



## SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA  
RELEASE**

Dili, 9 August, 2016

### **ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN People's Forum 2016 concludes in Dili**

The ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN People's Forum 2016 has concluded in Dili. At the request of organizers, the three-day event included presentations from members of the Government and an unprecedented open dialogue with the Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo.

The plenary of the forum began on Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August with the Prime Minister warmly welcoming the hundreds of visitors to Timor-Leste and expressing his "heartfelt appreciation" for the sixteen points enshrined in the Forum's [2016 Statement](#) issued by the Regional Steering Committee, most particularly regarding "renewed solidarity with our unfinished saga in restoring our maritime sovereignty in the Timor Sea."

The Prime Minister outlined the highly valued role of Timor-Leste's "vibrant civil society" to "the process of nation-building and state-building" and described the relationship between Government and civil society as tolerant, open and focused on the best interests of the Nation. He described the way the Government engages with Civil Society on "public policies and legislation affecting the lives of society" and the progress of the "Social Audit" mechanism which partners with Civil Society "to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the service delivery by the government."

The Minister for Planning and Strategic Investment and Chief Negotiator for Maritime Boundaries, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, spoke to delegates on the final day of the conference encouraging all to "celebrate the success of ASEAN and the change it has brought to our region" whilst making sure "that people are at the centre of this change." Minister Gusmão also engaged in open dialogue with participants.

Secretary of State for Youth and Sports H.E. Leovigildo Hornay spoke at the final event of the conference, a "Solidarity Night", along with former President and Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. José Ramos-Horta, who paid his respects to the many activists who stood in solidarity during Timor's years of struggle and expressed his conviction that Timor-Leste had developed as a tolerant society, inclusive and respectful of the beliefs of others.

On behalf of the Government, Minister of State Agio Pereira congratulated all involved in the success of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN People's Forum 2016 and commended all of Timor-Leste's Civil Society Organizations for their vital and ongoing role in building the Nation. **ENDS**



**Agio Pereira**  
+670 77045002  
[agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl](mailto:agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl)  
[govtlmedia@gmail.com](mailto:govtlmedia@gmail.com)  
[www.timor-leste.gov.tl](http://www.timor-leste.gov.tl)