

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Yoshitaka Hanada, Ambassador of Japan to
Timor-Leste,
On the Occasion of the Signing Ceremony of the F-FDTL Capacity
Development Program
September 16, 2013
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H.E. Dr. Jose Luis Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Cooperation,
H.E. Dr. Julio Tomas Pinto, Secretary of State for Defense,
(Mention other dignitaries, if any.)

Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Good morning.

It is my great pleasure to address the government and people of
Timor-Leste on this auspicious occasion of the signing ceremony of the
F-FDTL Capacity Development Program, formally named as the
Cooperation on Education and Training in the Areas of Humanitarian
Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations.

This program was initiated by the Government of Japan with a
strong recognition that humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
had become an imperative within the spectrum of military
capabilities.

As many of you may be aware, it was proven in Japan in an
extremely hard way when the Great East Japan Earthquake and the
mega tsunami devastated the Tohoku area in 2011. Even though the
death toll itself was desperately huge, it should be remembered that
the Japan Self-Defense Force had saved tens of thousands of lives
through its HA/DR operations that started right after the disaster
happened. The JSDF's operations included supply of food, installing
portable toilets and shower facilities, medical assistance as well as
search and rescue missions, to name but a few.

The bilateral agreement signed today sets a framework for the

Japanese cooperation with Timor-Leste in the HA/DR area. With the experience of the pilot project we conducted at Camp Metinaro between December 2012 and March 2013, the first cooperation project under this agreement will be training on car maintenance techniques, through which F-FDTL personnel will be given systematic training courses on how to troubleshoot and keep the mobility of vehicles.

The choice of car maintenance as the first such cooperation with Timor-Leste is no accident. The JSDF's operations in the aftermath of the unprecedented natural disaster were made possible by the day-to-day care of the vehicles. When the JSDF was the only institution that had the capability to access the affected areas, foods could not have reached the displaced families and the injured young mother could not have been saved from the collapsed house unless the JSDF did have enough vehicles ready for the mission.

In the time of large scale natural disasters in many parts of the world, it is hoped that our cooperation program will contribute to enhancing F-FDTL's capacity to respond to emergency situations and developing its capability to play a greater role in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Lastly but not least, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the people, both civilian and military, Timorese and Japanese, who have dedicated their efforts to conclude this agreement, for their steadfast teamwork and unwavering resolve to bring this program into life.

Thank you very much for your attention.
