



PRIMEIRO  
MINISTRO

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VI Governo Constitucional

## **Message International Women's Day 2017**

**H.E. Prime Minister, Dr Rui Maria de Araújo**

Every year on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, Timor-Leste and people around the world celebrate International Women's Day.

Timorese women are strong, resilient and played a key role in the liberation of our nation. Women continue to play a vital role in Timor-Leste's sustainable development.

Nevertheless, we are still not a gender equal society, even though that is what we are striving to be.

All around us we see this inequality, from early hours before men and boys are awake, women and girls are often up early to prepare family meals, fetch water and wood, and ensure children get to school. This is just one part of women's workday, before they continue to work in the household, on a farm, tending a small business or working in the public sector.

The work women and girls do as part of their household duties even before the formal workday begins is uncounted and undervalued. It is taken for granted and it is placed as an expectation on women and girls.

But as part of the International Women's Day we reflect on the roles of women and girls in the changing world of work.

Timor-Leste is a nation in transition and we are moving away from a subsistence and traditional society to a modern society.

As part of this transition we must build a Timor-Leste where women and girls are not automatically expected to cook, wash and clean, to look after the children and older members of the family, before they are able to participate in public life.

We are creating a modern Timorese society that requires women, approximately half of our population, to actively and equally participate in the labor market.

On this International Women's Day, as a man, a father, and the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste my message is for men and boys. We must play a more active role supporting and enabling women's social and economic empowerment.

The double burden of work must be shared between men and women.

By having a more gender equal society, we will have a more productive Timor-Leste ready to face the challenges of nationhood.

Together we can do it, One for All and All for One!

Men and women making Timor-Leste a 50:50 nation by 2030.