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**MEDIA
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The Office of the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste announces a working visit to Perth, Western Australia

The Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, is undertaking a working visit to Perth, Western Australia on April 3-5.

The principal purpose of the visit is to attend a function created for supporters of the Special Air Services Resources Fund. This fund assists members and former members of the Australian SAS Regiment, as well as dependants of those members, who are in need of relief or support.

Members of the Australian Special Air Service Regiment were the first to arrive in Timor in 1999, securing the airport in Dili to enable the main INTERFET force to arrive safely. 3 Squadron SASR led many INTERFET operations during the early days of the intervention to consolidate peace in what was to become the world's newest Nation of the Millennium, Timor-Leste.

Prime Minister Gusmão, former Commander in Chief of the Resistance forces in Timor-Leste, will attend the function as a keynote speaker. He welcomed the opportunity to support the work of the fund and to honor the men and women of the SAS for their contribution to peace building.

In addition, as the necessity for foreign aid has decreased and foreign investment by Australian companies has increased across sectors in Timor-Leste, the Prime Minister will attend a business lunch with both existing and new investors. Economic activities within Timor-Leste are set to be boosted by the new trilateral economic zone being planned by the governments of Australia, Indonesia and Timor-Leste. The proposed sub regional cooperation zone will extend from Sulawesi in the north, through East Nusa Tenggara and Timor-Leste, to Darwin and the northern region of Australia.

In a recent address Prime Minister noted "The petroleum sector, while an important one, is merely one sector amongst a vast range of sectors. We as States must coordinate, nurture and promote this wider range of sectors to bring economic innovations and diversities, productivity and profitability to our region. With strong private sectors and enhanced State-to-State partnerships, we as neighboring nations can set



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global precedent for good international engagement and cooperation. Opportunity is only as limited or as infinite as we allow it to be and there should be no barriers in striving for immeasurable outcomes for all our local communities and Peoples.”

The Prime Minister is expected to stay in Australia for three days with a Ministerial delegation in accompaniment. The visit of the Prime Minister will be followed by a 26-member delegation of Timorese veterans, the first visit of its kind with members deployed to Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra on Anzac Day to walk in solidarity with their Australian counterparts. **ENDS**



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