTL in preparing for the 2012 elections, including through ongoing training in the areas of operational planning and incident command and control as well as assistance in developing a joint operations plan for elections.

A key challenge for meeting our goals in the policing area is retaining UNMIT police officers – and selecting others -- with the expertise needed for effective implementation of the Joint Development Plan. Here, I appeal to police-contributing countries to provide officers qualified for specialised advisory positions, and reiterate the Secretary-General's request that the countries concerned approve extensions of deployment of police officers serving in key UNMIT positions.

Since the PNTL's resumption of policing responsibilities on 27 March, PNTL officers have effectively addressed incidents, and there has been no impact on the continuing low crime rate. In the long-term, the PNTL's enduring effectiveness will depend, to a large extent, on its ability to maintain the trust of the Timorese public. As noted in the Secretary-General's report, the Office of the Secretary of State for Security completed its review of the 199 officers with pending criminal or disciplinary issues, with criminal and/or disciplinary action recommended against 121 officers. The importance of PNTL's continuing efforts to

enhance internal disciplinary mechanisms, demonstrating its commitment to transparency and the rule of law, cannot be overstated. Another essential element of maintaining trust among the population is to serve its most vulnerable members, including the victims of domestic violence, which continues to be the second highest reported crime in Timor-Leste after assault. Continued efforts to engage in community-policing can assist in tackling this issue, which UNMIT continues to promote in all our work with PNTL.

As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, PNTL continues to face a challenge in meeting all of its logistical requirements. I urge the Government and Parliament, including in the context of the current 2012 budget discussions, to work together to ensure adequate financial allocations for the PNTL to overcome existing logistical gaps and to maintain any assets UNMIT might eventually transfer to it. These gaps are also being discussed in the High-Level Committee on Transition, on the basis of detailed analysis of requirements and costs.

Mr President, the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2012 will undoubtedly be another major milestone for Timor-Leste. Although the electoral calendar has not yet been announced, preparations are proceeding. The Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration has drafted subsidiary electoral legislation, including the rules and procedures for candidate nomination, polling and counting, and campaigning, as well as codes of conduct for media, observers, and party representatives, all of which are currently under review by the National Electoral Commission (CNE). United Nations support to the elections, provided through the joint UNMIT and UNDP Electoral Support Team, is a key example of UN integration in action. UNICEF and UN Women are also contributing to the UN's electoral efforts, including through support programmes targeting participation of women, young and first-time voters.

I would like to highlight that, while the representation of women in Parliament -- twenty-one out of sixty-five MPs -- is already commendable, Parliament's approval of the amended parliamentary election law providing for an increase in the quota of women on party lists of candidates to one in every three (from one in every four) reflects the widespread commitment to women's participation. To enhance women's participation in the elections, both as voters and as candidates, a national steering committee has been formed and comprises members of Parliament, the Secretariat of State for the Promotion of Equality, the

electoral management bodies, civil society organisations, UN agencies and UNMIT. On 7 and 8 November, the steering committee hosted a national workshop entitled “Women’s Leadership Leads Us to Peace and Stability” to discuss strategies to bolster women’s participation in the elections. Nevertheless, challenges remain. While women are currently playing important roles in a number of key Cabinet, State and other leadership positions, it is encouraging that multi-pronged efforts are being made by Government and local authorities, civil society and the UN and other partners to increase the level of women’s participation in political, electoral and other decision-making processes. Women’s increased engagement in these processes will enable them to further contribute as leaders and agents of change in society. During my discussions over the past months, I have appealed to all entities concerned, including State institutions and political parties in Timor-Leste, to promote women’s full participation in important for a and decision-making processes that will influence the course of their country’s future.

The elections are expected to be a major political event next year. I encourage international partners to again show their commitment to Timor-Leste by sending observers for the elections, and providing financial support still needed for UN electoral activities to be conducted at the request of the Government.

Furthermore, the elections are widely expected to lead to a peaceful transition to a new Government in Timor-Leste, by the third quarter of 2012, with the space for meaningful engagement of an opposition. It is also expected that PNTL will demonstrate its capacity to manage security throughout the electoral period. Based on those assumptions, and counting on continued stability, I am optimistic that conditions will allow for a smooth departure of UNMIT by 31 December 2012.

Mr President, on 30 September, the Government submitted to Parliament its proposal for the 2012 State budget in the amount of \$1.76 billion, with the plenary debate beginning on 9 November and expected to conclude by 25 November. Parliament’s discussions of this budget, in which all parties, including the opposition, actively participate, is yet another example of its role as a well-functioning forum for democratic debate.

As you know, in July, Parliament approved the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030, which sets out the Government’s strategies and actions to transform Timor-Leste into an upper-middle

income country by 2030. As the implementation of the Plan proceeds, it will be important for public investments to promote inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth, so that all segments of the population benefit from Timor-Leste's natural resources and growth. Creating increased employment opportunities for young people will be particularly important, as an indispensable contribution to long-term stability and prosperity.

Encouragingly, Timor-Leste's leaders are tackling these issues, making good progress on several of the Millennium Development Goals and redoubling attention to the targets which are currently off-track. Furthermore, through its chairmanship of the Group of Seven Plus Fragile States, Timor-Leste is at the forefront of the global policy agenda on strategies for enhancing aid effectiveness to fragile and conflict-affected states. In this forum, it has made significant contributions to the elaboration of objectives to consolidate peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts, which would facilitate achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in conflict-affected countries. Finally, there have been advances in strengthening the anti-corruption infrastructure. The Anti-Corruption Commission, which became fully staffed at the beginning of this year, has proceeded to undertake investigations. Parliament also approved a law establishing the Audit Chamber of the High Administrative Tax and Audit Court, and its staff are now being trained in Lisbon, Portugal.

As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the Commander of the F-FDTL, Major General Taur Matan Ruak, resigned on 1 September. On 6 October, President José Ramos-Horta hosted a ceremony to mark the transfer of command to newly-promoted Major General Lere Anan Timur, Major General Ruak's long-term deputy. This smooth transfer of command is a promising sign for F-FDTL's continued institutional stability.

Timor-Leste has also continued to demonstrate its commitment to human rights. On 12 October, Timor-Leste's National Report, which highlights the progress made and challenges faced in efforts to promote and protect human rights in the country, was adopted at the Twelfth Session of the Working Group of the United Nations Human Rights Council, under the Universal Periodic Review. The Minister of Justice led the Government's delegation, with the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice and civil society organisations also attending.

On 20 September, UNMIT launched the first public report by a peacekeeping mission on the rights of persons with disabilities entitled "Of

Course We Can". At the event, UNMIT provided, for the first time, information to persons with disabilities in alternative formats, including a Braille version of the report and sign language.

Mr President, UNMIT's transition is well underway. On 19 September, the President, the Prime Minister and I signed a Joint Transition Plan to guide the transition process in seven focus areas. It is the first time that a peacekeeping mission has jointly established such a mechanism with a host Government, and it has been a personal privilege for me to work so closely with the Timorese leadership on this ongoing matter. As part of the transition process, the Government is proceeding to make efforts to ensure sufficient resources are dedicated to strengthen its logistical capacity in areas currently supported by UNMIT, such as aviation services. In addition, UNMIT is increasing its capacity-building activities, both for its almost 900 national staff and various national counterparts. In the context of the transition process, joint working groups in each of the focus areas have also identified what support currently provided by UNMIT should be handed over to UN agencies, which, in turn, will need to raise the financial resources required to expand their responsibilities between now and the end of next year.

The planned and orderly conclusion of a peacekeeping mission is only one aspect of a successful transition. Equally important is establishing, in consultation with the Government in view of its priorities and requirements, what form of UN engagement will be needed thereafter by the country. As the Secretary-General has indicated in his report, consultations will continue on the various options for a UN presence in Timor-Leste following UNMIT, noting that any option would need to be discussed with the Government that will be formed following the 2012 elections.

Mr President, the coming year will be an eventful one for Timor-Leste. Just like the Timorese public, UNMIT looks forward to what in Dili is sometimes called "the democracy fest" expected in 2012. Credible and peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections would be a further demonstration to the world of the progress made by Timor-Leste in advancing sustainable peace and development. The elections will also be a test of the capacity of Timorese security institutions, particularly the PNTL, to ensure public safety and security across the country.

As mentioned earlier, Timor-Leste still faces a number of long-term challenges to achieve its development aspirations, including in terms of enhancing institutional capacities, further strengthening of the security sector, and increasing human resources. In such areas as access to justice, oversight and accountability mechanisms, youth employment, and health, additional support will be particularly needed. Yet, as the Secretary-General's report reflects, there are also many reasons for optimism. First and foremost among these is the determination of the Timorese people, without which none of the progress described in the report would have been possible.

In closing, I would like to thank Foreign Minister da Costa, as the representative of the Government of Timor-Leste, for our excellent collaboration. I would further like to thank all political parties, including the opposition, as well as civil society for their continued collaboration. My thanks also go to all staff of UNMIT and the United Nations country team for their contribution towards our mandated efforts to support Timor-Leste.

Thank you.