

**The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers and
Official Spokesperson for the Government of Timor-Leste
Ágio Pereira**



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Dili, Timor-Leste**

Mari Alkatiri ill advised on Timor Sea Negotiations; interference detrimental to national interest

In regard to his statements to the press it appears that Mari Alkatiri, Fretilin's Secretary General, has been ill advised and has misrepresented the position of the Government of Timor-Leste on the current status of the Timor Sea negotiations.

Even more concerning, Mr. Alkatiri does not seem to support the most important national strategic policy implemented by the Xanana Gusmão's Government to secure a thriving onshore petroleum industry for Timor-Leste.

Alkatiri has also misinformed the public by stating the Xanana Gusmão Government is, or has entered into a contract with Petronas to "replace" Woodside in the Greater Sunrise project.

This statement is incorrect and misleading.

The Government of Timor-Leste has not entered into a contract with Petronas to replace Woodside and its consortium partners. The Government of Timor-Leste has not, and is not, in the process of awarding an exploration or exploitation (upstream) rights of the Greater Sunrise field, as they are still legally held by Woodside and its consortium partners.

Nonetheless, it is also important to note that the Government of Timor-Leste has not given any downstream contracts for the Greater Sunrise project to any company including Woodside. The downstream segment will include the contract for transportation (the pipeline) and processing (the LNG-Plant).

All negotiations conducted by representatives from Timor-Leste are done so using the most up to date and comprehensive information, allowing negotiators to competently address the technical, commercial and socio-economic issues pertaining to bringing the Pipeline and LNG plant to Timor-Leste. The data has been obtained from a range of studies commissioned by the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão's Government, including a bathymetric survey completed with the cooperation of a Korean Consortium and a joint feasibility study between Timor-Leste and Petronas.

The results of studies have convincingly demonstrated that, unlike Alkatiri and others, including Woodside, who in the past believed that pipeline to Timor-Leste is technically not feasible, Xanana Gusmão's Government has mobilized all its efforts to study and prove the contrary; that a pipeline to Timor-Leste, only 200 kilometers distance as opposed to the 450 km to Darwin, is feasible and economically sound.

The mechanisms for negotiations and discussion of issues relating to the exploration of the Timor Sea, including The Greater Sunrise project, have all been established; these include Regulator to Regulator discussions, meetings of the Joint and the Sunrise Commissions, and whenever needed, the Ministerial Council.

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The Government will proceed to negotiate, through these mechanisms, development plans for Greater Sunrise to Timor-Leste; a policy that has unanimous support in Timor-Leste. This is part of the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão's Government's comprehensive national strategic policy to ensure long lasting economic benefits to Timor-Leste, through prudent management of national non-renewable assets (mineral resources).

The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers thus confirms that the Government of Timor-Leste will not compromise, in any way or form, the principle that any field Development Plans of Greater Sunrise must benefit first and foremost the long term and sustainable development of the people of Timor-Leste. **END**

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