

Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative, during a UN Security Council Debate on UN Mission in Timor Leste on November 12, 2012

I join others in extending a very warm welcome to H.E. Juan Luis Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs & Cooperation of Timor-Leste in the Security Council and thank him for his statement. I would also like to thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Mr. Finn Reske Nielsen for introducing the Secretary General's report.

2. The visit of Security Council's mini-Mission to Timor-Leste last week, in which India also participated, offered the Council members an opportunity to interact with the government and see first-hand the progress that the country has made towards sustainable peace and security.

3. Timor Leste has made multi-faceted progress since the establishment of United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor Leste (UNMIT) in 2006. The year 2012 has been an important milestone in the consolidation of democratic transition in Timor-Leste. This year, the country celebrated the tenth anniversary of restoration of its independence. Presidential and Parliamentary elections were also held in a calm and stable security environment. Timorese police and armed forces have conducted themselves professionally and in a responsible manner. We compliment the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) for its efforts to continue to strengthen its institutional development and capacity building. The final certification of full reconstitution of the PNTL has taken place recently and this marked the end of UNPOL's operational support to the PNTL.

4. We appreciate the resilience and determination of the Timorese people and its leadership in taking their country forward firmly on path to long-term peace, stability and development. The active engagement of all political parties in the democratic process is an encouraging indicator of their abiding commitment to democracy. We would also like to commend the UNMIT for its overall support towards this end and making the Mission a successful story.

5. As stated by Ambassador Basso Sangqu, the PR of South Africa, who led the Council's Mission and indicated in Prime Minister Gusmão's letter to the UNSG, there has been an unambiguous message from the Timorese people that the country should no longer remain on the Council's agenda and UNMIT withdraws as planned by the end of this year. We are particularly pleased that there is consensus amongst all stakeholders for UNMIT to withdraw as scheduled.

6. As UNMIT draws down, it is important that the contours of the post-transition UN presence should be finalized in accordance with the wishes and priorities of the government. Timorese ownership and leadership is essential for building upon the progress achieved so far.

7. We have noted with satisfaction that the overall economic growth, including proceeds from the oil and gas sector, continues to remain robust. The Government's continued focus on infrastructure and capital development would certainly be helpful

in ushering rapid socio-economic transition in the country. The international community must support the government in its efforts towards socio-economic development, poverty eradication and strengthening of its institutions.

8. India attaches very high 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. India has extended its support to the Government of Timor Leste towards its socio-economic development and in human resources development sector. We are also partnering with the Government of Timor-Leste under the IBSA framework. India fully supports the efforts of the Timorese government to expand its bilateral and regional cooperation.

10. Before I conclude, I would like to express our appreciation for the leadership of Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Mr. Finn Reske during this transition and the dedication of his team in supporting the government and people of Timor Leste.

Thank you.

**BACK TO SECURITY COUNCIL**