



PRIME  
MINISTER

**ADDRESS BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER  
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO  
AT THE 69<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

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

Your Excellency the President of the United Nations General Assembly

Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Your Excellencies the Heads of State and Government

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In September 2000, before becoming an independent country and while under UNTAET's administration, we came to this Great House as observers, in order to familiarise ourselves with the grand designs for the new century, in the shape of the Millennium Development Goals.

Twelve years after Timor-Leste was admitted into this prestigious Organisation, here we are again to take part in a review of what has been done and of what has not been done, looking at reasons and impacts. Ultimately we want to revise the manner of operation and redefine plans and strategies.

However, other speeches made both here and at the Security Council Summit show the other face – the most troubling one – of world problems, which is the general unquietness of the spirits and the pressure to use force in order to punish.

As such, I add my voice to all those who spoke before me, stating my deep concern in relation to the particularly difficult time in which the Community of Nations is living.

The United Nations has been an unequivocal forum for approaching international issues and continues to be the hope of millions of people throughout the world.

In the year 2000, the challenges came from the condition of extreme poverty, educational needs, enormous scarcity in terms of doctors and medication and lack of food production that affected the populations of many underdeveloped countries.

Fourteen years later, little has been achieved under this effort by the Community of Nations. The fragile or conflict affected countries are the furthest away from achieving their MDGs. Worse still, the challenges of the year 2000 have taken on a new path, increasing the problems related with the rise of tensions and conflicts in many parts of the world.

An organisation's true greatness and its ability in terms of global leadership are measured in difficult times such as these, where the search for peaceful solutions through more intense dialogue may well determine the future of humankind.

In order to respond to these challenges, we require an Organisation that operates effectively. We require an Organisation that is more active and less stereotyped – an Organisation that strengthens cooperation with other organisations, particularly regional ones, and that acts with great respect for the sovereignty and the idiosyncrasies of each State.

Every action carried out so far has just been a continuation of past measures that, in most cases, failed to achieve results that can be considered to be positive.

We are witnessing an increasing loss of trust and we are faced with a crisis of values. More important than the incomprehensible identity of issues that force us to react, we must seek to understand the true causes of the problems. When faced with a threat that does not respect borders and that jeopardises our commitment towards tolerance and peace, it is vital that we can better understand the interdependency of problems, so as to locate the civilizing gap that prevents us from talking to each other and from finding consensus.

We have always advocated that the use of military force does not establish universal values or build democracies. Misguided approaches that fail to recognise the various and diverse elements of the threats or, worse still, which are based on contradictions and on conflicts of interest, only serve to fuel the fire of radicalism and of extremist actions. As such, we must reflect and think things over... because as things stand, we are merely sliding off into the darkness of war, upholding the medieval principles of an "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth".

This is why I reiterate at this Great House that our collective efforts to preserve world peace and security must reject ill-conceived plans that are only motivated by the strategic interests of domination by the large powers. Instead, we need a plan that is more suited to the reality of each situation and that provides a true response to the main causes of the current crisis.

This common agenda should not insist on manipulating facts in order to produce collective reactions, but rather admit past mistakes due to the urge to impose peace through war. Only by correcting our way of thinking and acting will we truly be giving peace a chance!

Your Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The responses to the crises faced by humankind cannot be exacerbated by the desire to end war by waging war. Instead, they must be based on the desire to build a world of peace, supported by dialogue and by an effort – herculean, if need be – to respond to the root causes of problems that lead to terrorism, racism, extremism and intolerance.

When dozens of millions of people throughout the world suffer the horrors of conflict and the countless abuses perpetrated in this century of globalisation, the actions by the international community should prioritise the establishment of the best mechanisms for resolving the problems of exclusion, discrimination and marginalisation of groups, sects and ethnicities.

We must also ensure, from the very start, that the societies emerging from the ashes of these conflicts and committed to leaving the memories of the past behind are entitled to a vital transitional period, respecting their behaviours, their ways of thinking and acting, and their own internal rules and commitments.

Otherwise we will just be sowing the seeds for new conflicts, which we may end up reaping later on.

The war in Iraq, which has destroyed the legacy of a centuries-old civilisation, as well as the bloody conflicts in Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and the Ukraine, should make the international community draw its conclusions about the international standards applied in these contexts. The uncertainty

and the bloody anguish that surround Israel and Palestine, with those two peoples destined to live side by side, should alert us once and for all to the fact that fear and insecurity for the future lead to hate, which is the root of all evils.

Your Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Timor-Leste knows only too well the consequences and the scars of war.

In addition to the hundreds of thousands of Timorese killed, we also witnessed the near complete destruction of our country. A State born without the ability to ensure and promote the fundamental rights and liberties of its citizens is a fragile State that is unable to carry out its main mission.

Immediately after the war we started to reconcile the Timorese society. We wanted to achieve peace, since without peace we could not feel free.

We have also embraced Indonesia in order to achieve true and genuine reconciliation. Instead of feeding hatred and vengeance, we nurtured solidarity and tolerance between our communities. In this manner, we cultivated a sound relationship of cooperation between our States and our Peoples.

Western democracies are prone to paying for costly international tribunals for judging genocides. They also tend to feel shocked by the human rights violations that occur in developing countries. The issue with Indonesia cannot be seen only in terms of the actions by its military and its generals. Instead, it must be seen within a broader perspective, in which the governments of the western powers sold sophisticated weapons like rifles, warships, fighters, ammunition, tanks and cannons to the Indonesian military, in addition to providing it with training, so that it could decimate the Timorese.

That is why we Timorese and Indonesians preferred instead to record the truth of the facts, to close this painful chapter in our past and to look to

the future, which required and continues to require much effort to develop both nations and to improve the living conditions of both peoples.

With its pluralistic and tolerant society, Indonesia is more than a close neighbour. Indeed, it is an inspiration for Timor-Leste. Under the wise leadership of His Excellency President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono we have witnessed the establishment of a modern democracy that harmonises progress with the promotion of national, regional and international peace. We sincerely hope that the peaceful transition to President Joko Widodo will bring more success to this great Nation.

And I say this in a year when Timor-Leste is celebrating the 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its Independence. We have learned from our weaknesses and today we are living in an atmosphere of social and political peace.

We are very familiar with the challenges that are inherent to the efforts of developing a nation and of building peace and security.

We are very thankful for the support that the United Nations and all donor countries have provided to Timor-Leste. Nevertheless, these years of partnership have also taught us important lessons, which we have been sharing with the world, particularly the fragile States. We are encouraging them to own their processes and to be committed to the future of their citizens.

Your Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have also started to be more internationally active. We have been working hard within the scope of the g7+, a group that brings together 20 fragile and conflict-afflicted countries. In addition to sharing experiences and knowledge and seeking to put the needs of these countries on the global development agenda, we continue repeating, as many leaders have been doing since yesterday, that without Peace there can be no development. In turn, without development there can be no room for democratic transition, since democracy is a dynamic process of assimilating principles and values, rather than a process that can be measured by elections alone.

And this brings us to the subject of the general debate at this 69<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the post-2015 development agenda.

Inequality is increasing dangerously throughout the world, with wealth being concentrated in the hands of a few to the detriment of us all. Even after the world has learned of the greed and the corruption of the international financial system, which led to the Global Financial Crisis, we are now seeing how the faltering economic recovery is only benefitting those who were responsible for the financial meltdown.

Despite the best efforts by the Secretary-General and his team in the UN, we are almost in 2015 and we know that 2.2 billion people throughout the world are already in or are entering the ranks of the extreme poor, without even knowing what the Millennium Development Goals are.

Here I must draw attention to the incorrect practice by international organisations to view each of the United Nations' 193 member countries in the same manner, regardless of whether they are large or small; rich or poor; young or in a transitional period or centuries-old; developed, with emerging economies or underdeveloped. And these development indexes create scales of values that are both unfair and demotivating to the majority of least developed countries.

As such, all of us in attendance here today have a historical opportunity to share our thoughts on the enormous challenges ahead of us, so as to outline a truly transformative agenda in which no country is left behind.

However, the issue that deserves our collective apprehension and that requires urgent measures is the mitigation of the environmental threats that continue to increase and that are hindering the legitimate perspectives of emerging and developing countries.

Yesterday's Summit on Climate Change raised expectations in relation to actual action plans being implemented in some countries. These plans will be expanded more globally next year, in Paris. Some developed countries have also committed to providing capital for the adaptation fund, which has a vital importance for developing countries.

Ms Emília Pires, the Minister of Finance of Timor-Leste, was a member of the High Level Panel that advised the Secretary-General of the United Nations on this agenda. In the year 2013 and up until last August, Timor-Leste had the honour of assuming the Presidency of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. As such, we had the privilege of presiding over this session for one year, working with ESCAP and the nations of the Asia-Pacific region in order to achieve progress and to improve human development.

Timor-Leste is committed to this noble ideal and to this so-deserving mission of helping to nurture a culture of peace in our region, through the gradual and persistent reduction of social inequalities within each country and between countries.

However, and while in our region, including within the scope of ASEAN, there is presently strong cooperation and countries are promoting peace – which has enabled the rise of the Asian region, led by China, lifting hundreds of millions of people from poverty – we cannot but be concerned by the developments in the east and south of the China Sea.

This brings us to a key issue, and one that has vital importance for Timor-Leste. I am speaking of the need to set maritime borders between countries in a clear and serious manner, in line with international law.

Back in 2002, when we began to walk our own path in freedom, we saw a globalised world in which the arrogance of the powerful and the ambition of the rich prevails, and who prey upon the inexperience or the ignorance of the poor and the weak to act dishonestly and in bad faith, in a serious insult to universal values.

And I must affirm that big multinationals have always played an improper and disloyal role, acting with dishonesty and bad faith when dealing with poor countries.

Timor-Leste, a young, small and poor country, is caught off-guard in this sophisticated culture of manipulation and deceit. Nevertheless, we want to continue believing that international mechanisms, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, contribute to justice between nations and understanding between peoples, so as to defend sovereign rights and the truth.



Today, these commitments are vital in order to start rebuilding trust in the world system and to prevent tensions from increasing. The strengthening of dialogue and tolerance and the promotion of a new diplomacy must be translated from a set of good intentions into actual deeds in the international arena.

But what is truly intriguing is the fact that no decent country has yet advocated the need to promote inquiries that would ascertain the origin of the weapons used in the massacres of civilians, particularly women and children, so as to identify the true beneficiaries of this world crisis, who are the ones selling weapons to uncontrolled bands throughout the world.

Your Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, I would like to share with you that this year Timor-Leste has assumed the rotating presidency of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries.

In this space, we want to use diplomacy and cooperation to nurture our joint economic potential by making use of our regional ties. We also want to disseminate a message of peace, human rights and social justice throughout all the forums in which we are represented.

Guinea-Bissau is a member of this community, and a country with which Timor-Leste has been closely involved, including within the scope of the g7+, and particularly when it realised that Guinea-Bissau had been left to its fate and was at the mercy of international sanctions. After a devastating cycle of coups, we felt that the people of Guinea-Bissau needed peace and stability and we saw how their leaders were striving to achieve a collective commitment that would benefit the People and the Country.

Timor-Leste had the honour of providing financial support and of sending a technical team for assisting the whole electoral process in Guinea-Bissau. This process, which featured massive democratic participation, was a success and restored constitutional order in the country. Still, as we all know, elections are but a starting point, and a State without the means for ensuring the basic needs of its people faces

countless challenges that jeopardise the promise of peace and national cohesion.

In line with the subject of the debate in this General Assembly, I must say that it is now urgent to create the conditions to enable Guinea-Bissau to move from fragility to resilience, by supporting its State agencies. Guinea-Bissau needs to rehabilitate its public administration and its State agencies, as well as to reform its defence and security sector by modernising its forces. Furthermore, Guinea-Bissau requires a financial boost in order to jumpstart its economy.

Within the scope of the CPLP, we want to have an active collaboration with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and with the international partners, namely ECOWAS, so as to hold an International Conference on Aid to Guinea-Bissau as soon as possible. This conference should start by focusing on matters of extreme urgency, such as salaries, food security, fuel and health. Timor-Leste has already contributed with \$6 million, which corresponds to one month of public sector salaries.

I also urge every country in attendance to join Timor-Leste and the CPLP countries, consistent with the highest values of international solidarity, in supporting the consolidation of the achievements made so far by the people of Guinea-Bissau. Indeed, this is something that will also convey a promise of peace to the entire African continent.

And I cannot talk about Africa, a continent that is already wounded on the inside and massacred by hunger and poverty, without mentioning the scourge of the Ebola virus, which is presently challenging the international health system itself. This epidemic, which is unprecedented in our time, requires a vital and undelayable commitment by the International Community.

I hereby declare that Timor-Leste will provide \$1 million as immediate support, within the spirit of solidarity that guides the 'g7+', which includes Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. Next year we will also be allocating an equal amount to help fight this epidemic.

Your Excellency the President of the General Assembly  
Your Excellency the Secretary-General  
Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The great challenge in today's world is freeing people from fear. I am talking about the fear of difference, insecurity, hunger, poverty and disease. The fear of losing power or the fear of becoming a slave to power.

In today's unbalanced and unequal world, we need to have the courage to speak a language of trust and tranquillity. We need to pacify minds, to encourage dialogue and to free people from doubt and from feelings of injustice, so that they acquire greater tolerance and greater respect for differences and for diversity.

We need to free people from the yoke of poverty and from the deplorable conditions in which they are living, so as to ensure their right to development. We still have time to write a different and more humane tale for today's generation and for future generations.

Timor-Leste wants to make an active contribution to a Better World, where each country may live in tolerance, harmony and tranquillity, within a true atmosphere of friendship and solidarity that promotes peace. This peace must start in the minds and behaviours of the people at every level of society, so that they can have a positive influence on the policies of the global centres of decision-making.

This is the only way for us to believe that the baby from the Marshall Islands, who touched all our hearts two days ago, may be certain that her future is guaranteed and that she will be able to live in those small islands that comprise her country.

That is all.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão  
25 September 2014