



## SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Prime Minister makes official visit to New Zealand**

The Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, is undertaking an official visit to New Zealand, leaving Díli on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February and returning on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. The visit is being conducted in response to an invitation from the Government of New Zealand and will see the Timor-Leste delegation, including the Prime Minister's wife, Dr. Teresa Madeira Soares, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, H.E. Hernâni Coelho, the Minister of the Interior, H.E. Longuinhos Monteiro, and the Second Commander General of the National Police Force of Timor-Leste, Faustino da Costa, visiting the cities of Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin.

During this visit Prime Minister Araújo will engage in bilateral discussions with the Prime Minister of New Zealand The Rt. Hon. Bill English MP. A business dinner will be held in Auckland to update participants on national development and encourage New Zealand companies to pursue opportunities in Timor-Leste. The delegation will interact with organizations having expertise that may help Timor-Leste's transition to a more diversified economy, including the Shaw Dairy Farm based in Auckland and the Royal Albatross Centre on the Otago Peninsula, a successful model for eco-tourism. A visit will be conducted to the New Zealand Police College in Wellington to honor the enduring contribution made by the Police of New Zealand to Timor-Leste's national development. Visits to the Auckland University of Technology and the University of Otago in Dunedin will give an opportunity to observe these institutions of higher education and meet with the Timorese students enrolled in them.

New Zealand made significant defence and security contributions around the time of Timor-Leste's Restoration of Independence and the ongoing relationship has since transitioned to focus on economic development with aspects such as private sector development, education and training, and security and justice. New Zealand's Foreign Affairs Minister, The Hon. Murray McCully MP, visited Timor-Leste in 2012 and 2014 and the Embassy of Timor-Leste in New Zealand, based in the city of Wellington, was opened in 2014.

Spokesperson, Minister of State Agio Pereira, noted "Timor-Leste welcomes the opportunity to encourage business partnership and to meet with New Zealand experts in areas that are important to the economic diversification of Timor-Leste. This trip by the Prime Minister will strengthen the warm relationship already enjoyed by Timor-Leste and New Zealand and build on our history of friendship and cooperation."**ENDS**



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