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United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor

UNMISSET PRESS RELEASE

President of UN General Assembly addresses National Parliament

(Dili, 28 July) – The President of the 57th session of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Jan Kavan, today congratulated the people of Timor-Leste on all the progress that has been achieved since the restoration of independence, and assured them of continued UN support in all the crucial areas where much still remains to be done. Mr Kavan was addressing the National Parliament this morning as part of a 4-day visit to Timor-Leste that began yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Kavan remembered his first visit to Timor-Leste, when he attended the restoration of independence as the Czech Foreign Minister. “I had the honour to participate in the celebrations and to witness the birth of nation”. Later, he presided over the General Assembly session that admitted Timor-Leste as the UN’s newest member. He said that he still recalled that session with “pride and joy”, and also congratulated the MPs on Timor-Leste’s accession to the 6 main human rights treaties and 4 protocols.

Mr. Kavan then spoke on the theme of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) *, reminding MPs that the world faces many development challenges, and that the international community must tackle them together. It is fortunate that the international community has agreed on the MDGs as the way forward, but he warned that “formidable challenges lie ahead if we are to even coming close to achieving these Goals”.

Mr. Kavan also mentioned the particular challenges that Timor-Leste has to face, especially in the area of strengthening of the judiciary and of police development. He assured MPs on behalf of the UN General Assembly that UNMISSET will continue to lend support in these areas. He said that Timor-Leste is the first nation born in the 1st century, and is a model of what can be achieved. That is why the international community is looking on intently to see how Timor-Leste will overcome the challenges of post-conflict situations. “I strongly believe that the international community will support its newest member”.

Before addressing the National Parliament, Mr. Kavan had separate meetings with the RDTL President Xanana Gusmão, Prime-Minister Mari Alkatiri and the President of National Parlamento, Francisco Guterres ‘Lu’olo’. Tomorrow, Mr. Kavan will travel to Suai and Baucau.

- **ENDS** -

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(*) The international community committed at the UN Millennium Summit to achieving 8 MDGs by 2015: the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, reduction in child mortality, improvement in maternal health, the combat of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability, and the development of a global partnership for development. Timor-Leste has signed up to the MDGs as part of its National Development Plan

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