



## SPOKESPERSON V CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA  
RELEASE**

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### **Prime Minister and Delegation conclude State Visit to South Sudan**

The Prime Minister, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão and his delegation including Minister of Finance H.E. Emilia Pires, has concluded a busy schedule of meetings and presentations in the Republic of South Sudan.

This is the second visit of the Prime Minister to the world's newest nation having attended the g7+ Ministerial Retreat held in the capital Juba in October 2011. South Sudan is a fellow member of the g7+ group of 18 countries, currently chaired by Timor-Leste.

During this visit the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance met with President H.E. Salva Kiir and senior members of the Government of South Sudan.

In a press conference, following several hours of discussion with Prime Minister Gusmão, the President of South Sudan, H.E. Salva Kiir, expressed his warm appreciation for the support of the Government and people of Timor-Leste. When asked by local journalists about the relationship between the two countries the President explained "South Sudan is only two years old and Timor-Leste is now eleven years old. So this is like an older brother helping the younger brother."

A meeting with cabinet highlighted the many similarities of South Sudan and Timor-Leste. Both are independent after a long struggle for liberation, both endowed with oil, both with the challenge of building peace and strengthening their institutions of state for effective delivery of services.

Minister Pires had extensive meetings with the Minister of Finance of South Sudan, H.E. Aggrey Tisa Sabuni and the Minister of Petroleum, Mining and Industry, H.E. Stephen Dhieu. The Minister of Petroleum expressed his desire to send a delegation to Timor-Leste to learn more about the National Petroleum Authority, the National Oil Company and the management and administration of Timor-Leste's Petroleum Fund.

On Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of December the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance travelled by helicopter with Government officials, including the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.E. Peter Gbandi, to the remote village of Malou, Bor County, in the State of Jonglei. The village celebrated the arrival of their special guests with the slaughter of a cow, dancing, speeches and a demonstration of wrestling.



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They were thrilled that the Minister of Finance had returned to the village after her visit last year and deeply honored that the “big chief” from Timor-Leste had also come.

The Government of Timor-Leste has provided money for the building of a mixed primary school in the village of Malou and this day was a commemoration of the laying of the foundation stone. The Prime Minister’s moving discussion with the people of Malou village, along with his embrace of the former fighters for liberation and interaction with children, deeply impressed the people who expressed their heart felt gratitude to the people of Timor-Leste for their friendship, solidarity and support.

On the final day of the official visit Prime Minister gave a keynote speech at the South Sudan Investment Conference, encouraging investors to see the potential of the country and to take the first mover advantage. He also referred to some of the experiences of Timor-Leste in international business dealings and urged the Government to be vigilant in making sure that commercial exploitation was fair and ethical.

Hundreds of students attending the University of Juba attended a lecture the Prime Minister gave later that day entitled “Sharing Experiences”. They were very interested to hear about Timor-Leste and afterward there were so many questions time did not permit all to be answered.

The Prime Minister, who is also Timor-Leste’s Minister of Defence and Security, made his very last engagement with South Sudan’s Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs, H.E. Kuol Manyang. Together the Ministers visited the Military Headquarters of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army [SPLA]. There Prime Minister Gusmão spoke to veterans about how best to honor their struggle for liberation, encouraging them to work and show continued leadership in building the nation. **ENDS**

