

# **CONTRIBUTION OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE, TAUR MATAN RUAK IN THE OPENING SESSION OF THE TIMOR-LESTE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS MEETING 2019 (TLDPM),**

## **“DEEPENING COORDINATION FOR FINANCING DEVELOPMENT”**

*Auditorium “Xanana Gusmão”, Tower of the Ministry of  
Finance, in Aitarak Laran, Díli, July 4th, 2019*

Your Excellency, the President of the National Parliament, **Mr. Arão Noé de  
Jesus da Costa Amaral;**

Your Excellency, the President of the Court of Appeal, **Mr. Deolindo dos  
Santos;**

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and  
Representatives of Timor-Leste Development Partners;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honour for me to be able to open this important high-level dialogue  
and coordination forum, between the Government of Timor-Leste and  
Development Partners, this year subordinated to “*Deepening Coordination for  
Financing Development*”.

After two years of interruption, due to successive elections and political  
uncertainty, it is with great satisfaction that the VIII Constitutional  
Government resumes this political dialogue, taking advantage of the  
opportunity given by this forum to share our common vision on how to develop  
a prosperous Timor-Leste.

In this regard, on behalf of the VIII Constitutional Government and on my own,  
I would like to warmly welcome all participants, guests and members of the  
international community and accredited diplomatic corps in our country.

I would also like to convey our sincere and warm greetings to all of the friendly  
peoples represented here, on a bilateral and multilateral level, in this year of the  
Twentieth Anniversary of the Referendum and the INTERFET mission, which

marked the beginning of our Restoration of Independence process and the establishment of a democratic, free and sovereign State of Law.

As of August 30th, 2019, it will be 20 years of the fulfilment of this collective dream, which, bringing together the living forces of the Timorese nation, has established a path towards peace, stability, development and progress.

A route that have not been taken alone, otherwise, shared by the community and International organizations, under the leadership of the United Nations, and supported by the respective member States.

A course that makes us very proud of the results achieved in the last two decades.

- With your help, we have been able to promote, not only internal reconciliation, with our Timorese brothers, but also external reconciliation with our neighbours, overcoming past resentments, based on principles that *“everything that does not help us move forward must be abandoned and forgotten”*;
- We have been able to achieve a period of lasting, prolonged and sustained peace, which have been imposed itself, overcoming moments of uncertainty and crisis;
- We were successful in institutional development, creating the sovereignty body that today govern our democracy, supported by an increasingly engaged and active public administration;
- We have also been able to implement an impartial, fair, equitable, and independent justice administration system, accompanied by mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and controlling of governance activities, with increasing levels of accountability and transparency;
- We implemented a universal and free national education and education system, democratizing the access to knowledge, initial and continuous training, and qualification of human resources;
- We have made tremendous progress in welfare indexes, with the implementation of a social security system accessible to the most deprived, vulnerable and disadvantaged people, accompanied by investments in electricity, water, housing and infrastructures, which contribute not only to healthier and more productive families, but also for mobility and economic growth;
- We have been also able to define priorities and chose the most important and urgent areas, adopting a Strategic Development Plan, for the period between 2011 and 2030, in harmony with the commitments assumed in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

We thus celebrate a truly collective success which, recalling the first meeting of this forum of development partners held in Tokyo, in the year 1999, also points to a constant, continued and persevering presence of military, police, international agencies, professionals, experts, engineers and specialists who, over the years, have helped us to remove Timor-Leste from the list of fragile or post-conflict countries.

We are very grateful for your trust and continued support for the development of a Nation that we all wish to be more prosperous, active and competitive.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Distinguished guests,**

After 17 (seventeen) years on restoring independence, we believe that the appropriate time has come to deepen our strategic partnerships, in the short and medium term, improving coordination and enhancing financing methods for common projects, in favour of the quality of life of the Timorese People.

When celebrating the first anniversary of the VIII Constitutional Government, we would like to take this opportunity to set forth, to our partners, the broad guidelines for the coming years and a summary of the main goals and priorities to be reached by the end of our mandate.

Priorities to achieve a higher concentration of investments in new projects and the achieving of better results in the indicators and commitments made with our People, in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and in the Roadmap for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), whose results are presented today, also, in the report of the National Voluntary Review.

Commitments made for:

- improving the social welfare, social protection and citizenship;
- improving the Investment in the economy and strengthening of public finances;
- improving the national connectivity;
- strengthening and enhancing the defence, security and external relations;
- strengthening and enhancing the justice, democracy and human rights.

Improvements to fight hunger, malnutrition and poverty, through improved health, education and environment services, increasing employment opportunities, productivity and growth in the country.

Measures to achieve a sustained increase in income, stimulating the private sector, the diversification of the economy and the good use of the different local development opportunities and of the economic and productive sectors of the country.

Investments in strategic infrastructures, capable of promoting job creation and the emergence of a strong private sector, supported by human resources and public institutions, increasingly empowered, qualified and engaged with citizens and communities.

Necessary commitments that, addressed to the main challenges and problems, which affect the equitable distribution of national wealth, and that hamper territorial cohesion and balance, can positively respond to *the long forgetfulness of the rural area and the uncontrolled pressure of the urban area*.

We believe that with the new *Official Development Assistance Policy* (ODA) we are launching today, together with the result of the *Development Financing Assessment* (DFA), we will certainly be in a position to define the best engagement scenarios, taking greater advantage of the *Official Development Assistance*, which, in recent years, has placed at our disposal a financial resource that, on average, represents about US \$201 (two hundred and one million dollars) of investment per year.

The volume of this annual development assistance, while at more modest levels in recent years, continue to exceed the amount of tax revenue collected annually in the country.

Mobilize additional funding sources, and make a better use of the existing financial resources, effectively, efficiently, transparently, responsibly, avoiding duplication, superfluous or unnecessary expenditure, in line with the plans, objectives and results to be achieved, remains one of our concerns and priority, which seek to consolidate and reinforce, with partner and donors, a sense of trust in the Government and in State institutions.

**Ladies and gentleman,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

I can imagine that our Development Partners may have legit concerns about the scope and the contours of this policy, but i believe that this forum is the most suitable place to share documents, discuss all its aspects and implications, aware that we only intend to improve and make the dialogue and coordination more effective, namely between the Government and Development Partners, also facilitating Non-Governmental aid flows to the private sector and civil society organizations, since the financial support shouldn't be exclusively public funded.

I assure you, however, as of now, that the document with the new policy is flexible, and the Government, represented in this meeting by His Excellency acting Minister of Finance, is open to discussion about its contents, and we predict phased implementation, in order to comply with the terms of the financing agreements already concluded and not disrupt the normal disbursement pace for the implementation of on-going programs and projects.

At the same time, the Government, through Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation will do everything to strength and improve the existing institutional coordination mechanisms, in order to streamline understandings and procedures, to maintain focus on the development efforts and to safeguard policy and funding coherence.

With these words, i renew the high appreciation of the Government for the fruitful partnership that we have been able to promote with all the development partners, and i encourage you to continue together, hand in hand, to continue the on-going work, which will lead to better living conditions for all Timorese and for all citizens residing in this country.

I am aware that the Ambassadors, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and Representatives of International Organizations will carry out this message to your respective Governments and Multilateral Institutions.

I end by renewing fraternal greetings to all who are present here, wishing you all much health and happiness, personal, professional and familiar.

May God bless us and give us health and strength!

Thank you very much!