



## **SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **A year of Transition, Reform and Growth**

As 2015 draws to a close the Government of Timor-Leste reflects on the year as one of transition, reform and growth. The year, which marked the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence and the commemoration of 500 years of interaction with Portugal, also saw the inauguration of a new Government and Prime Minister.

Following Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão's resignation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, the transition to a new government was smooth and peaceful, conducted with dignity, and recognized globally as evidence of our nation's stability, resilience and maturity. The Sixth Constitutional Government sworn in on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February, consisting of a smaller and more inclusive executive lead by Prime Minister Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, has ended the year as it began, focused on service delivery and quality of works, prioritizing efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. Throughout 2015, from the inauguration, to the passing of the Program of Government, to the many activities covered in the First 100 Days report and the 2016 Budget process recently concluded with the unanimous approval of National Parliament, the new executive has pressed forward to do its work on behalf of the people of Timor-Leste with "Rigor and Responsibility".

A major part of that work was the instigation of key reforms including the Legislative Harmonization and Judicial Reform, Public Administration Reform, Economic Reform, Fiscal Reform, Performance Management Reform and Budget Performance Reform. Each of these, activated to facilitate Timor-Leste's transition to an upper-middle income country as envisioned in the Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030, are considered essential to bolster the nation's economic diversification and growth. Through improved planning, better systems and more effective implementation, the Government is determined to maximize the effectiveness of every dollar spent to provide the best possible environment for economic growth and development, and to ensure quality service delivery in response to the needs of our people.

Positive policies of previous governments, proactive towards human development and the establishment of essential economic infrastructure have produced results this year. The confirmation of Heineken's 40 million dollar investment in Timor-Leste and consolidation of TL Cement's plans to invest millions into developing a world-class cement facility are signs of confidence in Timor-Leste's pro-investment regime and improved structural capacity.

The Ministry of Finance Public Expenditure Review published this year noted that the project to electrify the



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nation has resulted in a 130% increase in electrical capacity and a rise in the access rate from 22% of households in 2007 to an estimated 53% of households in 2013. Major road works were finished in 2015 including the upgraded section of the North Coast road. Plans for the new port facilities in Tibar advanced another step with the decision to award the Public Private Partnership to French firm the Bolloré Consortium with contracts set to be signed in the first half of 2016.

Investing in people has remained a high priority and in 2015 important progress has been made in health and education. A National Immunization Campaign for Measles, Rubella and Polio completed late July reached over 93% of children under the age of 15. Critical steps were taken to curb the use of tobacco including a social campaign, new legislation and training for Quit Clinics. The rollout of the Family Health Program has begun with health workers on a mission to visit all families in their homes. In the area of education 2015 has seen the implementation of the new school curriculum, connected to local culture, focused on the development of the whole person and embracing a child-centered approach to learning. Teachers have been supported to use the most effective techniques including a clear systematic method for teaching language. This new curriculum, properly implemented, will have a life changing impact on generations of Timorese school children.

Our nation continued to be active in international partnerships across 2015 including in our leadership role as President of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries. This entailed the hosting several high level conferences throughout the year. Across the past twelve months, quietly and effectively, the capacity of Timor-Leste continued to be strengthened in readiness for our membership to ASEAN. In August Prime Minister Araújo made his first official visit a trip to the Republic of Indonesia and a commitment was made with President Joko Widodo to begin negotiations to delimit maritime boundaries between the two countries. Those talks have now begun. Timor-Leste continues to seek the settlement of all its maritime boundaries in accordance with international law and this year developed the Commission for the Final Delimitation of Maritime Boundaries, resourcing the Maritime Boundary Office and holding regular meetings of the Consultative Commission.

2015 was also a year touched by sadness with the passing of Emeritus Bishop of Dili “Dom Ricardo” in April, and then the unexpected passing of National Hero, Minister of State H.E. Fernando La-sama de Araújo in June.

Spokesperson for the Sixth Constitutional Government, Minister of State Agio Pereira noted “2015 was an eventful year for our nation. The Government goes into the 2016 with preparedness to meet the challenges ahead. At the end of this year that commemorated the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Proclamation of our Independence we recommit to honour those who have gone before us by upholding the national interest, serving our communities and building a future for our youth, as we give our all to ensure the success of our homeland.”**ENDS**



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