



STATEMENT BY MR.V.K. NAMBIAR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE,
ON THE SITUATION IN TIMOR LESTE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL
ON NOVEMBER 14, 2002

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council at this critical juncture in the Council's management of issues relating to international peace and security. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly felicitate the Ambassador of Cameroon for his exemplary stewardship of the Security Council during an unusually active period of time.

Mr. President,

India attaches great importance to its relations with Timor-Leste. We have sought to contribute to the country's development by providing expertise and training in areas of our competence and where we see complementarities in their application. To this end, we have offered 50 scholarships to East Timor in technical and economic areas, separate scholarships for study in Indian universities, in agriculture and in the information technology sector involving the up-gradation of skills.

India had made a statement in August during the last meeting of the Security Council on the issue of Timor-Leste. I shall therefore confine my statement on this occasion to a few

brief remarks pertaining to the report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor.

Mr. President,

I wish to take this opportunity to formally place on the record of the Council our felicitation to Timor-Leste on its entry into the United Nations as the organisation's 191st Member State. The Secretary General's report informs us of the country's accession to other international bodies such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and its establishment of diplomatic relations with a number of countries. India welcomes these developments. We welcome in particular the growing relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, underscored by the exchange of State visits between the two countries and the more recent creation of the Joint Border Committee.

The Secretary General has referred to the fact that the leaders of Timor-Leste have sought, since their independence, to promote a broad-based democracy, and to heed concerns or complaints expressed by their citizens. India welcomes the embrace of democracy by Timor Leste and its steady process of institutionalising the protection of human rights in the country. India's own commitment to

democracy since its independence, and the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression enjoyed by all its citizens, leads it to recognise the enormous value and utility, of such an exercise, for a nation and people. We wholeheartedly agree with the characterization of the leadership of Timor-Leste, specifically President Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and Senior Minister and Foreign Minister Jose Ramos-Horta, as significant assets.

UNMISSET has to play the role of enabler and facilitator of the larger political, social and economic goals of Timor-Leste. This is a major responsibility and requires the support of the international community. The Secretary General has referred to unpaid assessments to the special account of UNMISSET for the period since the inception of the Mission amounting to \$ 213.6 million. We believe that continued and timely support for the budget of UNMISSET would greatly enhance its ability to assist Timor-Leste towards self-sufficiency as a nation. There is also need to address the significant shortfall in resources, hindering the pressing need to fill posts required to develop capacity in Timor-Leste's public administration.

At the same time, we note that East Timor has been endowed with enormous potential for revenue from its hydrocarbons deposits, commercially exploitable coast line, agricultural base and tourism attributes. These require to be exploited in an efficient and environment-friendly manner so as to empower the nascent State with the resources required for self-sufficiency and economic independence in the shortest possible period of time.

We note with satisfaction, that, during the first three months of the fiscal year 2002-03, the Government of Timor-Leste has successfully collected 23% of its budgeted revenue, despite the economic contraction following the withdrawal of a significant international presence. However, the lack of sustainable assets resulting in unemployment at the range of 90% and the dependence on international aid, continue to beset the nation. These require to be addressed.

The Secretary General, in his statement, has drawn attention to the functioning of the country's justice system. We believe that the concurrent development of the judiciary along with the executive and legislature is important for the balanced development of a nation. In addition, constraints faced by the lack of adequate development of the judicial system would also hinder efforts to bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes committed in 1999.

Mr. President,

We take this opportunity to express our condolences to the families of the two UN Peacekeepers from UNMISSET who died in last month's bombing in Bali and to express our solidarity with the members of UNMISSET on the loss of their comrades. We note that the SRSG, in his statement, has alluded to the new shadow of terrorism which has fallen over the region. As a country familiar with the consequences of terrorist acts perpetrated without regard for national boundaries or norms of human decency, we agree that enhanced vigilance and improved capacities need to be put in place in Timor-Leste.

Before concluding my statement, I would like to join the Secretary General in paying tribute to the dedicated role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary General,

Mr. Sharma and his team in ensuring UNMISSET's contribution and utility to Timor-Leste.

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