



**P R I M E
M I N I S T E R**

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE,
DR RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO,
AT THE CPLP YOUTH FORUM**

“Young people, new paradigm for global transformation”

**Dili Convention Centre
9 November 2015**

Your Excellencies the Members of Parliament and Fellow Government Members
Chairpersons of the CPLP National Youth Councils and respective delegations,
Representative of the CPLP Executive Secretariat,
Leaders of the Youth Parliament,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
National and international observers
Ladies and gentlemen
Young people of the CPLP,

It is a great satisfaction for me to be here today before such a young audience that represents the Youth Councils from the Community of Portuguese Language Countries.

Holding the CPLP Youth Forum is a commitment that Timor-Leste embraced at the 10th Summit of Heads of State and Government in Dili. Considering that the last edition of this event took place in 2009, we could not be any prouder to host the youth of our Community for the first time in Timor-Leste. As such, the Timor-Leste National Youth Council, supported by the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sport, is to be congratulated for the initiative of enabling and organising this international-level meeting.

In addition to the satisfaction I feel, this is also a personal challenge for me. Anyone thinking that addressing a young audience is easier would be wrong. On the contrary, I am aware that I am talking to the leaders of tomorrow, those who the sociologists call “generation Z”. These are people born in the 1990’s and more recently, whose contact with the new technologies has enabled them to multitask in order to better adapt to the virtual world. They also have better access to globalisation and to a culture of social and cybernetic networks. Furthermore, I am aware that I am addressing young people who have always sought to transform, to revolutionise, to present new opinions and particularly to mobilise themselves and to mobilise everyone around a cause.

This immutability of the youth throughout the years makes me think of certain historical moments in each of our CPLP countries that I would now like to discuss with you.

I am talking about historical moments that make us all proud today, such as the struggles for liberating peoples, protecting their rights and promoting the dignity of their lives. I am talking for instance of the liberation movements in Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe and Timor-Leste! These were emancipation movements that changed our countries and that had repercussions in the regional and global political order.

In addition to the values that are common to every country, what did all these movements that shaped the history of our countries have in common? **The fact that all of them resulted from the initiative of young people between 20 and 30 years old, such as Amílcar Cabral, Agostinho Neto, Samora Machel, the young captains of the Carnation Revolution and Nicolau Lobato, just to mention a few.**

All of them were young people such as yourselves, who at one point felt that they could do more for their countries. They were young people who “rolled up their sleeves” to go to work and who raised their voices so that their ideas could be heard, changing the

lives of the populations then and now. Their active participation through their interventions and ideas made an enormous contribution and put us all at a new development stage today.

These were also young people who inspired many others and who made young people such as yourselves think in a critical and creative manner. All the claims and acts of contestation back then made an enormous contribution to the liberation of our countries and were an example of determination and of the desire to work together.

Ladies and Gentlemen
Young people of the CPLP,

Four decades and many new challenges later, we are still searching for a better world. This search must involve each and every one of us, looking for initiatives that contribute to sustainable economic development, such as reducing poverty, promoting justice and social equality and promoting the sustainability of the environment. In short, after the previous generations of young people liberated the countries, it is now up to the subsequent generations to liberate the peoples.

This is precisely why the United Nations Member States are committed to meeting the goals recently proposed in the post-2015 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

As such, it is important that the young people of today and of tomorrow are called upon to contribute to decisions that will lead us to the goals we want to achieve, as they affect their lives both now and in the future. We want to ensure that our young people have a safe and healthy future, with access to education and employment, and that they live in a quality environment with better living standards.

And how can young people contribute towards these goals?

It is very important for young people to get involved and to have positions regarding society's issues. This happens when young people take an active part in initiatives that enable you to have your voices heard, such as the Youth Parliament, or in activities whose impact contributes to the improvement of the living situation of the population in the short, medium and long term.

For instance, the Youth Parliament, which was created in Timor-Leste in 2009, exists also in other countries such as Brazil, Mozambique and Portugal, and will hopefully be extended to other countries in our Community, is a project that is integrated in the vision of developing and capacity building young people, so as to create a space for raising the awareness of and introducing young people to their democratic and civic participation as citizens.

Agriculture is another example of an activity where young people have been having a more active participation. The interest of young people in this economic activity has increased and today we see more young people dedicated to growing products that contribute not only to subsistence but also to the economy. As good examples of this we have the around 50 young people developing this activity throughout Timor-Leste, after receiving training in Bazartete, the around 30 young people who have received training

in urban, suburban, organic and biological agriculture in Cuba, who are applying their knowledge in the region of Oe-Cusse Ambeno, and the initiative of national youth camps in every municipality on agriculture and the environment, organized by PERMATIL, a youth-led NGO dedicated to sustainable development.

We also have the “Youth Brigades”, intending to motivate young people in relation to development. Young people submit projects related with small youth entrepreneurship activities, development of infrastructures in the villages and support to sporting infrastructures.

By providing training in project management, entrepreneurship and voluntarism, the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sport has been supporting the creation of small youth cooperatives in the areas of carpentry, cattle breeding and agriculture, water grid projects in villages and other places and the construction of football pitches and volleyball courts, as well as the promotion of sporting activities, particularly in remote villages. This year alone the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sport has already selected 100 projects, which will be implemented in 15 sucos and villages throughout the country, and continues to listen to new proposals.

We also have the practical example of your active participation in activities for protecting the environment and fighting climate change. You make a tremendous contribution when you organise yourselves in groups to help cleaning our beaches, seas and woods, while educating and raising the awareness of the entire community. This is a major contribution for the preservation of the environment, and as such we thank you and nature thanks you too!

These are just a few examples, using the case of Timor-Leste, of how your voice and your initiatives, together with those of the governments, may help the achievement of higher, crosscutting and global goals. Your participation and entrepreneurial spirit are necessary for making the world a better place in which to live.

I want to say that the world of today has great hopes for you and is focusing on you. Your dynamic of interaction and your energy in face of these challenges gives you young people the ability to influence the direction of our countries, so that you may be the actors of change and, as the theme for this Forum says, the “new paradigm for global transformation”.

As such, we encourage you to create goals and build strategies and paths that make an actual impact in the fight against social inequalities, poverty and injustice, in the protection of the environment, in the fight against climate change and in the promotion of peace. The world and the future we want require young people who work constructively to build on the relationship between governments and the civil society.

Ladies and Gentlemen
Young people of the CPLP,

Before I conclude, I want to convey my hope that this CPLP Youth Forum will enable the profitable sharing of inclusive opinions and experiences contributing to the

development and nurturing of this youth associativism between the young people of all CPLP countries.

Do not forget that the great wealth of being young is having hope. Young people have hope and dedication and want to change society. Even if we do not have many results, we have young people shouting. Today, it is particularly in the social media that young people are displaying that side of their personality. Social media enables young people to express their voices, their wealth, their cultural diversity and their determination.

Consequently, and as history has shown us, young people have in themselves great potential. This is even truer of Portuguese-speaking young people, who can become a “new paradigm for global transformation” within the construction and sustainable development of our communities, our countries and the world. As our African brothers and sisters use to say “if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together”.

I want to leave you, my dear young people, with the challenge of thinking together about initiatives that help each of our countries individually and as a whole to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, as well as about activities that can enhance and promote the aims of this “CPLP Youth Forum”.

Timor-Leste’s population is mostly young. It is these young people that, together with the young people from the other CPLP countries, may make a difference in the contribution made by our Community towards global transformation.

I trust that issues such as the CPLP Youth Forum Statute, this Forum’s Position concerning the post-2015 Development Agenda and the Dili Declaration will be discussed with great success.

After freeing our countries (thanks to the young people from the previous generations), it is time for the young people of today and tomorrow to free our peoples! This can only be done if we all work together. As such, kindly allow me to leave you with a little piece of advice, as an older brother might do, to use the motto adopted by the Government of Timor-Leste: “One for All and All for One”!

Thank you very much.

Dr Rui Maria de Araújo
9 November 2015