



**Statement by Mr. V. K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative, on the situation  
in Timor Leste at the Security Council on May 10, 2004**

Mr. President,

The Government of India has strongly condemned the heinous terrorist attack in Grozny which resulted in the killing of the President of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. We extend our condolences to the Government and people of the Russian Federation and to the bereaved families on this tragic occasion.

We felicitate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I also take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Gunter Pleuger of Germany for his capable stewardship of the Council during an eventful month. We are happy to have Senior Minister Ana Pessoa Pinto participating in this session of the Council.

Mr. President,

It has been almost two years since Timor-Leste attained its independence. This period has seen rapid progress in the emergence of Timor-Leste from conflict to confidence as a new member of the international community. In an era characterized increasingly by global conflict and conflagration, the success of this peace-building exercise, spearheaded by the UN, represents optimism and hope for the future.

The comprehensive support of the international community, mainly in the form of assistance for political and socio-economic development, capacity building and security, has been instrumental in facilitating Timor-Leste's emergence as a viable state within the international community. This process needs to be consolidated. India supports the Secretary General's recommendation, as contained in document No. S/2004/333 dated 29 April, 2004, for the extension of UNMISSET for a further, one-year phase, to enable Timor-Leste to attain a "critical threshold of self-sufficiency".

The three broad programmes that the extended UN mandate would facilitate appear fully justified, given the reduced size of the mission and the imperative of ensuring a sound and logical conclusion to one of the most successful exercises in post-conflict peace building that the UN has undertaken in recent years. We note from the Secretary General's report that the first programme for public administration and justice would be undertaken by 58 civilian experts; the second programme, for the development of law enforcement would be advanced through 157

civilian police advisers; and the third programme, support for the security and stability of Timor-Leste, would be effected through 42 military liaison officers, 310 former military and 125 gendarmes.

These support measures indicate a minimum truncated international presence. The Secretary General has noted in his report that it was the "extraordinary progress" that had taken place which permitted this "swift downsizing in the international presence on the ground", leaving no doubt as to the "momentum of transfer of responsibility to Timor-Leste".

We agree with the Secretary General when he counsels Timor-Leste and its sagacious leadership to further build on and consolidate the gains achieved by taking full advantage of the assistance and by making practical and policy decisions in a timely manner. Among the critical issues that require to be addressed early by the Government of Timor-Leste are the adoption of key legislation for public institutions, preparation for local elections through voter registration and other logistical arrangements, measures to enhance economic development and self-sufficiency and the consolidation of Timor-Leste's security institutions.

Mr. President,

The international community cannot remain permanently engaged. The UN's role and assistance in Timor-Leste would have to cede to the country's growing capacity and confidence in governance. Multilateral assistance of the current scale would also have to be substituted progressively by bilateral and regional cooperation.

India's relationship with Timor-Leste is characterized by exceptionally close bilateral ties marked by full understanding and support for each others' concerns. We welcomed the emergence of Timor-Leste as an independent nation in May 2002 and have keenly followed its successful efforts at democratic institution-building as well as economic development. We have assisted in Timor-Leste's socio-economic development through bilateral technical training programmes in capacity building, university education and the deputation of experts for rural development. We take this opportunity to compliment the Timorese leadership for its steadfast and exemplary commitment to democracy as well as transparent and accountable governance, which have greatly facilitated nation-building.

The continued cooperation and good relations between Timor-Leste and its neighbours, especially Indonesia, are important not only for regional harmony but also in the larger interest of South-South cooperation. The commitment displayed by the leadership of Timor-Leste and Indonesia towards forging a harmonious, good-neighbourly relationship must find practical expression through completion of agreement upon the land border, resolution of the problems of refugees and provision of socio-economic opportunities for people living on either side of the border.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I wish to join other delegations in paying special tributes to the former Special Representative of the Secretary General, the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, and to the current Special Representative, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, for their capable and dedicated leadership, as also to the members of UNMISET and UNTAET for their exceptional contributions. Their actions provide a shining beacon to inspire the international community even as the UN continues in its effort to foster peace and development in other parts of this troubled world.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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