



Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

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Monday, 12 November 2012, 3.20 p.m.

New York

President: Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri. (India)

Members:

Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
China	Mr. Wang Min
Colombia	Mr. Osorio
France	Mr. Bertoux
Germany	Mr. Eick
Guatemala	Mr. Briz Gutiérrez
Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
Russian Federation	Mr. Ilichev
South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
Togo	Mr. Menan
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/765)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/765)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Japan, Mozambique, New Zealand and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/765, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

I now give the floor to Mr. Reske-Nielsen.

Mr. Reske-Nielsen: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), covering the period from 7 January to 20 September 2012 (S/2012/765). I would like to acknowledge the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. José Luís Guterres, an old friend with whom I have worked closely over the years.

I would like to begin by saying that it is an honour for me to be here today to share with the Security Council the great progress that Timor-Leste has made since 1999. When I arrived there for the first time in that year, the country had literally been burned to the ground. I returned in 2006 and witnessed how the country's initial gains had been put to the test. What I see today is a young country of resilient people, with great potential, led with dedication and vision.

Let me first thank the members of the Security Council for the consideration they exhibited for Timor-Leste through the visit of their mission from 3 to 6 November. That visit, along with the visit of the Secretary-General from 15 to 16 August, served as a powerful symbol of international recognition for the notable progress made by the people of Timor-Leste since UNMIT was established, in 2006. It also served as a reminder of the importance of ensuring the international community's commitment to support Timor-Leste beyond 31 December, when, with the Council's concurrence, the United Nations peacekeeping presence in Timor-Leste will end.

The end of peacekeeping operations in Timor-Leste is justified by the successful completion of critical benchmarks and the generally positive security situation we have seen this year. The assumptions laid out in the Joint Transition Plan signed by UNMIT and the Government in September 2011 have been met — stability prevails; the 2012 national elections took place in accordance with international standards; a Government was formed based on the outcome of the elections; and the political opposition has space to operate in line with democratic principles.

As detailed in the report of the Secretary-General, there has also been substantial progress in achieving the benchmarks set forth in the medium-term strategy, as requested by the Security Council in resolution 1802 (2008). If I may remind the Council, those benchmarks were designed to help measure progress in addressing the underlying challenges that gave rise to the UNMIT mandate. They are divided into four areas, ensuring, first, security and stability; secondly, justice, the rule of law and human rights; thirdly, a culture of democratic governance and dialogue; and, fourthly, socioeconomic development.

Several events this year exemplify Timor-Leste's continued progress. Perhaps most notable, from the perspective of UNMIT's mandate, was the ceremony

on 31 October during which Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão and I signed an exchange of letters marking the certification of the full reconstitution of the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). That was an acknowledgement that the PNTL was fully capable of conducting all police functions throughout the country. As the Council may remember, the PNTL took on responsibility for policing in March of last year, with UNMIT police subsequently providing operational support, as required and requested, as well as support for capacity-building and the institutional strengthening of the PNTL. That ceremony also marked the end of what was known as the reconstitution phase of the PNTL. It also marked the end of UNMIT Police operational support to the PNTL and the beginning of the drawdown of UNMIT's police personnel.

The certification was the result of considered assessment processes described in the report of the Secretary-General, conducted jointly between the Government and UNMIT. On 5 October, the joint working group created to assess PNTL capacity submitted its report to the PNTL General Commander and UNMIT's Police Commissioner. The report was generally positive about the PNTL's development, while candidly pointing out areas where further strengthening was needed. The General Commander and Police Commissioner endorsed the working group's findings in a joint letter dated 12 October addressed to the Prime Minister and to me. On that basis, the Prime Minister and I agreed that the exchange of letters could proceed on 31 October. At the ceremony, the President and the Prime Minister spoke graciously about the support that UNMIT Police had given since the Mission's establishment. The Government also expressed its gratitude for the services of the international security forces, a sentiment that I would like to second here today.

Despite the ongoing drawdown of UNMIT Police, capacity-building activities based on the Joint Development Plan of PNTL and UNMIT Police continue. The plan will be 95 per cent implemented by the end of November. As of today, over 1,100 training activities have been completed under the Plan.

The reconstitution of the police service of Timor-Leste is a milestone that marks the great advances of the PNTL and civilian oversight authorities since 2006. That is not to say that the PNTL is a perfect police service. Significant capacity challenges remain, which have been identified jointly by the Government and

UNMIT. I am sure the members of the Security Council would agree that building an effective and responsible police service is an ongoing effort that stretches over many years. As in other areas, Timor-Leste is now at a stage where those long-term efforts can be better served by other forms of international cooperation. United Nations agencies will continue to provide some support to the PNTL post-2012. However, I would like to take this opportunity to urge Member States to continue their strong engagement with the PNTL, including through the "Friends of PNTL" initiative, which is an important venue to mobilize and coordinate external support. With the planned departure of UNMIT, their engagement will become even more important.

As the report of the Secretary-General indicates, the risk of confrontation within or between security forces has diminished considerably since 2006. The military and the police coordinated well during the election period, and there have been no reports of serious tension between the two for several years. The relationship between the security forces is a crucial element for the long-term stability of the country and will require the continuation of clear policy guidance and strong leadership. In the meantime, the military continues its own institutional development initiatives and, like the PNTL, continues to make contributions to other peacekeeping missions. It deployed a further two officers to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan on 22 October, while 17 PNTL officers have qualified for peacekeeping deployment, in addition to two officers currently serving with the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

The other major event this year that highlighted Timor-Leste's progress was the conduct of the presidential and parliamentary elections. The Secretary-General's report describes in detail the logistical, security and political arrangements put in place for the successful elections. I would just like to highlight that in all of these areas, while the United Nations still provided important support, it was much less than in 2007. The electoral management bodies demonstrated their growing capacity, for the first time the PNTL had policing responsibilities for national elections, and Timorese institutions led the development of a political pact signed by almost all of the registered political parties and presidential candidates. The excellent work of the electoral management bodies bodes well for future elections.

The overall climate surrounding the elections this year was very different from that of 2007. Five years ago, Timor-Leste was still wrestling with the immediate consequences of 2006, and there was still a feeling of trepidation about security around the elections. This year, there were no serious incidents of political violence during the election period, the few complaints of alleged misconduct were channeled through the appropriate national mechanisms, the results were accepted by the public and all major political actors, and national and international observer groups made positive assessments of the elections. The election demonstrated that all communities and political leaders were united in their desire to take the necessary measures to promote the future prosperity and development of the country.

Since the elections, the prevailing political atmosphere has been calm. Since its formation on 8 August, the governing coalition has already demonstrated its stability. In addition to Parliament's consideration of the Government programme mentioned in the report, on 17 October Parliament approved a rectification to the 2012 State budget, with all 40 of the coalition's Members of Parliament voting in favour. The next major Government initiative will be the presentation of the 2013 State budget to Parliament. Meanwhile, the opposition is playing an active and responsible part in parliamentary debates and proceedings. In a positive sign of the focus on the areas outside of the capital, Dili, President Taur Matan Ruak began a series of district visits, meeting with rural communities to discuss their concerns and aspirations.

As part of the efforts to enhance a culture of democratic governance, UNMIT has supported national and local leaders throughout the country in organizing events called democratic governance forums, where national and local leaders meet with communities to discuss relevant themes, such as accountability and leadership. The last forum featured President Taur Matan Ruak on 25 October. Over the past four years, 175 forums have been held throughout the country, with almost 12,000 participants. I sincerely hope that this dialogue between State institutions and citizens will continue after UNMIT departs.

Since the report of the Secretary-General was issued, there has been one important development related to accountability for crimes committed in 2006 and mentioned in the report of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry (S/2006/822). On 19 October,

a court rendered a decision in the case of an arson attack that resulted in the death of six people, including four children under the age of 18. Twelve defendants were acquitted, while two were sentenced to 24 years' imprisonment for crimes, including murder. The two sentenced individuals have appealed the decision.

The Mission is on track to withdraw by 31 December. The phased drawdown of UNMIT has been moving apace. One of the Mission's regional offices has already closed, with two to close later this month and the last one in early December. The repatriation of UNMIT police accelerated after the certification ceremony on 31 October, with only a residual presence to remain by the end of November. The High-Level Committee on Transition continues to oversee UNMIT's drawdown, having met twice since the closing date of the Secretary-General's report, with the participation of all the key ministers and under the chairmanship of the President. The implementation of the Joint Transition Plan is proceeding well, and UNMIT is on track to complete our activities and hand over priority activities and key facilities in an orderly manner.

The only notable area where our work will not be completed by the end of the mandate concerns the investigations into cases relating to crimes against humanity and other serious crimes committed between 1 January and 25 October 1999. Under the supervision of the Office of the Prosecutor-General, the UNMIT Serious Crimes Investigation Team has completed 319 of 396 investigations. It is projected that an additional 16 investigations will be concluded by 31 December, leaving 61 investigations outstanding.

The United Nations and the broader international community should and will, I am sure, remain engaged in Timor-Leste beyond December 2012. Timor-Leste still faces many challenges. However, in my opinion a peacekeeping mission is no longer best placed to support efforts to meet those challenges. Prime Minister Gusmão himself noted in his letter to the Secretary-General on 20 September (S/2012/736, annex) that the country no longer requires a peacekeeping or political mission. The time has come for Timor-Leste's interaction with the international community to be guided through different structures and modalities. The Government has expressed its wish for an innovative working relationship with the United Nations after UNMIT's closure, and we are working closely with the Government to shape that future partnership, first and foremost through the work of the United

Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Delivering effective support to Timor-Leste's development and institution-building priorities will require the continued commitment and financial contributions of the international community.

In conclusion, I would like to say that it has been a privilege for me to accompany the people of Timor-Leste on their exceptional journey to peace and development, and I wish them the best of luck as they continue to move forward. I also wish to take the opportunity to thank the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Shigeru Mochida, and all the dedicated staff of the United Nations who have served and continue to serve in Timor-Leste.

The President: I thank Mr. Reske-Nielsen for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guterres.

Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste): We thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting on Timor-Leste during India's presidency of the Security Council.

Since December 1975, the issue of Timor-Leste has been on the agenda of the Security Council. Many Security Council resolutions have been adopted on Timor-Leste and many United Nations missions established by the Council. Looking back, we can say that this United Nations organ has successfully fulfilled its obligations and mandate under the United Nations Charter.

The report of the Secretary-General before us (S/2012/765) highlights developments in Timor-Leste, and I am confident that the statement of the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, my dear friend Finn Reske-Nielsen, will enrich our discussions today.

Just few days ago, a delegation from the Security Council honoured our country and our people with an historic visit. We deeply appreciate that visit and the briefing that was just given.

Today, 12 November, we celebrate Timor-Leste's National Youth Day. It was established to honour the courage and the dedication to freedom and the independence of Timor-Leste shown by the students and young people who marched in 1991 in Dili from Motael Church to the cemetery of Santa Cruz to protest the assassination of one of their comrades, Sebastião

Gomes. Many were killed that day by the security forces.

In May, we celebrated in Timor-Leste the tenth anniversary of the restoration of our independence, which followed the popular consultation of August 1999. Ten years ago, the world witnessed the birth of a new country. With hope, courage and a good dose of optimism, we, together with the United Nations, started the extraordinary work of building a new country.

We have learned from our problems. During the 2006 crisis, about 150,000 people were internally displaced. We started a genuinely inclusive dialogue among State institutions as well as with civil society. It was important for us that our fragility be recognized, a fragility due mainly to our inability to leave behind our traumatized conflict-ridden past and to the fact that our institutions were still being developed, as peacebuilding and State-building had to go hand in hand. In 2009, Timor-Leste's Government proclaimed a national motto — "Goodbye conflict, welcome development" — enshrining the national spirit that sought to end the cyclical problems that had plagued the country in the past. For that policy to be effective, we had to have local ownership and leadership, so as to ensure that everyone would be an agent of our peace and development.

We instituted critical reforms in the security and defence sectors and established new institutions, including an independent civil service commission and an anti-corruption commission, and strengthened the justice sector with the aim of promoting good governance and the rule of law. In 2011, the Prime Minister of the Fourth Constitutional Government, Xanana Gusmão, launched a strategic development plan, aimed at turning a low-income country into a medium-high-income country by 2030.

Today, life expectancy at birth in Timor-Leste has increased by more than two years and now averages 62.1 years. The gross national product per capita increased 228 per cent during the same period to more than \$5,000. Average annual growth has been double-digit for the last four years, and real non-oil gross domestic product growth remains strong. According to the 2010 national census, primary school enrolment in Timor-Leste jumped from a modest 63 per cent in 2006 to 90 per cent today. In the past three years close to 200,000 adults have graduated from illiteracy

to functional literacy, and Timor-Leste will be able to proclaim full adult literacy by 2015.

The visit in August of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, with Mr. Gordon Brown, the United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and Ms. Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO, to launch the new United Nations education initiative was a historic moment for education in our country and around the world. In that context, we would like to pay tribute today to the courage and intelligence of Malala Yousafzai, the brave young schoolgirl from Pakistan; she is an inspiration to us and to the world, and may God help her recover fully.

In the health sector, significant progress has also been made. Mortality in infants and children under five years old has been halved. The incidence of malaria and dengue fever and the prevalence of poverty have decreased significantly. The incidence of leprosy is now lower than one case per 10,000 people, and the World Health Organization considers it to have been medically eliminated in Timor-Leste. The poverty rate has declined, from 49 per cent in 2007 to 41 per cent today, but it is still high and remains a major challenge for our country. Access to clean water, sanitation, public health and education, and investment in infrastructure are key priorities that the Fifth Constitutional Government will work towards in the next five years.

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative rates Timor-Leste one of the best performers in Asia, and third in the world, in terms of accountability and transparency in the management of our petroleum resources. We have a dynamic multi-party democracy, with four parties represented in the national Parliament. Thirty-three per cent of the elected members of Parliament are women, and several women hold key ministerial portfolios. We have ratified all major international human rights treaties and complied with our reporting obligations. In Timor-Leste we have one of the freest media in our region.

We understand, of course, that that success is not only ours; it is also a United Nations success and a success for the international community. From the beginning, the United Nations, through its various missions and agencies, has provided important assistance in the areas of the rule of law, governance, justice and human rights.

We remain strongly committed to fighting corruption. Education and prevention are on the agenda of the Anti-Corruption Commission. Mr. Aderito de Jesus, the Anti-Corruption Commissioner, announced recently that next July Timor-Leste will host the Asia-Pacific Anti-Corruption Initiative of the Asia Development Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In March 2011 the Government of Timor-Leste applied formally to the Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for membership in ASEAN. In consideration of the importance of becoming part of ASEAN, the Fifth Constitutional Government has appointed a Secretary of State for ASEAN Affairs responsible for the preparations for joining ASEAN.

This year we held peaceful and credible presidential and parliamentary elections. A new President was elected, and we witnessed a peaceful transfer of power from Nobel laureate Mr. José Ramos-Horta to the former Commander of the armed forces, Mr. Taur Matan Ruak. The new Parliament was inaugurated and the new Government appointed, with Xanana Gusmão as Prime Minister.

On behalf of the President of the Republic, Mr. Taur Matan Ruak, the President of our National Parliament, Vicente Guterres, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, and of our people, we would like to express our profound gratitude to the Security Council and all its members, the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, the Special Representatives and Deputy Special Representatives, the commanders of the United Nations military and police forces and all the members of the United Nations missions and the countries that have contributed to peace and stability in Timor-Leste. We thank our neighbouring countries of Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand, the countries of ASEAN, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the core group for their continuing support to Timor-Leste.

As a token of our profound appreciation, in May next year the State and the people of Timor-Leste will decorate every country that has sent citizens to Timor-Leste, as a way of honouring their contributions and as a sign of our deep gratitude to the United Nations.

As a Member of the United Nations, we will continue to do our best to guarantee peace and stability in Timor-Leste, to share our experiences and lessons

learned, as we are doing now through the Group of Seven Plus, and to continue to contribute in a modest way to United Nations missions and the work of United Nations agencies.

As an expression of our solidarity today, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão announced in Haiti that Timor-Leste will contribute \$1 million to peacebuilding and development initiatives in Haiti.

The Fifth Constitutional Government will continue to count on the invaluable contribution of political parties, religious communities, the media, non-governmental organizations and traditional leaders in order to develop the country for the benefit of all of its citizens, based on the rule of law, social justice and inclusion, gender equality, peace and harmony.

The President: I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): My delegation wishes to welcome to the Security Council once again His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste. We welcome his insightful views on the progress attained by his country. We also wish to thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, for his comprehensive briefing on the latest developments in Timor-Leste.

South Africa is pleased to extend its congratulations to Timor-Leste on the 10-year anniversary of the restoration of its independence and the thirteenth anniversary of the popular consultation. It is not only a milestone for the Government and people of Timor-Leste, but also a victory for all the peace-loving people of the world, who continue to champion the right to self-determination. Today, 12 November, is especially significant, as it is a day on which the people of Timor-Leste commemorate the Santa Cruz massacre, one of the bloodiest days in the history of that nation. Over the past 21 years since that tragic day in 1991, the country has undergone a dramatic shift from the struggle for independence through the teething challenges of a newly independent nation to what we find today, namely, a vibrant nation that has made significant strides towards peace and development. Throughout that period, the United Nations — through its various missions, including the current United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) — has closely partnered with the people of Timor-Leste on their journey.

As we meet to consider the situation in the country and to dwell on the future United Nations role as peacekeepers prepare to depart, we must consider the significant progress made over recent years. Particularly notable is the successful holding of presidential and parliamentary elections earlier this year, the confirmation of a new Government, a stable security situation and the resumption of all policing responsibility by the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). The final certification of the full reconstitution of the PNTL, which marked the end of operational support by United Nations police (UNPOL) to the PNTL, is particularly significant. It is an indication that the PNTL has the capacity to fulfil its responsibilities. Gaps remain, as noted in the PNTL-UNPOL joint working group report. However, the senior leadership of the PNTL and the political will of the Timorese authorities give us confidence that those gaps will be overcome. As Prime Minister Gusmão stated at the certification ceremony, “the resolve and wisdom of our people manage to draw strength from weaknesses”.

As an indication of Timor-Leste’s remarkable transition, it has gone from a country hosting a United Nations peacekeeping mission to one that has deployed personnel to such missions in other countries, such as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan. That is a testament to the strengthened capacity of the Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) and the will of the Timorese authorities to make a positive contribution to international peace and security. During the Security Council’s visit there was an opportunity to witness the tremendous progress made by the F-FDTL and PNTL. Those institutions are well equipped to address the security needs of the country.

The adoption by the Government of its five-year programme and the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for the period 2011 to 2030 highlights the emphasis on efforts to address socioeconomic challenges and to promote equitable and inclusive development throughout the country, especially for peasants in rural areas, women and young people. The leadership role of the Government of Timor-Leste in the Group of Seven Plus fragile States and its active leadership in promoting the implementation of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States are commendable.

In resolution 2037 (2012), the Council made it clear that it is for the Timorese authorities to decide

on the future role of the United Nations in the country. The Government of Timor-Leste has made its views very clear. It does not seek to remain on the agenda of the Security Council. Instead, it seeks an innovative relationship with the United Nations, focused on development and institutional strengthening.

It is the view of South Africa that Timor-Leste has made significant strides towards peace and stability and that the situation there does not pose a threat to international peace and security. It is therefore time for the matter of Timor-Leste to be removed from the agenda of the Security Council.

We recognize the challenges faced by the Timorese. They include human resource capacity constraints, the need to strengthen State institutions and national judicial capacities, reparations for crimes of the past, security sector strengthening and socioeconomic development. Those are challenges that many of our countries face. They are not challenges that can be addressed overnight. We are confident that the institutional arrangements in place in Timor-Leste are adequate to address those challenges.

The international community should remain a partner to the Timorese people. Bilateral and multilateral partnerships with the country are essential to address institutional capacity-building and development. The United Nations country team should continue with its sterling efforts to assist in the development of the country.

We take note of the Government request for an innovative partnership with the United Nations, while we remain cognizant that such a relationship falls outside of the mandate of the Security Council. We urge the Timorese authorities and the Secretariat to consult on the modalities for such a relationship.

Addressing the crimes of the past remains a challenge for Timor-Leste. We recognize the willingness of the Government to forge ahead in a spirit of reconciliation and to move forward in a positive relationship with its people and neighbours. During the Security Council visit, the Government and the Prosecutor-General were aware of that issue, which the country is addressing through its own processes.

Developments in the recent past have shown — as confirmed during the Security Council mission to Timor-Leste — the desire of the Timorese people to own their future focused on development. That focus on

national ownership can be seen in the manner in which the Timorese people have begun to assert control over their destiny and in their willingness to address shortcomings. We in the international community should support that noble endeavour.

Timor-Leste is a success story for the United Nations. For its part, South Africa will continue to support the people of Timor-Leste in their quest for sustainable peace and development.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to welcome the presence and participation of His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, and to congratulate him on the significant progress made in his country with the assistance of the United Nations and the international community. I would also like to welcome Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), as well as to congratulate him and his team on the remarkable work they have accomplished in support of peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

The report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/765) comes at a moment when the country is at an important and crucial turning point in its history and is envisioning the future with confidence and optimism. During the reporting period, positive developments took place in Timor-Leste, as evidenced in the success of the presidential and legislative elections. Those elections reflected the country's ability to hold pluralistic, uncontested elections with a high turnout. That said much about the population's commitment to the democratic process. The recognition of the results by all parties, in the Government and the opposition alike, bolstered the vote's credibility.

The reporting period was also marked by the Timorese Parliament's adoption of a five-year programme primarily directed at women's active involvement, fighting corruption, promoting human rights and integrating moral values into political life. All that progress, which has greatly benefitted the people of Timor-Leste, would not have been at all possible without the positive and active commitment of neighbouring countries to support peace and stability in the entire region.

The Council's adoption of resolution 2037 (2012), in February, which endorsed the definitive withdrawal of UNMIT, and the adoption by the High-level Committee on Transition, which includes the members of UNMIT and the Timor-Leste authorities, of a Joint Transition Plan, prepared the ground for a transformation of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. The recent visit by the Security Council delegation to Timor-Leste — in which I, unfortunately, could not participate due to the impact of Hurricane Sandy — confirmed the meritorious efforts of the Timorese people and their leaders' desire to turn the page of the United Nations presence in the country.

However, despite the progress achieved, Timor-Leste still requires the assistance of the international community in a number of areas, such as in rebuilding State institutions, strengthening the security sector, especially the Timor-Leste national police, strengthening rule of law, and access to justice. That assistance must take into account the desires of the country's authorities and the need to build on the achievements of recent years. We believe that from now on it is essential to respect the wish expressed by the Timor-Leste Government regarding the status, scale and nature of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste.

The assumption by the Timorese authorities of essential State functions and their determination and commitment to ensure those functions and take them on with the assistance of their regional partners and the United Nations should encourage the Security Council to terminate, as stipulated in resolution 2037 (2012), UNMIT's mandate and to assess, together with the Government, the best formula for reaching a mutual agreement to strengthen capacities and support the country's efforts.

Mr. Menan (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) (S/2012/765), and to congratulate him for the work he has done in taking over the responsibilities of Ms. Ameerah Haq. I also wish to welcome to New York His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste. His presence among us testifies to the importance that his Government attaches to today's debate, which enables him to exchange his views with the Council on the future of Timor-Leste.

Six years after the establishment of UNMIT, by resolution 1704 (2006), significant progress has been achieved. The results obtained in strengthening democracy and the rule of law are extremely encouraging, particularly since the adoption of resolution 2037 (2012), which extended UNMIT's mandate to 31 December 2012. We were able to assess for ourselves the reality on the ground during the Council's mission to Timor-Leste from 3 to 6 November, in which I was privileged to participate and which has just been exhaustively described by the representative of South Africa (see S/PV.6858). On that occasion, we were able to observe the high degree of partnership and trust between the United Nations, in particular UNMIT, and the Government, on the one hand, and the entire Timorese political class, on the other. My country especially welcomes that.

With respect to political progress, the Timorese Government has successfully met the challenge of organizing, in accordance with the requisite standards and with the participation of all, the presidential election won by Mr. Taur Matan Ruak, and transparent parliamentary elections whose results were accepted by all parties. Consequently, the legitimacy of the new Government, led by Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, has been endorsed by the people, while the opposition continues to actively participate in parliamentary debates.

The Government's regular consultations with political parties not represented in Parliament is another initiative that should be encouraged. Togo particularly welcomes the strengthened climate of trust, cooperation, dialogue and reconciliation among Timorese political stakeholders who presided over the organization this year of commemorative demonstrations, such as those marking the tenth anniversary of the country's return to independence and the thirteenth anniversary of the popular referendum.

Similarly, we note that democratic governance has been strengthened, in particular through the adoption of the Decree Law setting out the rules concerning the planning, implementing and funding of public projects in all districts of the country. In parallel, the Timorese authorities have pursued their efforts to strengthen the mechanisms of the fight against corruption. The Anti-Corruption Commission in the country plays a remarkable and vital role in that area. However, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his report, it is appropriate to urge the Government to

make further progress in adopting precise rules and making operational the Audit Chamber of the High Administrative Tax and Audit Court.

Togo has many reasons to welcome the situation in Timor-Leste, all the more so since the security issue is no longer a cause of grave concern. In that regard, the report under consideration shows that UNMIT police spared no effort to provide support for institutional development and for strengthening the capacity of the Timor-Leste national police. However, every effort must be made to halt not only domestic and gender-based violence, but also incidents linked to the illegitimate use of firearms. That is why my country keenly hopes that the national police, already fully operational, will steadily be provided with competent human resources and appropriate logistical resources so as to strengthen its capacities in all areas, particularly in disciplinary investigations.

Moreover, we call for open cooperation between the armed forces and the national police, with responsibilities clearly allocated between them in order to avoid possible future conflicts.

In the area of human rights and national reconciliation, despite important progress, the Government must strengthen its effort to protect the rights of its citizens and guarantee access to justice for all, with particular attention to the cases of those who have disappeared and their families. It is also necessary to resume the development of ethics courses for judges, prosecutors and lawyers.

The tasks entrusted to UNMIT, pursuant to resolution 2037 (2012), will soon come to an end. As a prelude to that, we gladly note that the Joint Transition Plan will be duly carried out until the drawdown of UNMIT on 31 December, as attested by the fact that several projects are being carried out jointly by the Government and the United Nations system.

With regard to the statement of the Timorese authorities that United Nations support through a political or peacekeeping mission would no longer be necessary after 2012, my country hopes that the new cooperation in the strengthening and developing of institutions will not skirt such essential matters as the resolution of socioeconomic problems to achieve the equitable and sustainable development of Timor-Leste. It is appropriate to protect gains achieved at such a cost.

In conclusion, I reiterate the gratitude of my country to UNMIT, the United Nations and its specialized programmes and funds for their important work, which has made the renaissance of Timor-Leste possible. I am also grateful to South Africa for the important role it has played as the leading country in managing the Timorese situation. Finally, I thank the troop — and police-contributing countries to UNMIT and the International Stabilisation Force for the great sacrifices they have made to bring stability to the people and Government of Timor-Leste, the true worth of which we can appreciate today.

The new Timor-Leste still needs the United Nations, as the Head of the Government stated in his letter of 20 September 2012 (S/2012/736, annex). That is to be expected from a country emerging from so many years of sociopolitical conflict and which remains fragile.

Mr. Ilchev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, for his briefing on the final stage of the work of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the situation in the country. We welcome the successful conclusion of the Mission's work, which was made possible by the sustained stabilization of the situation in Timor-Leste in almost all of its parameters. Moreover, we underscore that it would not have been possible if the Timorese people themselves had not sought to overcome conflicts with their neighbours and within their own society and to build their own State, capable of solving its problems independently. The political maturity of Timor-Leste was confirmed by this year's parliamentary and presidential elections, which were conducted without hindrance.

The security situation is also stable. The transfer of the Mission's law enforcement mandate to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste in March was justified. During the electoral period, local security services duly fulfilled their tasks. The overall situation in Timor-Leste, the strengthening of peace in the country and the successful establishment of State authorities, including the national police, are good examples of effective United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding as a whole.

We welcome the decision of the Timorese to share their own experiences and to make a significant contribution to United Nations peacekeeping by providing military and police officers. We believe that

the political and security situation in the country will enable us to draw down the Mission by the end of this year and to remove Timor-Leste from the Security Council's agenda.

Timor-Leste is prepared to shoulder its full responsibility for the processes in the country. That was confirmed in a letter to the Secretary-General from the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. Xanana Gusmão (S/2012/736, annex). The Security Council's recent mission to the country came to the same conclusion.

With regard to the modalities of a future United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, the final decision must be taken by the country's leadership.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to welcome the presence at this meeting of the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luís Guterres, and to thank him for his statement. We are also grateful to the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, for his briefing and for presenting the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/765) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

Azerbaijan welcomes the continued progress and impressive advances in achieving a secure and stable political situation in the country. During our recent visit to Timor-Leste, we had an opportunity to witness those encouraging developments. Along with maintaining a stable security situation and low crime rate, Timor-Leste has managed to advance the country's democratic agenda. The presidential and parliamentary elections held earlier this year were major milestones in the country's political life in 2012. We commend the Timorese authorities for successfully carrying out the three rounds of elections in a peaceful and credible manner, and convey our congratulations to the newly elected Government and President of the country.

The Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL), with the support of UNMIT, played a major role in providing security throughout the electoral process, and thereby proved to be capable of ensuring stability and security in the country. It is encouraging to note that public confidence in the PNTL has significantly increased. We note that UNMIT has continued to support the institutional strengthening and capacity-building of PNTL, focusing on five priority areas, as outlined in the PNTL-UNMIT Police Joint Development Plan. UNMIT has also continued to provide operational support to the PNTL, including by conducting joint patrols.

Azerbaijan welcomes the progress made in strengthening the country's institutional and human resources capacities and the role of State institutions in safeguarding stability and democracy. There is nevertheless a need for further support from the international community in that regard. Although relatively high economic growth has been observed in Timor-Leste this year, the country is still facing substantial challenges in tackling poverty, malnutrition and unemployment. We support the Government's efforts to address those challenges and to ensure economic sustainability.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, the Government and UNMIT, together with other stakeholders, has continued to collaborate and advance further in the transition process, as well as to facilitate the completion of UNMIT's mandate. We take note of the view of the Government on the post-2012 presence of the United Nations in Timor-Leste, which was expressed in the letter dated 20 September, 2012, from the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2012/736, annex). We support the desire of the Government of Timor-Leste to turn a new page in its relations and cooperation with the United Nations by switching from the presence of the United Nations peacekeeping or political mission to enhancing the relationship with a focus on institutional strengthening and development.

Despite remarkable achievements, Timor-Leste continues to face a number of challenges, with remaining weaknesses and gaps. Further efforts are required to develop sustainable national capacities, strengthen State institutions and tackle socioeconomic challenges. We agree with the Secretary-General that it is critical to continue to support national efforts so as to preserve the gains made today. The commitment of the Government and the people demonstrated so far convince us of their firm determination to resolve the remaining issues and to move forward in building a prosperous future based on sustainable peace, development and the rule of law.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to welcome to the Council the Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luís Guterres. His statement today was very encouraging. We also thank Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT),

for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/765) and his up-to-date information.

The progress achieved by Timor-Leste over the past 13 years deserves our admiration. We are honoured to share this historic moment with that friendly country. We congratulate the people and the Government of Timor-Leste and we thank bilateral donors and the international security forces for their ongoing commitment to peace and stability in that country.

We welcome the fact that this year, which marks the tenth anniversary of the independence of Timor-Leste, the Secretary-General visited the country, as did a Security Council delegation as recently as last week. In that connection, we would like to thank the representative of South Africa for his report on that subject (see S/PV.6858).

We are aware that consolidating democracy and building a system of governance is a long-term process. Although many challenges remain, the successes in the political, economic and security situations and in connection with the rule of law reflect the firm commitment and goodwill of the leaders and people of Timor-Leste.

This year, Timor-Leste succeeded in organizing presidential and parliamentary elections in a peaceful and orderly fashion. We welcome the fact that the Parliament has become an important and inclusive political forum. We also welcome the comprehensive rebuilding of the Timorese national police and acknowledge the progress made in allocating tasks between the police and the army.

We would like to acknowledge the important role played by the United Nations in Timor-Leste since 1999. Guatemala, as a country that has also benefited from United Nations peacekeeping, emphasizes how important it is for the new Government of Timor-Leste to adopt a timely decision on the future presence of the United Nations in Timor-Leste after the drawdown of UNMIT. We believe that the United Nations will remain an important partner in the country through the Resident Coordinator's team.

We know that the support of the international community will continue to be necessary after UNMIT's drawdown, particularly in consolidating the young institutions in Timor-Leste, such as those in the security sector. We believe it is important to continue and follow up on the outstanding tasks that will remain

after UNMIT's drawdown — for example, investigating crimes against humanity and other serious crimes.

Like many developing countries, Timor-Leste confronts socioeconomic challenges, but it has significant natural resources. Continued and proper management of those resources will be vital for the sustainable development of the country. More investment in areas such as education and youth employment is, in our view, necessary.

The leadership of Timor-Leste as Co-Chair of the Group of Seven Plus fragile States and its status as a troop-contributing country reflect the hope that this young nation offers to the international community. We are pleased to see that the endeavours of the international community to bring about conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding are achieving positive results. The situation in Timor-Leste is a very good example of that.

Guatemala once again would like to commend UNMIT peacekeeping forces for their work and their contributions. We also thank the international community for its multilateral and bilateral support of Timor-Leste, as well as the Timorese people themselves for their unwavering devotion to peace and security in their country.

Mr. Eick (Germany): Let me begin by welcoming His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres to the Council. I would also like to join colleagues in thanking Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Finn Reske-Nielsen for his briefing today.

As the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) will come to its conclusion by the end of the year, Germany expresses its sincere gratitude for the excellent work of the United Nations, both in Timor-Leste and in New York, in support of the Timorese people.

We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union later in this debate.

Germany continues to be entirely confident that the people of Timor-Leste, with the support of the United Nations and its international partners, are on the right track. We congratulate them on the progress made since independence a decade ago. Both the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/765) and today's briefing underpin our optimism. In its tenth year of independence, Timor-Leste has successfully conducted

presidential and parliamentary elections in a peaceful and calm environment, marking a milestone in the transition of the country, and formed a new Government based on the outcome of those elections.

As we have stated in the Council before, the successful completion of the three rounds of elections marks the right moment to end UNMIT's presence in Timor-Leste. We therefore entirely concur with the Secretary-General's recommendation that UNMIT continue to proceed with its drawdown until its completion at the end of the year. Timor-Leste has made impressive progress in many fields, in particular with regard to the continuously calm and stable security situation, which leads us to believe that UNMIT's presence has served its purpose and is no longer required. Considerable progress has also been made in strengthening the institutional capacities of State institutions, including in the security, justice and governance sectors, providing a sound institutional framework for a peaceful and prosperous future for Timor-Leste.

At this stage, it will be key to ensure that the full transfer of UNMIT's responsibilities to the Government of Timor-Leste or its bilateral and multilateral partners is smooth and that stability prevails. We laud the respective efforts thus far, including in the framework of the Joint Transition Plan, and assure the Government of Timor-Leste of our continued support to that end.

In that regard, we stand ready to support our Timorese partners, in the expectation of maintaining a close link to the Council for as long as it is deemed necessary. We want to see a smooth transition that secures the important achievements made by UNMIT in coordination with the Timorese authorities, including in the security field and the area of the rule of law and human rights, along with economic progress.

Future cooperation needs to be designed to counter the remaining challenges described in the Secretary-General's report and to further advance and consolidate socioeconomic progress and reconciliation efforts, while building on those undertaken by the Government of Timor-Leste thus far.

I would like to express once more the sincere appreciation of my Government for the efforts and commitment of UNMIT in supporting Timor-Leste, and to commend the dedication and service of its staff on the ground.

Let me conclude by wishing Minister Guterres, the Government under Prime Minister Gusmão and all Timorese all the best for years to come. Let me assure them that they will not have to shoulder that responsibility alone. Germany highly values its close friendship with Timor-Leste and will continue to stand by Timor-Leste during the transition and thereafter.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first, to welcome His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his statement to the Council. I would also like to highlight the work carried out by Ms. Ameerah Haq. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) until 9 June 2012, she did her job with admirable devotion and commitment.

We also welcome Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I commend the work of UNMIT and the United Nations country team for its support of the efforts of the people of Timor-Leste to consolidate peace, stability and development — conditions that are essential to the strengthening of the State. I also thank our colleague Ambassador Baso Sangqu of South Africa for his briefing on the visit of the Security Council to Timor-Leste, which he led. We very much regret that we were not able to participate in that visit.

This has been a particularly important year for Timor-Leste. The holding of successful presidential and parliamentary elections led to the formation of a new Government and the renewal of Parliament. The country celebrated the tenth anniversary of its restored independence and the thirteenth anniversary of the 1995 referendum. Timor-Leste has also assumed a new regional leadership role, including in co-presiding the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, together with the Group of Seven Plus fragile States. Those are commendable milestones. As President Ruak has said, the key to those achievements lies in the unity and resolve of the people of Timor-Leste.

The United Nations, through a series of operations and missions, has worked for more than 10 years in close cooperation with the authorities and people of Timor-Leste, supporting their efforts to emerge from conflict and to build lasting peace and security, creating robust democratic institutions, and developing

an inclusive and equitable socioeconomic system. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste will come to an end on 31 December, but we wish to say that we will continue to support the Government and people of Timor-Leste in consolidating the successful process of institution-building.

Timor-Leste has made much progress since regaining independence and particularly since the 2006 crisis, which led to the creation of UNMIT. Tangible proof of that is the progress made in restoring stability and security, the return of thousands of internally displaced persons, and the gradual reintegration into civil life of the excluded members of the Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL). The Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) is continuing to mature and to extend its reach throughout the country, which has led to a drop in the crime rate. We have also seen institution-building and human resources grow in other State sectors, such as the judiciary, security and governance. We have also seen the Parliament become a dynamic forum for parliamentary debate, with the participation of the Government coalition and the opposition. All those achievements reflect the unwavering commitment of the leadership and people of Timor-Leste to democracy, the rule of law and the creation of a secure and stable State.

Many challenges remain in Timor-Leste's path, particularly in the four priority areas of UNMIT's mandate. Certain gaps remain to be filled, due in part to the ongoing limitations in available capacity and human resources. We acknowledge that much progress has been made in the security sector through legislation defining the respective competencies of the F-FDTL, the PNTL and other institutions. Sustainable capacity-building is required in the justice sector, the economy and the PNTL through the training of prosecutors, judges, public defenders and private lawyers and support for the Legal Training Centre and the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice.

It is important to enhance access to justice, especially for the most vulnerable groups, and to promote accountability, especially for crimes against humanity. It is therefore important for Parliament to promptly resume the pending debates on legislation on restitutions and to establish the institutions that are to replace the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Commission of Truth and Friendship. The Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030 is a major step towards full

socioeconomic development and the creation of a more inclusive and equitable system. My country welcomes the establishment of the working group to start discussions with the United Nations on matters identified in the Joint Transition Plan for the post-2012 period, and of the National Planning Matrix.

The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste is one of the most successful examples of United Nations efforts to enhance stability, promote a culture of democratic governance and facilitate political dialogue. Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão's letter to the Secretary-General on 20 September (S/2012/736, annex) expressed the sincere gratitude of his Government for the support it has received and stated that, as of 31 December, there will no longer be a need for a United Nations peacebuilding mission in Timor-Leste, but that his country wants an innovative cooperative partnership with the United Nations, focusing on strengthening institutions and development. Successful and effective collaboration among the people of Timor-Leste, UNMIT and the United Nations country team has made a decisive contribution to the successes obtained. Now comes the consolidation process. Cooperative work will have to continue to ensure the full fruition of a sustainable, lasting peace.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate. I listened carefully to the briefing of Ambassador Sangqu of South Africa on the Security Council's visit to Timor-Leste. I also wish to thank Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Reske-Nielsen for his briefing. We also welcome Mr. José Luís-Guterres, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, to today's meeting.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of Timor-Leste's restored independence. China is very happy to see that, through the efforts of the Government and people of Timor-Leste and with the support of the international community, Timor-Leste has made continuous progress. Nation-building efforts are on track and economic and social development is proceeding steadily. Successful presidential and parliamentary elections have been held, establishing a new parliament and Government and promoting the maintenance of stability and development. As Timor-Leste's national development enters a new stage, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste

(UNMIT) peacekeeping operation is about to close successfully.

I would like to emphasize three points. First, China highly appreciates the fact that the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste is now officially and fully responsible for domestic security. The efforts of the Government to build national institutions and improve governance capacities have made encouraging progress. China staunchly supports the Government of Timor-Leste in its efforts to enhance capacity-building in national institutions and to safeguard national security and stability.

Secondly, economic development and improved standards of living are crucial if countries are to achieve long-term stability and security. The international community should support Timor-Leste in improving its capacity for independent development and help the Government to strengthen development in areas such as infrastructure, education and health care in order to encourage inclusive, equitable socioeconomic development. China hopes and trusts that Timor-Leste will return to the path of sustainable development as soon as possible.

Thirdly, since its inception UNMIT has worked very effectively and contributed enormously to the maintenance of security, stability and the promotion of economic and social development. It is a successful example of United Nations peacekeeping. Following the withdrawal of UNMIT, we hope that the United Nations, fully consulting and respecting the opinions of the Government of Timor-Leste, will jointly discuss future cooperation between them.

As a friend and cooperation partner of Timor-Leste, China will continue to provide assistance and support to Timor-Leste within our capacity.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the members of the Security Council that were elected this morning to the Human Rights Council and to wish them well in that important endeavour.

I will deliver my statement in Portuguese, which, as members know, is a very beautiful language.

(spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation)

I welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste and thank him for his important

statement. In this historic year, in which Timor-Leste is seeing a decisive cycle in its history come to a positive conclusion, the presence of the Minister is particularly symbolic and auspicious as regards future cooperation between the United Nations and Timor-Leste.

Portugal naturally subscribes to the views expressed in the statements to be made by the Ambassador of Mozambique on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and by the observer of the European Union.

I thank in particular the Acting Special Representative, Mr. Reske-Nielsen, not only for his assessment of the situation in Timor-Leste, but also for the important work carried out by the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) during the past six years to bring about democracy, stability, security and development in Timor-Leste.

In that regard, our well-deserved appreciation goes to all those who have worked and continue to work with such dedication within UNMIT, as well as to those who have headed the mission in the past, namely, Special Representatives Atul Khare and Ameerah Haq, as well as United Nations police commanders, whose personal commitment, perceptiveness and professional experience were so often decisive in overcoming the most complicated challenges. All deserve our recognition for their achievements.

Timor-Leste is a success story in terms of its people, its authorities, its democracy and human rights. It is also a success on the part of the United Nations, as should be duly noted, as well as the successful outcome of an international cooperation based on solidarity, clearly understood and well carried out.

The parliamentary and presidential elections of 2012 marked the end of a decisive cycle in the history of Timor-Leste. As has typically been the case in Timor-Leste, the elections took place in an environment of democratic normality and transparency, in keeping with internationally accepted standards. The Timorese people once again demonstrated their high level of civic responsibility and their political parties' maturity. Together with the process of the formation of the new Government, the elections clearly showed that parliamentary democracy has taken root in Timor-Leste and that the country's representative institutions have been consolidated.

Timor-Leste has also made significant progress in capacity-building and State responsibility in the areas of security, justice, education, health and the protection and promotion of human rights and a true democratic culture.

Timor-Leste's relevance in the international arena has also increased as a result of its participation in peacekeeping missions; its preparations for its accession to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which we hope will come about very soon; the strengthening of its actions in several international forums; and the development of its bilateral relations with a growing number of States, with a constant reaffirmation of its commitment to peace, progress and multilateralism.

It is time for the Timorese to dedicate themselves, with that same strength and capacity, to the challenges remaining on the country's path towards social and economic development. The road map and objectives set out in the Strategic Development Plan are already a clear indication of that goal, which Timor-Leste, on the basis of the political stability that the country has already shown, will be able to achieve.

Now that the goals mutually agreed between the United Nations and Timor-Leste for the last year of UNMIT's mandate have been achieved, according to the Joint Transition Plan, it is time to look to the future. In that context, the mission that the Security Council sent to Timor-Leste last week was particularly timely and contributed to the verification of the progress already made and to the identification of the role that the United Nations will play in supporting the initiatives of the Timorese Government.

The transfer of responsibilities and capacities from UNMIT to the Timorese authorities is taking place at a steady pace, and as a result UNMIT's main tasks may now, to a large extent, be undertaken by the Timorese authorities or by the latter in coordination with international partners.

In addition to in-depth strategic planning, the application of policies and effective coordination with the United Nations and bilateral partners, the national ownership and leadership of the transition process assumed by the Timorese authorities are the elements underlying the success of this process.

In that regard, Timor-Leste has shown its capacity to discharge on its own the fundamental mandates of the State, as well as to cooperate productively in

those areas where national capacities are not yet fully developed.

For all of those reasons, the decision of the Timorese Government conveyed to the Secretary-General in the letter dated 20 September 2012 (S/2012/736, annex) deserves our full support.

Allow me nonetheless to underline the fact that the reconfiguration of the presence and activity of the United Nations in Timor-Leste, concentrating efforts and resources on the United Nations country team and the United Nations Development Programme, should not and must not translate into a reduction of the international community's involvement with Timor-Leste. On the contrary, this will be an opportunity to intensify the work already carried out in different formats, to consolidate the progress achieved and to find new modalities for the international cooperation that Timor-Leste may still need.

For our part, I wish to reaffirm to the Minister that Portugal will continue to do everything in its power to support Timor-Leste on its path towards progress, stability, peace and democracy. We will do so, as always, with complete respect for the priorities defined by the Timorese Government and by remaining true to the solidarity and fraternity that binds us together.

Timor-Leste and Portugal share centuries of common history — a history that, as any other, is made up of darker and brighter moments, of good and bad times. We share a common language that, for Timor-Leste, is also an element of national identity and unity, as was frequently mentioned by the Timorese authorities during the recent mission of the Security Council.

The new cycle that is beginning now will not jeopardize Portugal's commitment to Timor-Leste, which has always been characterized by a refusal to remain silent before, and therefore an accomplice to, oppression and the violation of human rights.

Today is a time to highlight the brighter moments in the history of Timor-Leste. In concluding, I would recall, with deepest respect, the difficult path that has brought the Timorese people to independence, freedom, justice and democracy.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): I wish at the outset to thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing. We very much appreciate the presence here of the Minister for Foreign

Affairs of Timor-Leste and his participation in today's debate.

This has been a pivotal year for Timor-Leste. It has marked the tenth anniversary of its independence and conducted a landmark general election that resulted in a democratic and peaceful transfer of power to a new Government. That election was held against the backdrop of an increasingly stable security environment. It conformed to international standards, and its outcome was accepted by all parties. We commend the Government and the people of Timor-Leste on those achievements. They are significant milestones in Timor-Leste's continued development and represent real progress in consolidating their State.

The United Nations has played an essential role in that progress, helping the people of Timor-Leste get back on their feet. Because of that progress, it is right that the international community's relationship with Timor-Leste should continue to evolve. Indeed, this year has seen a real shift in the United Nations relationship with Timor-Leste, with the planned departure of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We welcome UNMIT's successful drawdown and look forward to its full withdrawal by the end of this year.

The level of cooperation between UNMIT and the Timorese Government throughout the Mission's mandate has been exemplary. The Joint Transition Plan has set the benchmark for future transitions, with the United Nations and the host State working closely together and producing a comprehensive, detailed plan for safeguarding the future stability of the country.

The Joint Transition Plan will need to be looked at again in the light of the proposal that changes the engagement of the United Nations from a peacekeeping Mission to a country team. For that change to be smooth, we must adequately plan to scale up the United Nations country team and ensure that it has the capabilities that it needs.

UNMIT's departure is a key test for Timor-Leste. To date, we have ensured that the Mission's drawdown proceeds effectively and efficiently while safeguarding stability. That can be a difficult balance to strike. But the drawdown has been an example of effective disengagement, establishing sound principles for future successful transitions elsewhere.

The lessons learned from that process should be incorporated into the guidance on transition and

mission drawdown that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is now developing. A great deal of thought has already gone into what shape the United Nations follow-on role should take. We support the Timor-Leste Government's desire to see the Organization's efforts in Timor-Leste led by a United Nations country team, as set out in Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão's September letter to the Secretary-General (S/2012/736, annex). At the same time, it is right that the Security Council should remain informed on the situation in Timor-Leste. We therefore propose that the Secretary-General give due consideration to how best that might be achieved.

As the United Nations Mission draws down and transitions into a country team, we also welcome the willingness demonstrated by the Timorese Government and people to take responsibility for their development and for safeguarding their hard-won security. In that regard, we applaud the Timor-Leste leadership in promoting the implementation of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, its role as a co-Chair of the Group of Seven Plus fragile States, and its decision to act as a pilot country for the New Deal.

While UNMIT, along with the people and Government of Timor-Leste, has laid firm foundations for peace and security, we will need to remain vigilant to protect that progress. Relapses into conflict can be all too sudden. The United Nations should keep the Council informed of any warning signs in that regard, perhaps through the reports of a special envoy or the horizon-scanning conducted by the Department of Political Affairs. Hard-won gains in security and stability should not be lost for want of keeping alert to and acting upon signs of renewed fragility.

Almost exactly 10 years ago, Timor-Leste was the 191st State to join the United Nations family. The intervening years have been turbulent and tough. It is a tribute to the people of Timor-Leste and to the commitment of the international community that a country, while still fragile, is able to take another step towards sustained peace and stability.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): We welcome the Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste to the Security Council. We thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) for his briefing. We are also grateful to Ambassador Baso Sangqu for his briefing

and for his able leadership of the Security Council mission to Timor-Leste. We note the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/765).

The successful conclusion of the electoral process in Timor-Leste is a major accomplishment. It is a sterling example of the remarkable progress made by the country in the short period since its independence. We congratulate the leadership and the people of Timor-Leste on that achievement.

In that regard, we particularly acknowledge the role of former President Mr. José Ramos-Horta, under whose leadership the elections were held. The turnaround in Timor-Leste would not have been possible without the support of UNMIT. We therefore commend the efforts of the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and of the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ameerah Haq. The Security Council can take due satisfaction from the fruit of its involvement in Timor-Leste.

Over the past 10 years, Pakistan has contributed to three peacekeeping missions in Timor-Leste, including UNMIT. The last Pakistani formed police unit is due to depart from the country on 14 November. We are proud of the contribution made by our peacekeepers towards the peace and stability of Timor-Leste. One of them, Ms. Shahzadi Gulfam, was awarded the 2011 International Female Police Peacekeeper Award in recognition of her outstanding performance as the team leader of the Vulnerable Persons Unit in Dili.

I would like to touch upon five issues. First, the elected leadership of the country has expressed its desire for Timor-Leste to be taken off the agenda of the Security Council. That message was clearly conveyed to the Security Council mission by different sections of the Timorese polity and civil society. The recent developments, as well as the palpable confidence of the Timorese, demonstrate that the country stands ready to assume control of its affairs.

Secondly, in his letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2012/736, annex), Prime Minister Gusmão notes that Timor-Leste would like to establish an innovative working relationship of cooperation for the future that focuses on institutional strengthening and development. The United Nations can continue to contribute to the future development of the country. The future shape of the United Nations involvement in

the country must be decided in close consultation with the Timorese authorities.

Thirdly, the implementation of the Joint Transition Plan is proceeding satisfactorily. It is important to ensure that the transfer of the functions and assets of UNMIT to the Timorese Government takes place in a systematic and coordinated manner.

Fourthly, we are encouraged by the economic performance of Timor-Leste, as noted in the Secretary-General's report. The country has made continued progress towards meeting the objectives and benchmarks of its medium-term strategy related to socio-economic development. However, it faces challenges in ensuring sustained improvement in livelihoods, in increasing employment opportunities in rural areas and for young people, and in eradicating poverty. The Government must make efforts to use the natural resources effectively to promote inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth in the country.

Fifthly, the Secretary-General's report and the Security Council mission have highlighted other challenges, including human resources capacity constraints, strengthening State institutions and the national judicial capacity, security sector review and socio-economic development. The support of the United Nations and of Timor-Leste's bilateral partners would be crucial to addressing those challenges.

In conclusion, we would like to underscore the fact that the international community has played its part in helping the people of Timor-Leste. That provides a solid foundation for the Timorese leadership and people to build upon for a better future of peace and prosperity for their country.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I thank Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Reske-Nielsen for his briefing. I commend him on his strong leadership and commitment in the final but very crucial phase of the presence of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). I also wish to thank the Government of Timor-Leste, represented here by Foreign Minister José Luís Guterres and Ambassador Sofia Mesquita Borges, for its unwavering dedication in ensuring that stability continues to prevail in Timor-Leste and in undertaking its thoughtful and thorough planning for the handling of the drawdown of UNMIT and its anticipated withdrawal.

For more than a decade, the United Nations has been present in Timor-Leste, working hand in hand with the Timorese Government and people to support their efforts to emerge from conflict and to build sustainable peace and security. Today is an important opportunity to reflect on UNMIT's achievements during the past six years, to consider its lessons in United Nations peacekeeping and to look ahead to the United Nations future role in that young democracy, which celebrated the tenth anniversary of its independence this year.

Timor-Leste has come a long way since the establishment of the first United Nations mission there in 1999. In March 2011, the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) assumed executive policing authority from UNMIT and the United Nations police. Since that time, the PNTL has exercised responsibility for all police operations in the country. On 31 October, UNMIT ceased operational support to the PNTL — one of the last major milestones as the Mission withdraws by the year's end.

UNMIT also coordinated closely with Timor-Leste during the three rounds of presidential and parliamentary elections in 2012. The elections were free, fair and peaceful and included high levels of participation. They and the resulting peaceful transfers of office stand as major achievements for Timor-Leste.

Finally, we should recall that the essential State institutions in the security, justice and Government sectors, which today play crucial roles in safeguarding stability and democracy, did not exist 13 years ago. Despite its impressive progress, however, Timor-Leste continues to face many challenges that must be addressed to avoid a return to conflict and instability.

The United States wants to see Timor-Leste maintain stability, deepen democracy, respect human rights and improve the delivery of justice. We support the Government of Timor-Leste's continued engagement on the world stage through its leadership in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, UN-Women and United Nations peacekeeping. We commend Timor-Leste for its strong leadership as one of the Chairs of the International Dialogue on Peacekeeping and Statebuilding and of the Group of Seven Plus coalition of fragile States. As we prepare for a significant transition in the United Nations role in Timor-Leste, we must focus on what will promote

lasting peace and security in Timor-Leste for decades to come.

First, through the Serious Crimes Investigation Team within UNMIT, significant strides have been made to investigate and safeguard information into crimes against humanity committed in 1999. The team's work has not been completed, however. We therefore strongly encourage the Secretariat to identify a path forward for the investigation team to complete its work. The investigations are important for promoting reconciliation and continued accountability.

Secondly, we should continue to work with the Government of Timor-Leste to help bolster human rights institutions and to infuse human rights into key institutions, such as the police and military. As UNMIT withdraws, the United Nations should consider other ways to assist with institution-building and provide specialized technical assistance, as needed and requested by the Government of Timor-Leste.

Finally, we must consider providing the Government of Timor-Leste with the appropriate United Nations tools to identify potential rising political and security tensions. It is crucial for the United Nations to work in conjunction with the Government to undertake a big-picture analysis of sources of fragility, in order to foster reconciliation and social cohesion while preventing future instability.

This is a positive moment in United Nations peacekeeping history, and we, as the Council, are presented with the unique opportunity to study UNMIT's success story and look for ways to replicate the lessons learned in UNMIT to help guide Security Council actions in other post-conflict and post-peacekeeping missions. As we prepare for a significant transition of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, we have to look beyond today and tomorrow and consider the United Nations tools that will most assist the people and the Government of Timor-Leste in further advancing peace, stability and development.

The United States applauds the Timorese people and its leaders for the progress they have achieved in building their country and joins other Council members in welcoming the developments that make it possible for Timor-Leste to enter a new phase in its relationship with the United Nations.

Mr. Bertoux (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Reske-Nielsen for his presentation

and to welcome the presence and the statement of Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste.

My country aligns itself with the statement that will be made by the observer of the European Union.

At the outset, I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of South Africa for having led the Security Council's mini-mission to Timor-Leste, for his report (see S/PV.6858) and, more generally, for his work in the Security Council on this matter. My country would also like to thank the United Nations staff members who have worked in the Mission in Timor-Leste since its deployment, the successive Special Representatives and those nations that have participated in stabilizing the country, in particular, Portugal, Australia and New Zealand.

We would like to congratulate the authorities of Timor-Leste for organizing free and democratic legislative and presidential elections, which were held in a peaceful climate with a high turnout. The transfer of power was peaceful, which gives shape to the entrenchment of democracy and the solidity of the country's institutions. The transfer of responsibility for security to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) took place in good conditions and without an increase in crime. The certification of the full reconstitution of the PNTL paves the way for a cut in staff levels of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and an end to the Mission on 31 December 2012, as stipulated in resolution 2037 (2012). The country's diplomacy is displaying great dynamism, as demonstrated by its role in the Group of Seven Plus coalition of fragile States and its growing interaction with regional organizations in the area, an aim that we too are pursuing for our territories in the Pacific. The security situation has been stable for some years now, and everything points to it remaining so.

The challenges that the Timorese must tackle today include combating poverty, economic development, discrimination against women, the scourge of corruption and bolstering justice and accountability for serious crimes committed in the past. The challenges should be met with the assistance of the international community, and no longer with the support of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

The effective departure of UNMIT is approaching and taking final shape. The preparations for UNMIT's withdrawal and the Joint Transition Plan are, in our

eyes, a model to be followed in other theatres. We have taken due note of the wishes expressed by Prime Minister Gusmão on the nature of the relation between his country and the United Nations after the withdrawal. It is clear that the type of presence that the United Nations will maintain on the ground should be defined in concert with the local authorities and with their full agreement. We should also bear in mind its budgetary implications. We are also ready, as requested by the Timorese authorities, to see the agenda of the Security Council evolve in order to reflect the new situation in Timor-Leste. We nonetheless are prepared to join all the parties concerned in considering the outlines of a future relationship between the United Nations and Timor-Leste.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of India.

I join others in extending a very warm welcome to the Security Council to His Excellency Mr. José Luís Guterres, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, and to 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 report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/765).

The visit of the Security Council's mini-mission to Timor-Leste last week, in which India also participated, offered 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. Timor-Leste has made multifaceted progress since the establishment of the 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 Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) for its efforts aimed at continuing to strengthen its institutional development and capacity-building. The final certification of the full reconstitution of the PNTL took place recently, marking the end of the United Nations police's operational support for the PNTL.

We appreciate the resilience and determination of the Timorese people and its leadership in firmly taking their country forward on paths 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 UNMIT for its overall support to that end and for making the Mission a success story.

As stated by Ambassador Baso Sangqu of South Africa, who led the Council's mission, and as indicated in Prime Minister Gusmão's letter to the Secretary-General (S/2012/736), there has been an unambiguous message from the Timorese people that the country should no longer remain on the Council's agenda and that UNMIT should withdraw as planned by the end of this year. We are particularly pleased that there is consensus among all stakeholders that UNMIT should withdraw as scheduled.

As UNMIT draws down, it is important that the contours of the post-transition United Nations presence should be finalized in accordance with the wishes and priorities of the Government. Timorese ownership and leadership are essential to building on the progress achieved so far. We have noted with satisfaction that overall economic growth, including proceeds from the oil and gas sector, continues to be robust. The Government's continued focus on infrastructure and capital development should certainly help to usher in a rapid socioeconomic transition in the country. The international community must support the Government in its efforts to achieve socioeconomic development, eradicate poverty and strengthen its institutions.

India attaches great importance to its relations with Timor-Leste. We have sought to contribute to its 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 in the areas of socioeconomic development and human resources development. We are also partnering with the Government of Timor-Leste within the India-Brazil-South Africa framework. India fully supports the Timorese Government's efforts to expand its bilateral and regional cooperation.

Before I conclude, I would like to express our appreciation for the leadership shown by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General

for Timor-Leste, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, during the transition, and for the dedication of his team in supporting the Government and people of Timor-Leste.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Ribeiro Viotti (Brazil): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate, and, like the Ambassador of Portugal, I would like to deliver my statement in Portuguese.

(spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation)

I would like to welcome Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation José Luis Guterres, who honours us with his presence at this historic moment for Timor-Leste. His presence attests to how important the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the United Nations are to Timor-Leste, as well as the earnestness with which the Timorese Government views the new phase in its relations with the United Nations after 2013. I also thank the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, for his briefing and insightful comments. I would also like to express our appreciation to Ms. Ameerah Haq for her extraordinary work with UNMIT, and to congratulate South Africa for its excellent coordination of the core group for Timor-Leste. In that connection, we thank Ambassador Sangqu for his briefing on the Security Council mission to Timor-Leste (see S/PV.6858).

The year 2012 is a milestone in the recent history of Timor-Leste. Ten years after the country's independence, the Timorese people have been able to organize and hold two very important elections and to ensure a smooth transfer of power.

Sustained progress has also been made in other areas. In the security sector, the transfer last year of policing responsibilities to the national police of Timor-Leste was a very important step. Economic growth has accelerated, and a base for investment and for development of the country's infrastructure has been established. The Timorese have worked hard to strengthen mechanisms for the protection of human rights, implement anti-corruption programmes, promote transparency and ensure social progress and good governance. The participation of women in Timor-Leste's nation-building process is also notable.

In the 2012 parliamentary elections, quotas established through electoral legislation resulted in women occupying 38 per cent of seats, which, as highlighted by the Secretary-General, is the highest percentage in the Asia-Pacific region. Brazil commends UNMIT's important contribution in helping Timor-Leste in its efforts to overcome the obstacles in its path towards peace, stability and development.

In this new stage in Timor-Leste's history, it is essential that the international community and the United Nations continue to cooperate with the Timorese in order to consolidate the positive results obtained in areas such as security and institutional capacity-building. We are confident that, as has been the case so far, the future relationship of the United Nations with the Government of Timor-Leste will be based on a mutually beneficial dialogue focused on the country's priorities and concerns.

Brazil supports the vision formulated by the Timorese Government of an innovative and cooperative relationship with the United Nations, aimed at strengthening Timor-Leste's institutions and socioeconomic development. We encourage the prompt beginning of discussions on issues identified in the Joint Transition Plan for a post-2012 agenda. Brazil will continue to develop its strong ties with Timor-Leste. We will maintain our support to the Timorese Government through cooperative projects in areas such as agriculture, education, justice and security.

We are also proud of the work that Sérgio Vieira de Mello, a Brazilian national, was able to do, as Head of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, in supporting the country in the early stages of its independence.

The commitment and dedication of the Timorese people have been at the heart of the achievements we celebrate today and constitute a solid base for an even stronger partnership between Timor-Leste, the United Nations and the international community in the years ahead. Timor-Leste can continue to count on Brazil.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): I would like to begin by extending a warm welcome to Mr. José Luis Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and by thanking him for his participation in this debate and for his statement. I would also like to express my appreciation to Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen for his comprehensive

briefing to the Council in his capacity as Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

I also want to sincerely compliment the people of Timor-Leste on their outstanding achievements, which include, among other things, the successful conduct of two rounds of presidential and parliamentary elections this year. I believe that those achievements will enable them to enjoy peace and prosperity as they harvest the fruits of democracy.

We have witnessed a process whereby a close partnership between the host country and the United Nations has led that country on a promising path. In that regard, I would like to make special mention of the role played by successive earlier United Nations operations in Timor-Leste, which will come to a close at the end of this year with the drawdown of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

After Timor-Leste became independent, the United Nations missions operating in the country evolved in step with the country's progress. They maintained close relations with the Timorese and supported the people in their efforts. To that end, the Security Council has played a very important role in synchronizing the missions' mandates with the progress in Timor-Leste. Such experiences give us confidence regarding the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping for international peace and security. The achievements in Timor-Leste give us great hope for those who suffered in the aftermath of conflict there and should serve to encourage them as they move forward towards their future.

Japan feels privileged to have been a part of United Nations efforts in Timor-Leste. Japan's engineering units participated in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor and the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, and helped to establish a foundation for the country's development. In addition, Japan dispatched its civilian police personnel to support Timorese efforts to build their policing capacity and strengthen their security institutions. Japan also supported the national electoral process by sending election observers. Up until September, Japan continued to assist UNMIT by contributing two military liaison officers to the Mission. The success of Timor-Leste assures us of the effectiveness of our contribution to United Nations peacekeeping. On the basis of our experience in Timor-Leste, Japan would like

to intensify its efforts in working towards international peace and security.

The achievements of the Timorese have opened the door to a new stage of further development. In order for Timor-Leste to begin its efforts on the right track in that new stage, a successful and seamless transition is vital. In that regard, I would like to emphasize the importance of ongoing joint efforts by Timor-Leste and UNMIT for a smooth transition. Japan firmly believes that the strong partnership between Timor-Leste and UNMIT will add a successful transition to their success story.

I believe that the key to the Timorese success is a spirit of unity, which has been fully exercised not only among the Timorese people but also among all entities working on the ground, including UNMIT, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, UN-Women, UNICEF and Timor-Leste's bilateral partners. The future will require more coordinated, harmonized and strengthened efforts by all relevant entities, under the strong ownership of the Timorese with their enhanced spirit of unity working towards the country's future prosperity.

In conclusion, Japan will do its utmost to support the further development of the country. As an old friend of Timor-Leste, going back to the days before independence, Japan supported its nation-building efforts, while also supporting its development of human resources, infrastructure and agriculture. Japan will continue to assist Timor-Leste and further deepen its support, together with our friends responsible for the future of the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mozambique.

Mr. Gumende (Mozambique): I would like to thank you, Sir, for having invited us to participate in this debate. Like my colleagues from Portugal and Brazil, I seek your indulgence to deliver my statement in Portuguese.

(spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation)

Allow me, at outset, to thank you, Sir, for having given Mozambique the opportunity to address this important organ of the United Nations in its capacity as the Chair of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), which also includes Angola, Brazil,

Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, Portugal and Timor-Leste.

We welcome His Excellency Mr. José Luis Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, whose presence in this debate reflects the strong commitment of his country to the effective implementation of provisions for cooperation with the United Nations system, in particularly under auspices of the Security Council. We therefore align ourselves with the content of his statement, as we support the range of efforts that Timor-Leste has undertaken with a view to consolidating peace, stability, democratic institutions and promoting sustainable economic development.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/765), presented at this meeting, which in general indicates remarkable progress in important sectors of the political, economic and social spheres in the country that should be a cause for rejoicing and pride for the leadership and the people of Timor-Leste. Two of the important events that characterize the progress and deserve special mention are the presidential elections in March and April and the parliamentary elections in July, both of which the international community judged to have been free and fair. We are aware that those positive developments reflect the will and determination of the people of Timor-Leste to continue in their quest for a future of lasting peace and leading to the realization of their noble aspirations.

The implementation of the framework of cooperation between the United Nations and Timor-Leste — in particular, the success of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), which is now drawing down — demonstrates a positive experience in the stabilization of the country and has brought new advantages. At present, Timor-Leste participates actively in peace efforts as a contributor to United Nations peace and security missions around the world, thereby assisting in the solution of conflicts and the building of an increasingly peaceful and stable world. We therefore reiterate our appeal to the international community to continue to provide its valuable contribution to the political, economic and social development of Timor-Leste, a country with great potential for growth and development.

In that regard, we would like to acknowledge the importance of the visit paid by the members of the Security Council to Timor-Leste at the beginning of this

month, as well as the visit of the Secretary — General last August. Such visits, among other initiatives, will help to identify, in turn, better ways to overcome the challenges the country still faces, such as the promotion of economic and social development and the capacity-building of State institutions, areas in which the international community can still play an important role.

Alongside the efforts of the international community, CPLP member States continue to redouble efforts aimed at strengthening the political and economic stability of Timor-Leste in order to harness the experience of this sister country so that it can continue to be an increasingly important partner in building peace and development at the regional and global levels.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): In September 1999, Asia-Pacific leaders gathered in Auckland, New Zealand, for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit. Less than two weeks earlier, the people of Timor-Leste had overwhelmingly chosen independence in a United Nations-supervised popular referendum, following which the territory was plunged into violent chaos. As the death toll mounted, APEC leaders discussed options for ending the violence, and, on 13 September, they agreed urgently to deploy an international peacekeeping force to stabilize the situation. So began a process that, three years later, saw Timor-Leste's emergence as an independent country.

With this nation's birth playing out so dramatically on my own country's soil, so also began New Zealand's partnership with the Timorese people. New Zealand participated in the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), which was dispatched to Timor-Leste following that APEC Summit. We have played a significant role in every international force in the country since then, including, most recently, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

Since 1999, more than 6,000 New Zealand military personnel have served there. Indeed, at INTERFET's peak in 2001, approximately half of New Zealand's land forces were involved in some way in servicing that deployment. That was in addition to the hundreds of police and civilian personnel from our diplomatic, overseas development, customs, corrections and other

agencies who, over the past decade or so, have also contributed towards building this young country.

In short, New Zealand was proud to be one of the first countries to commit to supporting the post-referendum transition to independence. Since then, we have been privileged to walk with the Timorese people on their journey out of conflict and fragility. We have gained a lot from that engagement ourselves. It has taught us about the nature and demands of complex peace operations and of post-conflict peacebuilding, not least in our own region. Opportunities to live, work and serve in Timor-Leste have enriched the lives of many of our people.

Firm bonds have been forged between our peoples. I will give just one example, which is all the more touching as it is an example of triumph transcending tragedy. The parents of a New Zealand soldier killed in Timor-Leste in 2000 established, in his honour, a charity to educate Timorese children — a charity that has changed more than 40 lives in just one village.

Timor-Leste and its partners have encountered setbacks in this journey. But today we have the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate its many achievements. Great strides have been made since 1999 in healing the wounds of the independence struggle. Former combatants have been demobilized and reintegrated. Displaced populations have returned, and communities reconciled. Core Government institutions and conventions of democratic governance have been steadily built and consolidated. We also commend all of Timor-Leste's neighbours, most particularly Indonesia, for the readiness with which they have welcomed it into their regional community.

In 10 short years, we have seen Timor-Leste move from being conflict-ravaged to itself being a contributor to United Nations peace operations. We have watched as it has provided inspiration and voice for fragile States seeking more focused and accountable international assistance.

The orderly conduct of this year's elections was a tribute to Timor-Leste's political maturity. It stands as a testament to what post-conflict countries can achieve through vision, leadership and determination. New Zealand is one of many countries that supported those efforts, most recently by sending election observers.

Over the past four years, Timor-Leste has also enjoyed impressive levels of economic growth, which,

together with careful stewardship of oil and gas revenues, has enabled progress in tackling poverty and laying foundations for a for a more prosperous future. Remarkable progress has been made in confronting other challenges, such as domestic violence and women's political empowerment.

Overall, today Timor-Leste is more stable, more peaceful and more prosperous and its future appears brighter than at any other time in its history. Timor-Leste can take pride in those achievements. Its friends can also take pride and, indeed, the Council should take pride, in what has been achieved under its mandate.

As of 1 November, leadership and responsibility for Timor-Leste's security is now in the hands of Timorese national police, supported by the nation's defence force. Given that both the United Nations police and the International Stabilisation Force have ceased their residual security roles, and that the reconstitution of the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste has now been fully certified, with UNMIT scheduled to withdraw by the end of the year, Timor-Leste will enter a new phase, including in terms of its relationship with the international community.

As the Secretary-General noted in his report (S/2012/765), the process will entail many daunting challenges. Access to health and education services must be enhanced. Greater inroads are needed to counter malnutrition, and the benefits of development must be felt beyond Dili. Above all, jobs are urgently needed for Timor-Leste's young and rapidly growing population, which will require support for an emerging vibrant sector in the non-oil economy.

Recent gains in the areas of security and democratic governance must also be consolidated and extended. And further progress is needed so that all of the gains are anchored in strong and wise leadership, as well as in effective, resilient and sustainable institutions.

Particular priority is needed to strengthen core institutions of the security and justice sectors, and among those responsible for Government oversight and accountability.

The challenges are common to many countries and we believe that Timor-Leste has the vision and the determination to meet them successfully. In all of those endeavours, it will have the support of its many loyal friends, and New Zealand is just one of the friends.

We will remain a reliable partner to Timor-Leste as it writes the next chapter in its history, through our \$22 million bilateral development assistance programme. Over the next three years we will contribute to the construction of a stable, democratic and prosperous country by fostering private sector investment, strengthening the security and justice sectors, including through our recently launched bilateral community policing programme, and by supporting education and training.

Support from the United Nations system will also be vital. The new Timorese Government has articulated what it regards as the most appropriate form, scope and focus for its post-UNMIT relationship with the United Nations. We support efforts by both sides to develop the modalities for that more fully nuanced relationship.

Finally, in what we expect to be the last meeting of the Council on the situation in Timor-Leste, I pay tribute to the United Nations personnel, from the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on down, and to the men and women from many nations who have worked over the past 13 years to provide Timor-Leste with a more peaceful and prosperous future.

Above all, I pay tribute to the courage and determination of the people of Timor-Leste itself, which has carried that young country such an extraordinary distance since the dark and dramatic days of 1999.

We truly wish the Minister's country well. We wish it well as it begins the next phase of its remarkable journey. I assure the people of Timor-Leste that we will walk with them on that journey.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Ms. King (Australia): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this debate. I would like to acknowledge the presence of the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luís Guterres. I would also like to acknowledge the presence of the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to thank him for his briefing this afternoon. The Australian Government has very much appreciated his strong leadership of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). As this may be the last Council debate on UNMIT, we would also like to highlight the important contribution of former Special Representatives Atul Khare and Ameerah Haq and

their able deputies. Each performed their role with great professionalism.

It is clear that Timor-Leste, working closely with UNMIT and bilateral partners, has made great progress since the events of 2006. The Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste has been fully reconstituted, the threat posed by disaffected groups has dissipated and the Timorese-led political reconciliation process has contributed directly to peaceful elections this year. We agree with Prime Minister Gusmão that security conditions in Timor-Leste have improved markedly and that, following the very successful elections held during the course of the year, it is time for the international security forces to depart.

As the Council has heard during numerous debates, Timor-Leste authorities have worked to achieve an extended period of peace by maintaining stability and enhancing political and social cohesion. Australia agrees with the recommendation of the Secretary-General that UNMIT should conclude its mission at the end of the year.

Many members today have commented on the success of the 2012 elections. The Timorese electoral authorities, security services, political parties and civil society deserve to be commended for that success. We acknowledge the crucial role played by UNMIT and the United Nations Development Programme in helping to build the capacity of the Timorese electoral management bodies to the level that we witnessed this year.

We are pleased that members of the Council were able to visit Timor-Leste last week and witness first-hand the achievements of the Timorese and the significant contribution made by UNMIT — as did the Secretary-General when he visited in mid-August. The Mission has successfully integrated the many functions of the United Nations into a single mission structure. That will provide useful lessons for future peacekeeping operations. Beyond its important task of reconstituting and supporting the PNTL, UNMIT has also promoted and supported political reconciliation and the development of human rights standards and institutions, including building an awareness of justice issues. We encourage the Mission's leadership to continue working with the Timorese Government to manage the economic impact on Timor-Leste resulting from the closure of UNMIT, particularly on employment in Dili.

The end of the United Nations peacekeeping and political presence should not signal the end of United Nations engagement with Timor-Leste. Timor-Leste wants to shape an innovative development relationship with the United Nations. Australia will support the country in that endeavour.

We commend Timor-Leste for its Strategic Development Plan for the period 2011-2030, which sets out long-term principles to underpin development. Australia was the first development partner of Timor-Leste to commit to the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. Our partnership is now firmly rooted in those principles. For example, we are partnering with the Ministry of Finance to provide development assistance directly through the Ministry's systems. We encourage future United Nations engagement with Timor-Leste to be aligned with those principles.

We would also like to recognize the very effective relationship between UNMIT and the International Stabilisation Force (ISF). The division of responsibility for providing security assistance to Timor-Leste — shared between the United Nations police and the ISF — provides useful lessons in the effective demarcation of responsibility as well as unity of purpose, which may serve to assist the Council in developing mandates for future peacekeeping operations.

Australia will begin to carry out the drawdown of the ISF, in close coordination with the Government of Timor-Leste, the Government of New Zealand and UNMIT. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our ISF partner, New Zealand, as well as Portugal and Malaysia, with whom we worked so closely in 2006, ahead of the establishment of UNMIT.

The coming departure of the ISF does not signal the end of Australia's security cooperation with Timor-Leste. We will continue our work with Timor-Leste's police force and our defence cooperation programme in support of the country's defence force.

Our relationship with our close neighbour and friend will continue to deepen and broaden as we work in partnership with Timor-Leste to alleviate poverty, provide education and employment opportunities to young Timorese people and build on the strong, extensive and enduring community links between our countries.

The Timorese people have shown tremendous resilience over the past decade as they set about building a new nation. While UNMIT and the ISF have made their contribution, the real credit for the peace and progress enjoyed today must go to the Timorese people themselves.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vrailas: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The acceding country Croatia, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

First and foremost, I congratulate the current and preceding Timor-Leste Governments for the tremendous progress made towards stabilization and recovery since the restoration of independence in 2002. On the eve of the departure of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the successive Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and to all UNMIT personnel for their substantial contributions. Finally, I join others in thanking Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, for his briefing and the Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Luis Guterres, for his statement.

Over the past decade, Timor-Leste has accomplished impressive progress in terms of stability, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and economic growth. Since the Security Council debate on UNMIT in February (see S/PV.6720), Timor-Leste has witnessed several new milestones, including successful and peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections, as observed by an EU election observation mission. The withdrawal of UNMIT by the end of this year, 10 years after the country regained its independence, is a logical step on that path and a clear sign of Timor-Leste's national commitment to consolidate the capacity of its institutions.

However, as noted by the Secretary-General in his latest report (S/2012/765), several challenges remain,

in particular as a result of persisting human resource capacity constraints, namely, in socioeconomic development and justice. To address those challenges it is important, in our view, to build on the progress already made and to focus on the effective implementation of the remainder of the Joint Transition Plan, as well as the reforms already endorsed. We welcome the new Government's five-year programme, as well as the Strategic Development Plan, which aims to further advance the previous Government's actions and to set a course for a sustainable future. In that regard, we underline the importance of a continuous focus on the rule of law, human rights and access to justice. In that context, it will be important to maintain the engagement of, and support by, the international community.

We furthermore firmly believe that reconciliation is an important precondition for long-term stability. We therefore look forward to the National Parliament's renewed discussions on the two draft laws on the memorial institute and reparations, and on the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation.

We believe that, following UNMIT's departure, the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste for the coming years should be designed to support the ongoing consolidation efforts and to build on the significant achievements of UNMIT's activities to date, in close coordination with the Timorese authorities. We acknowledge the preferences expressed by Timor-Leste in that regard and stand ready to support the outcome of the discussions between Timor-Leste's Government and the United Nations.

We commend Timor-Leste's achievements at the regional and international level, in particular through establishing strong and cordial ties with its neighbours and through its driving role as co-Chair of the Group of Seven Plus (g7+). We welcome Timor-Leste's candidacy for membership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, its active role within the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and its integration into the Pacific through cooperation under the Pacific Island Forum's regional programme.

In conclusion, we have stood by Timor-Leste's side through challenging times and remain committed to do so in the future. We are currently preparing our development support for 2014 to 2020 in close consultation with national authorities, which will, of course, be based on Timor-Leste's National Strategic

Development Plan. It will also ensure alignment with the new deal of the g7+.

As the focus is shifting from security and stability to development issues, we encourage others to remain strongly engaged as well in support of Timor-Leste's development process. We are confident that Timor-Leste will continue to be a successful example of national

leadership in institution-building and socioeconomic development.

The President: There are no further names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.