



**PRIME
MINISTER**

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE,
DR RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO,
AT THE SIDE EVENT FOR
PATHFINDERS FOR PEACEFUL, JUSTICE AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES**

**Conference Room, United Nations Headquarters
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Palácio do Governo,
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,
Dili, Timor-Leste

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour to be able to participate in this important Side Event to discuss peaceful, just and inclusive societies. We are here because we are all committed to human development, ending poverty and promoting peace.

After suffering under occupation for almost a quarter of a century, Timor-Leste restored its independence in 2002. Following the elation of achieving our freedom, we soon found that the challenges of self-government, and building a nation from the ashes of war, was as hard as our struggle for independence.

Like many post-conflict countries, we suffered a cycle of unrest and violence. In 2006, our country went up in flames again as our people turned on themselves. We saw years of development progress go up in smoke.

The dreams that our people had on our independence were turning into a nightmare. It was clear that there could be no sustained peace without addressing the problems in our society, and there could be no sustained peace without development progress.

We were fortunate to have the assistance of the international community. Nations from around the world came to our aid and helped us to restore order. We had the support of a United Nations mission and the International Stabilisation Force in 2006.

However, to sustain peace we needed to deal with the underlying conflicts and tensions in our society. And we needed to come together as a nation and say 'enough is enough'.

We all know that Agenda 2030 states clearly that "there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development." It calls for us to work together to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, to tackle the drivers of violence, instability and injustice, and to redouble efforts to resolve and prevent conflict.

Timor-Leste has fought for peace, justice and inclusive institutions to be part of the 2030 development agenda, because we know from our own experience how important they are. People who have seen conflict, like ours, want above all else to see a world where their kids are not threatened by violence and where they can trust their government institutions to be just and inclusive, and to protect them.

Peace, justice and inclusion are not only in goal 16 but are integrated across the agenda. For example, other goals contain targets for ending violence against women, for promoting a culture of peace in our schools, for ending trafficking. We also have targets that address the foundations of a peaceful society, in areas such as employment, inequality, and resilience to a range of shocks.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A peaceful society means more than an absence of conflict. To achieve sustained development, we need to build just and inclusive societies. We need to build institutions of the State that provide justice, security, education and health. We need good governance to ensure transparency and accountability and to build trust in the State.

In Timor-Leste we know that we need to strengthen our institutions to deliver the development goals. With this in mind, my government has embarked on reforms in a number of key areas that include fiscal, public administration, and the legal and justice sector.

With fiscal reform, the Ministry of Finance is reforming our tax system which will include measures to create incentive for the private sector to train and employ the young people. Business can obtain fiscal credit in this area. In a country with very young demographic like ours, where more than half of the population is less than 24 years of age, this reform will help ensure that our young people have access to employment, that they are engaged as productive members of society.

We are reforming our public sector to make it more effective and responsive to the needs of our citizens. We have conducted a diagnostics of each of our ministries and they are now developing strategies and action plans to implement the recommendations.

In the legal and justice sector reform, we aim to improve people's access to justice. This includes looking at traditional justice as a mechanism to be used together with formal justice. Traditional justice is the first stop in dispute resolution for most of our population, particularly those who live in the remote and rural areas.

It is also important that the international community works together to support the countries with similar condition like ours in Timor-Leste. In this age of globalisation, porous borders, International crime and conflict, no State can stand alone and many States have face similar challenges.

Regrettably, we are seeing growing inequality both within nations and between nations. The benefits of economic growth are not been shared and we are seeing entrenched privilege and wealth looking after their own interests.

The pathfinders initiative for peaceful, just and inclusive societies – which brings us here today – is about a practical focus on implementation. Through it, we are looking at the evidence for what can accelerate implementation of peace, justice and institution-building initiatives. We have already been working on these areas, but this is an opportunity to speed up delivery, to go deeper and make things happen.

We are glad to be a part of it because it allows us to share Timor-Leste's experiences with others, as well as have a frank discussion about our challenges. It connects up different

professional groups: public health approaches to violence prevention, criminal justice, political leadership to eliminate conflict and so on. It will give an opportunity to talk about global issues like trafficking and organised crime which no one country can control on its own. Through the partnership, we also acknowledge that peace, justice and inclusion are relevant to all countries no matter how developed – I am glad for example to see Brazil and Switzerland taking part and sharing their own experiences.

We look forward to continuing to take part in the pathfinders initiative and to creating a deeper partnership to accelerate the delivery of peace, justice and inclusive institutions for people in all countries around the world.

Thank you so much.

Díli, 20 September 2016
Dr Rui Maria de Araújo