

24 March, 2008
Session2, Tokyo Peacebuilders Symposium 2008

What Needs To Be Done for Peace-building In East Timor?

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before making my brief presentation, let me sincerely pray for early recovery of President Ramos-Horta who sustained serious injuries during a cowardly attack by armed rebels last month, and whose leadership is so indispensable for successful completion of peace-building process in East Timor.

East Timor is the very first country to become independent in this century. The Japanese people have warmly welcomed this country as a new neighbor and a precious friend in the Asia-Pacific region. The Japanese government has been strongly committed to supporting this country in its effort in economic development, democratization, and the very achievement of peaceful society.

Since year 2000, I myself have made four visits to East Timor, and have had some direct bearings with various aspects of peace-building process there. In today's presentation, I would like to consider what needs to be done for current peace-building efforts in East Timor, mainly referring to 'Toyama Mission's Report on Timor-Leste', which was made as Japan's proposal to the United Nations, after my fourth visit to East Timor as the head of delegation from Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June 2006.

First, in political and administrative dimension, we need to see more positive results in capacity building of human resources efforts. While international attention has been drawn on the problem of internal struggle among political leaders, there is a more serious problem that poses a long-term threat to consolidation of peace. That is, the lack of middle-ranking bureaucracy that can handle day-to-day businesses of a democratic government in a fair and politically neutral manner. As we all know, establishing good governance is the key to successful peace-building in post-conflict situation. Together with the United Nations, all supporting countries including Japan

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should continue to make their best efforts in this area.

Rebuilding a professional police force is another important task to be complete. During my visit in June 2006, I went to a huge IDP camp in the outskirts of Dili. I remember I was shocked to know how poorly ordinary Timorese people held confidence in their police force. With intensified international support to improve the security situation, Timorese police force may be much better by now. I understand that UN Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) has concentrated a lot of resources into this over the last few years. But in view of the fact that President has been attacked under daylight, or there are still about 100,000 IDPs in the country, East Timorese security situation does not reach a level every Timorese wants. Assessing what has been achieved or not achieved yet with this matter, international society should provide necessary support for UNMIT in its undertakings on this problem.

Thirdly, I would like to point out the importance of maintaining an administrative mechanism between leaders of the East Timorese government and UNMIT, through which timely exchange of opinions, information-sharing and policy coordination are carried out. In my mission's report to the United Nations in 2006, we clearly proposed the establishment of what we called 'Policy Consulting Council' composed of President, Prime Minister, Speaker of National Assembly and Head of the UN mission to this effect. This proposal is a product of my communication with the people who occupied those positions at that time – including Chair of this Session Dr. Hasegawa as the UN head – in the sense that an accumulation of misunderstandings among important figures could lead to a quick destruction of earlier peace-building efforts.

Of course, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of the Timorese ownership in the nation-building process. What we want to see is a truly self-reliant government of Timor-Leste. Always bearing this principle in mind, however, we need an ensuring mechanism in order not to waste precious effort of everyone involved for the sake of a new, peaceful East Timor. In this regard, it is highly commendable that UNMIT and the Timorese government have maintained such a mechanism for better coordination since the very start of mandate for UNMIT in 2006.

I would like to conclude this brief presentation by expressing my determination, as a member of Japanese parliament, to continuously support the peace-building process

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In Timor-Leste, and to make Japan a truly respectable country as a leading nation of peace-building. Thank you very much for your attention.

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