

**STATEMENT BY DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION,  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SINGAPORE, KOH TIN FOOK  
AT THE TIMOR-LESTE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS'  
MEETING 2010**

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**Your Excellency, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao  
Ministers of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste  
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Let me begin by congratulating the Timor-Leste Government for convening this important meeting today. It is an honour for me to be here again together with Timor-Leste's development partners and I would like to thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of Singapore.

2 Since Timor-Leste's independence in May 2002, the Timor-Leste Government and People have worked very hard to develop the country's hardware such as its infrastructure, and its software such as human resource capacity, while addressing the country's security concerns. We stand by all of Timor-Leste's development partners present today to laud your efforts in shaping a bright future for Timor-Leste and advancing towards the Millennium Development Goals.

3 Singapore is pleased to have made modest contributions to Timor-Leste's development process over the past decade. We recognise that establishing peace and security which were priorities when Timor-Leste was born as a nation, remains crucial for the steady progress of the country. Singapore has consistently supported Timor-Leste in its peacekeeping efforts, evident through the deployment of our largest-ever overseas peacekeeping contingent to Timor-Leste. Following the establishment of the United Nations Mission of Support for East Timor (UNMISET) in 2002, together with Australia, New Zealand and other countries, Singapore contributed manpower and resources in various deployments, including a Company Task force of 160 armed peacekeepers, 72 Air Support Crew, and 4 helicopters which served together with the Thai Battalion in the South-West Sector of Timor-Leste. We also deployed a 10-man Force Commander Group, which included Major-General Eric Tan Huck Gim, who served as Force Commander of the UNMISET Peacekeeping Force, and was later appointed as the Deputy Special Representative for the Secretary General for the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) from 2006 to 2007. Currently, the Singapore contingent in UNMIT consists of 21 police officers and 2 military officers.



4        Besides the peacekeeping force, Singapore has supported Timor-Leste's human resource capacity development efforts by sharing the knowledge, expertise and experience we have gained through our own development over the years. Under the auspices of the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP), administered by the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs, more than 330 Timorese officials have benefited from over 170 programmes such as study visits and SCP training courses in fields including Diplomacy, Finance, Healthcare, Civil Aviation, Public Administration, Port Management, Customs and Taxation and the English Language. Most of these technical assistance programmes were conducted in specialised training agencies in Singapore, which enabled participants to learn not only through classroom lessons but also through hands-on experiences and site visits. Many of these courses were of train-the-trainer nature, which provides a multiplier effect in terms of human resource development.

5        We are also happy to share that a good number of Timorese officials have continued to actively participate in training courses conducted in collaboration with our partners under the SCP's Third-Country Training Programme (TCTP) arrangement. To date, Timorese officials have participated in some 90 joint courses conducted under the Japan-Singapore Partnership Programme for the 21st Century, and the Singapore-International Monetary Fund Joint Training Programme. Timorese officials have also attended seminars and workshops such as the "Early Childhood Regional Policy Seminar" under our partnership with United Nations Children's Fund, the "Asia Pacific Dengue Workshop" under our partnership with the World Health Organisation, and most recently, the "Regional Workshop on the Implementation of Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme" which was jointly conducted by Singapore and International Maritime Organisation last month. Apart from this, we have also trained Timorese officials under our Singapore-Norway TCTP and the Singapore-Thailand TCTP in areas such as Climate Change, Food Safety and Environment.

6        Besides these training courses, Singapore has also provided undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships for students from Timor-Leste to study at our local Universities.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

7        Singapore's relations with Timor-Leste remain warm and friendly. We have good ties at the government-to-government level and our leaders are

well-acquainted with each other. I am happy to note that, at Foreign Minister Dr da Costa's invitation, my Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr George Yeo, will be making his first official visit to Dili in August this year. Such bilateral exchanges would serve to strengthen our bilateral ties and enhance mutual cooperation.

8        Besides cooperation at the Government-to-Government level, our people-to-people ties are strong. Singaporean entrepreneurs have set up businesses in your country and many volunteer groups have contributed in their own way to Timor-Leste. At present, there are around 300 Singaporeans living in Timor-Leste, most of whom are engaged in running small but profitable businesses such as restaurants, supermarkets and small hotels. Some of them have settled down with their families and have become an integral part of the Timor-Leste community. I am also pleased to note that Singapore-based investor Datuk Edward Ong has invested in a hotel cum golf course project in Tacitolu, the first of its kind in Timor-Leste. Such large-scale projects will provide valuable employment opportunities and attract foreign investments to the country.

9        As we move forward together, Singapore will continue to do our best to support Timor-Leste's human resource capacity development efforts in areas of our expertise such as Port Management, Civil Aviation, Education, Healthcare, Tourism, Governance, Environment and Water Management. We will continue to strengthen our collaborations with our existing partners as well as explore new partnerships to fully maximise the knowledge, skills and experience we can share with Timor-Leste.

10       Singapore is pleased to have been involved as a development partner of Timor-Leste since its independence. We believe that a strong commitment to human resource capacity building, maintaining peace and stability, and promoting economic growth would move Timor-Leste closer towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

11       Thank you.

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