

SPEECH BY H.E. PRESIDENT TAUR MATAN RUAK

ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING SESSION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS MEETING

Dili, 19 June 2013

Excellencies, dear friends.

It is an honour to welcome you to Timor-Leste. I welcome you most warmly, on my behalf and on behalf of the Timorese people, whose aspirations and interests are what bring us together here today.

The topic of this year's meeting – Operationalising the Strategic Development Plan for more effective results – is particularly suitable and timely.

In fact, following the elections and other developments over the past year, our country has entered a new development phase. The Timorese reaffirmed, most emphatically, their desire for stability and peace. We held free and peaceful elections, with a high participation rate. The National Parliament's democratic legitimacy was refreshed, a new president was elected and a new government took office based on the electoral results.

These developments were only made possible by the maturity of the Timorese people and their leaders, by Timor-Leste's partnership with the United Nations and by the strengthening of our trust-based working relations with our Development partners.

The work developed with the United Nations entirely met its objectives and was unanimously considered a success by the international community.

The Timorese people's determination and their leaders' vision have forged a broad social consensus on national priorities, thus creating better conditions for a new and decisive drive towards economic and social development.

I am aware of the great challenges still facing us. Our society is becoming increasingly aware of them, also. However, Timor-Leste now has mature and solid institutions by facing and solving the challenges arising from our recent history.

The country also has the resources to look for the solutions to future challenges.

And we have the good fortune of having developed strong friendships and working relations with all of you, our development partners. That cooperation and the common experience are particularly valuable to us. I believe we have reason to look to the future with optimism.

It is pleasing to see the Millennium Development Goals embodied in our common methodology. Although the results of those goals may not be fully met in many countries, including Timor-Leste, it won't keep us from making further progress towards their achievement by 2015.

I also salute the g7+ group's agreement on a New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. The agreement represents an important contribution and a greater joint responsibility of the recipient countries in their own Development process.

Our country's participation in the g7+, over which Timor-Leste has the honour of currently presiding, brings with it new responsibilities. Timor-Leste and the g7+ are privileged that

our Minister of Finance, Dr Emília Pires is on the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Agenda which was created under the auspices of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia.

These responsibilities will translate into new trust-based relations between our country and the international community, especially following the intense partnership and cooperation with the United Nations and the Development Partners over the last six years.

However, they also serve as proof of our determination to overcome the initial phase of institutional consolidation and to open a new chapter in the relatively short history of the Timorese State – the Development chapter.

I welcome the appointment of the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs Noellen Heyzer, as the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's special advisor for Timor-Leste. Mrs Heizer knows our country. Her active role in liaising between national players and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the United Nations team with us will certainly contribute towards deepening our partnership with the United Nations and assisting it to adjust to our new realities. Her new role will also surely contribute towards deepening regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific, given her further responsibilities as Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific -- ESCAP.

This appointment is very positive and innovative for following up Development processes. I believe that it is in accordance with our country's objectives of strengthening regional and international integration. I am pleased for this innovation to remain linked to our relationship with the United Nations.

Excellencies. Friends.

The fight against poverty involves improving the quality of our public services and is dependent on the Public Administration's ability to adapt to the development goals.

Timor-Leste's State as a whole, including its diplomacy, is called on to find new solutions to old problems and to adjust itself to our emerging needs ranging from the quality of the Education and Health sectors, public works inspections and public procurement, to diplomacy. As far as external relations are concerned, in particular, our diplomats have to increasingly incorporate into their activity the priorities and objectives of economic diplomacy, thus contributing towards answering the country's need to attract investments and make progress in terms of its international economic integration.

The vision regarding Timor-Leste's development is summarized in our Strategic Development Plan, which is the topic of this meeting.

Its implementation poses significant challenges.

I am certain that this meeting will make important contributions towards helping us overcome these new challenges as well.

The strengthening of the joint work with our Development Partners is the key to quickly achieving our goals.

I offer you my best wishes for an exciting and productive debate, and for a pleasant stay in Timor-Leste.

Thank you all.