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## Security Council

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[Extract]

### *The situation in Timor Leste*

**Mr. Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias**

Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Panama.

I would like to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. My thanks go also to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), represented by Mr. Atul Khare, for its efforts, and to South Africa for its interest, reflected in a variety of actions. The concern and endeavours of Australia, Indonesia and other countries of the region during these difficult times for Timor-Leste are also to be acknowledged.

Today, we recognize the progress made by Timor-Leste and UNMIT in 2007. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/26) highlights, among other things, the holding of elections, the security sector reform and the building of democratic institutions. We could list other areas of progress.

However, despite the calm that has prevailed in Timor-Leste following the recent attacks against two high representatives of the legitimate institutions, the attacks show that a long road remains to be travelled to address and remedy the causes of

the conflict. We note, furthermore, that in recent years the members of the Council have acknowledged the wide range of activities required to achieve these ends, many of which do not fall within the traditional concept of peacekeeping. This is a good time to recognize that fact. The Charter of the United Nations lays down, as one of the Organization's purposes, the maintenance of international peace and security and grants to the Security Council the prime responsibility for that function. At the time, the immediate concern of the authors of the Charter was disputes between States. In the post-war world that goal of maintaining peace meant peace between States.

However, a constitutive charter — and the United Nations Charter is one — should develop in keeping with the needs of the times, or it ceases to be a living document and may well become a dead letter. The Charter should, moreover, be interpreted as a whole. Its principles include protection of human rights and promotion of development. The concepts of peace and security should therefore be interpreted as something more than just the absence of war or armed conflict.

The experience of Timor-Leste is an example of the importance of this conceptual evolution as regards peacekeeping. UNMIT is not the first time that the United Nations has sought to tackle problems in that region. Today, more than ever, it is clear that the priorities of UNMIT's future mandate should include not just the maintenance of peace and security but also should attend to political, institutional, humanitarian, human rights and sustainability aspects, because without them, peace and security will remain elusive. Consolidating dialogue and reconciliation, deepening reform of the justice and security sectors, resolving the problem of internally displaced persons and promoting economic development are among the various factors that must be dealt with.

In that context, allow me to support and echo the statements of Ambassador Urbina of Costa Rica on the need to build capacity and not dependence. He warned in particular about the need to strengthen the armed forces in Timor-Leste as a matter requiring very careful consideration. The experience of Panama and Costa Rica runs counter to such a trend.

Lastly, allow me to repeat that this Council should demonstrate its commitment to Timor-Leste through efforts to deal with problems and projects in a cross-cutting manner. In the various areas of its mandate it should be both flexible and robust and should present clear goals, sufficient to allow the Secretariat, as our executive body, to draft clear, verifiable and immediate goals and eventually to prepare procedures for an orderly and successful withdrawal.

I cannot end without expressing our recognition of the irreplaceable leadership work carried out by President Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão and expressing our hopes for a speedy recovery to President Ramos-Horta.