



PRIME
MINISTER

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY HIS EXCELENCY
THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERRAL OF THE HIGHEST
INDONESIA MEDAL OF HONOUR, “BINTANG REPUBLIK
INDONESIA ADIPURNA” BY H.E. PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA**

Bali, Indonesia
10 October 2014



Palácio do Governo,
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,
Dili, Timor-Leste

Excellency, President of the Republic of Indonesia,
Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

Excellencies, Members of the Indonesian Government

Distinguished guests

It is with profound emotion that I am here, on behalf of the People of Timor-Leste, to receive the highest medal of honour of the Republic of Indonesia, the “Bintang Republik Indonesia Adipurna”.

It was an honour to deserve from the legitimate representatives of the Indonesian State and from our brothers and sisters, the Indonesian People, this appreciation for the small contribution that I made in strengthening relations between our two nations.

Since 1974, I have been involved in a process where my Homeland and my People have asked everything of me that I could give, to serve their rights and sovereignty, as a People equal to other Peoples of the world.

It was a journey of 40 years, painful in the beginning and difficult in the last decade and a half, but they were also 40 years of learning in regard to respecting other human beings, in order to understand other peoples and identities, in the need to comprehend the latest policies of the world and the basis of relations that should exist between nations.

The effort to understand all this, while still at war with Indonesia, gave me strength to guide our resistance, breaking with the conventional taboos of hatred and vengeance as the ultimate expressions of petty sentiments of victory.

And the result of all this was that we were capable of disentangling honesty from tendencies of manipulation, true from false standards, and in that way, we could choose our own path to the future, upholding universal values and principles and denouncing at the same time new forms of neo-colonialism.

This effort was matched by the Indonesian authorities and I want to emphasise here, by His Excellency, Mr. President on an unusual scale.

In this solemn moment, I want to make known to all those here the following passage, in our different journeys that placed the interests of our people above all else. In the beginning of 2002, Mr. President, I was in Jakarta when Your Excellency called me, as 'Menko Polkam', and said "Xanana, we heard that you do not want to be the President of Timor-Leste. On behalf of the Indonesian generals who fought in the war in Timor-Leste and on behalf of the Government of Indonesia, I ask you to accept to be the President of the Republic. We need you, at least for the first five year mandate, because we believe that with you being the President of Timor-Leste, we can work to build new relations between the two peoples and two States".

I do not need, Mr. President, to repeat here the various meetings where true brotherhood proved fundamental to our relations, breaking the rigid and conventional climate of relations between States.

Today, the Republic of Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste are two sovereign States that respect each other and place as a fundamental basis for their relations of cooperation, the spirit of brotherhood and the principle of equal to equal, and above all, the value of sincerity in our acts for the greater interests of our Peoples.

We have in you, Excellency, the best friend of the people of Timor-Leste.

I wish from the bottom of my heart that this act cements the already solid relations between the two sovereign States and between our two peoples.

Thank you very much for the honour and privilege that Your Excellency has bestowed on me on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia.

Bali, 10th October 2014

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão