

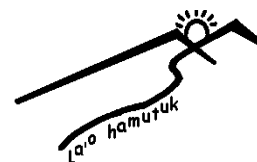
La'ó Hamutuk

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La'ó Hamutuk, as a nonpartisan civil society organization, asked the two Presidential candidates to answer 11 questions to explore their vision for Timor-Leste's development. Both Lu Olo and Taur Matan Ruak provided answers in Tetum, which we did not edit but have translated, below. We thank both candidates for their time to respond to these questions, and hope that their answers will help educate people to make a wise decision about the future of this beloved nation.

La'ó Hamutuk question	Taur Matan Ruak	Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo
1. At present, RDTL's Constitution gives certain powers to the President of the Republic. Do you think that these are sufficient already? If not, what would you like the National Parliament to do in the Constitution?	My personal conviction is to prefer a presidential system over a semi-presidential system, but amending the Constitution is Parliament's responsibility. Changing the Constitution is not my priority, because I will be ready to work with the existing semi-presidential system.	<p>I also helped to make our Constitution. I will not push to amend the Constitution and, especially the political system we have because this system is the best for our political and social reality. I will support institutional solidarity and will respect each sovereign organ's powers. I will do everything according to the Constitution of the Republic and Laws in force in our country. Therefore, I, "Lu-Olo," have made the commitment to defend this Constitution and, as Head of State, I will adhere strongly to this Constitution.</p> <p>I also know that the President of the Republic is the guardian of the Constitution. I will become the Constitution's Guardian.</p> <p>The President takes an oath to the Constitution currently in force. Therefore, the President's first function is how he can ensure compliance with the Constitution and the Laws, and also international treaties we have ratified which are part of the National Juridical Order.</p> <p>As President of the Republic, I will become Head of State obedient to the Constitution and the Laws in force in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. I will carry out my powers with institutional autonomy and will respect the powers of the other sovereign organs.</p>

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<p>2. President Ramos-Horta just vetoed three laws about access to land because he saw these laws as not benefiting little people. If you become President, are you ready to use the Constitutional to veto some laws when they will have negative impacts on the lives of community people?</p>	<p>Clearly, I will use my veto power, and this is part of my political commitment.</p>	<p>It's true, the President has the right and responsibility to defend the people from laws with negative impact through his veto. I also agree with President Horta's veto of the land laws in the form they passed Parliament. The following is my electoral commitment:</p> <p>The President of the Republic, as Head of State, is mandated to use his VETO power for legislative acts from the Parliament and the Government.</p> <p>To me, the President can only use his power to VETO when he sees unconstitutionality or some decision doesn't defend the public interest, such as peace or national stability. Therefore, the President can make a political or a legal veto. This is important to ensure the functioning of the government system and state institutions. The president shouldn't use VETO because he wants to confront the Government, even less to make Government unable to lead, and not only to comply with the Government, or to allow the Government to rule arbitrarily. The President can use his VETO power to defend the common good, public interest, constitutional legality, citizens' important rights and freedoms, values that the entire world enjoys and which are put in our Constitution.</p>
<p>3. Do you think that the President is responsible to reduce poverty and develop a sustainable economy, especially agriculture, in Timor-Leste? What are your thoughts?</p>	<p>I cannot work like President Jose Ramos Horta who created an independent mechanism to reduce poverty separate from the Government, But I will promote a general vision to create interdependency within the state, using the Council of Ministers, civil society to contribute ideas to the Government to reduce poverty. I will speak of macro issues, rather than micro. I have my own vision about the future of the people of our country.</p> <p>According to my thoughts, poverty can be reduced when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create conditions for local production, reduce dependency on production from overseas • Increasing our domestic capacity does not use a lot of resources. • Need to reduce dependency on the oil and gas sector and invest a lot in agriculture, fisheries and tourism. • Need to consider "Dutch disease", to control or reduce inflation. • Large investment in human resources, especially education. 	<p>I will ensure that Peace and Stability are really strong in our land, in our midst.</p> <p>I will also put the environment question in my work agenda as Head of State. I will give attention to the environmental question and sustainability of development. As President of the Republic, I will do everything to advance our Nation's economic, social, cultural and intellectual life. As the child of common people, I will watch closely to social problems within society, a society where many people live in poverty. As Head of State, through cooperation with the Government and other public and private institutions, I will do everything so that the State can provide benefits to everyone who needs help. I will give the most attention to public policies about education and professional training, health, job creation, struggling against poverty, housing, basic sanitation, running water and electricity for everyone and, I will defend social and economic inclusion.</p>

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<p>4. The reports from CAVR, Indonesian KPP-HAM Indonesia and the UN Commission of Expert recommend creating International Tribunal to judge Crimes Against Humanity in Timor from 1975-1999, when Indonesian and Timorese justice processes fail. Do you think the President has a responsibility to struggle against impunity? When a criminal has been convicted by a court, do you think they should be imprisoned or should receive a pardon or clemency from the President?</p>	<p>The Maternus Bere case will not happen again during my Presidency. I will work forcefully to prevent active or verbal willful intervention by one state organ into another. I will not use my power to give clemency arbitrarily. This is part of my policy manual.</p> <p>The issue of an International Tribunal is the responsibility of the international community, and the international community should be pro-active. In my view, an International Tribunal takes time, and will depend on democratization in Indonesia. The State of Timor-Leste cannot stick its fingers into this process.</p>	<p>I will use my status as Head of State to strengthen justice, so that justice will be for everyone.</p>
<p>5. Do you think that Timor-Leste should ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance?</p>	<p>I already sent my team to look and study its obligations in detail, because I am concerned about many past issues about disappeared people.</p>	<p>I totally sympathize with the rights of the families of disappeared victims to get complete information about their missing relatives.</p> <p>In principle, I'm not against Timor-Leste ratifying this Convention. The First constitutional government itself created a working group to work together with national and international organizations to search for and look into the question of disappeared people in Timor-Leste. I will transfer this process.</p> <p>Timor-Leste already ratified many conventions and treaties, but after ratification the state RDTL had trouble complying with reporting obligations that these treaties and conventions require, especially because of various limitations, including human resources.</p> <p>Like other conventions and treaties, before Timor-Leste can just ratify this convention, we need government together with parliament, other sovereign organs, and civil society, to carry out a process to evaluate the various implications of ratification for the state of Timor-Leste. Therefore, I as president will give my support and total efforts to carry out this process.</p>

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<p>6. Bayu-Undan and Kitan will be dry in 12 years, and the current Government is spending more than the Estimated Sustainable Income from the Petroleum Fund every year. How do you think Timor-Leste can move away from dependency on petroleum?</p>	<p>Most important is good governance, cannot have corruption of the people's resources, and people who show signs of illicit riches should be investigated. I also strongly oppose the Lifetime Pension Law (Lei Pensaun Vitalisia), which is excessive. To get out of petroleum dependency, Timor-Leste should invest strongly in human resources, increase the capacity of the private sector and other productive sectors. Investments should be well-planned.</p> <p>In terms of the ESI 3%, it depends on the Government, because the explanation of this issue is not clear. For me, 3% ESI is not a problem, however the biggest problem is corruption of the oil money.</p>	<p>An economy with rules, like an economy build strongly in the constitution. A financial system is already in the constitution. Economic development must proceed according to the law, according to the constitution. This economy should not be like today, with a Referendum Project or other projects being started, this is not good. An Economy like this brings only a few people to become wealthy, with many more not changing. This economy doesn't follow rules, doesn't follow the law, just passes out drinks, will not give benefits. Our oil money will not come to our country, but will fall into a few people's hands. The people will get nothing.</p> <p>Because of this I say, as a candidate I want to build a sustainable economy. This will give income to our country, to our people. So that the economy can grow. Don't just spend oil money, the money will all run away. The law opens the way for the money to fall into the people's hands. You see that when we fill a water tank, but it has a hole at the bottom, even when you pour in more water, the water continues to run out. Timor-Leste's economy is like this tank, tight, because a law must plug the hold at the bottom. Do this so the economy can move, to tightly hold the policies which also can tightly hold our money in our country. If not, as we have seen during the last five years, we see, nearly \$5 billion already spent but you cannot find the bones of the billions, the skin of the billions.</p>
<p>7. What do you think Timor-Leste can do to resolve the maritime boundaries with Australia and Indonesia?</p>	<p>I will continue to hold discussions. These discussions should include the fisheries issue. For the maritime boundary problem I will not make radical changes, but continue previous policy.</p> <p>I see that Australia is always a little problem for negotiations, because they want to get a big portion. Most of their agreements depend only on political negotiations, not legal. Like maritime boundaries with Papua New Guinea and New Zealand, Australia got more.</p>	<p>I will ensure national unity and unity of the State, territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of the nation.</p> <p>As I declared in my electoral Commitment: I will give all of myself to grow good relations with every country in the world, especially our neighbors Indonesia and Australia. However, to grow relations not based on giving up our national sovereignty or control of Timor-Leste's resources. I have always defended our right to develop our natural resources, and will always defend this in the future.</p>

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<p>8. The Strategic Development Plan gives more priority to the Petroleum Sector than to agriculture, small industry and other sustainable sectors. Do you think a plan like this can sustain Timor-Leste over the long term?</p>	<p>It will be difficult when we depended on the petroleum sector, must invest strongly in productive sectors like agriculture, tourism and small industries.</p>	<p>Those who lead today want to give more priority to the petroleum sector than other productive sectors. They don't have a long vision for Timor-Leste, but they go down a road with big risks for the next generation.</p> <p>I will ensure we can have balanced and sustainable development. This sustainable development means that money from our Petroleum Fund must be used to develop our own people first of all, through investing in health, education and basic sanitation. Human development is key.</p> <p>Timor-Leste can and should become an example of compliance with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). As Head of State, I will strongly support Government programs and I will intervene, when necessary, at the internal or international level, to strengthen the methods Government takes to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.</p>

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<p>9. Timor Leste invests less in the Health and Education sectors compared with other nations. What do you think about valuing and developing human resources in Timor?</p>	<p>To value human resources we need to build our people's capacity, increasing people's capacity is an investment. Today the state allocates a little, perhaps this is a ministerial weakness, but for me it is important to invest in our young people, especially in their education, improve the entire university, increase the research capacity of the university in the future so that we won't send laborers overseas, but will send managers to work in other countries.</p> <p>We should invest in health and education. Investment must be a preventive mechanism, especially in community health, not only in big hospitals. Increase food production in the country to improve local people's health.</p>	<p>We cannot abandon the future, specifically on the question of health and social development, especially mother-child health and reduction of mortality rates, and accompanying children until they are of school age. As President, I will look to help the government to define policies and approve program which involve the whole society, to respect mothers' and children's rights. The State should guarantee children's rights to a balanced diet up to five years old, and the whole society should help our children to grow up in good health. For the national interest and our people's future, I will insist on this.</p> <p>I will also give special attention to endemic and contagious-infectious diseases. I will urge the responsible state organs and also from the whole society to put our arms together to fight and prevent against tuberculosis, malaria, dengue and, especially, HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>As I already said, Timor-Leste can and should become an example of compliance with the MDGs. As Head of State, I will strongly support Government programs and I will intervene, when necessary, at the internal or international level, to strengthen the methods Government takes to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.</p> <p>I will also give attention to Youth and Gender Equality. As Head of State, I will give my entire attention to the question of youth and equality between women and men. I will always dialogue with civil society and traditional and community leaders, with youth and women's organizations, with religious denominations and organizations which defend human rights to look for fair and balanced solutions for the problems which affect our society.</p> <p>Our whole society should give attention to the question of domestic violence and sexual abuse, especially sexual abuse of children and pedophilia. As President, I will put strong interest to these questions, and will always dialog with the whole society and public and private institutions, religious and traditional, I will look to mobilize everybody to struggle together to eliminate bad things from our country and from the whole world.</p> <p>As President, I will become a factor for political stability, peace and development. I will do everything to help Government to advance sustainable development, to reduce poverty, to reduce the differences between the city and rural areas, to reduce differences, to build opportunities for everyone and to include more people in social and economic life, to increase capacity and, to strengthen institutions so that the can function normally and obey the Constitution and Laws in force in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.</p>

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<p>10. Timor Leste just began borrowing from international lenders. What do you think about this issue?</p>	<p>Borrowing isn't a problem; the big problem with debt is management. Indebtedness, especially interest, is most important. Is the interest floating or fixed? Another thing is how to pay back, because it is problematic to use oil money for debt repayments. Borrowing should be used for capital development</p> <p>When we borrow, most important is that other sectors like agriculture, fishing, tourism and other sectors should already be productive.</p>	<p>For me the state of RDTL doesn't need to borrow and leave repayment to future generations. We first need to manage our own money well enough to carry out balanced and sustainable development, as I already said in my electoral commitment.</p> <p>The Government only has a three-month mandate left, so it would be better not to leave a burden for the new government. Better to let the new government implement its program for development and governance.</p> <p>However, I want to give big thanks to the countries which are always ready to give financial support to us to carry out our development.</p>
<p>11. If the people choose another candidate to become President of the Republic, what will you do in the future?</p>	<p>It's clear I will accept the result of the election, I will become a good citizen, will work for another organization to contribute to the state. A strong citizen means he must consider his future.</p> <p>I will not make a coup, which I was only commander of the armed forces I didn't make a coup, and even less so as a civilian. Sr. Mari Alkatiri also knows that during the 2006 crisis, as a person in an institution I defended the integrity of the state, including Government. For example I sent my bodyguards to give protection to the Prime Minister at that time.</p>	<p>I will continue to work for my people and my state as I have worked during my entire life. I will use all my capacity, including the new capacity I received as a lawyer, to strengthen the rule of law in our land. I will always defend the people's dignity, sovereignty and independence.</p>