



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



**MEDIA
RELEASE**

Dili, 21 April, 2017

Government supports meetings of Timorese and Australian veterans

This week veterans of Timor-Leste's independence struggle will travel to Australia to meet with members of Australia's veteran community, visit organizations involved in veteran care and take part in commemorations of ANZAC Day on Tuesday the 25th April. The majority of the veterans participating are former members of FALINTIL, the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of Timor-Leste, and were fighting in the mountains for 24 years. This will be the fourth visit of its kind and is set to build further on the warm friendship between the veterans of both nations.

This year the official delegation will be led by President Elect H.E. Francisco Guterres 'Lu-Olo', a 24-year veteran of the independence struggle, who, following his win in the Presidential election held on the 20th of March, is set to be inaugurated as Timor-Leste's Head of State on the 20th of May 2017. H.E. Isabel Guterres, the Minister of Social Solidarity, will be representing the Government and Ms. Ines Almeida, the Liaison Officer for Veterans Affairs within the Office of the Prime Minister will be the visit coordinator and Spokesperson. Timor-Leste's Ambassador to Australia H.E. Abel Guterres, and Timor-Leste's Honorary Consuls in Queensland and Tasmania are helping to facilitate the visit.

Delegations will be based in Hobart, Canberra and Brisbane with short visits to include the regional centers of Townsville in Queensland and Yass in New South Wales. In Townsville the veterans will visit Lavarack Barracks, home of the Australian Army's 3rd Brigade which provided the nucleus of the INTERFET deployment to Timor in 1999 and Operation Astute in 2006.

Timorese veterans will visit organizations including branches of the Returned Services League, Mates4Mates, the Veterans Care Association and Solider On, where they will be meeting soldiers and staff to discuss how these services work and to consider the place of similar support services in Timor-Leste. They will participate in various events on ANZAC, the 25th of April. Information about the visit and updates on activities will be posted at www.veteranvisit2017.org

Spokesperson, Minister of State Agio Pereira, noted "This visit builds on a friendship reaching back to the Second World War when the Timorese at great cost assisted Australian commandos. This friendship has been strengthened by ongoing connections with the INTERFET soldiers who witnessed first hand the devastation of our country, and in recent years has broken new ground with the relationship between our veteran communities and the success of the '[Timor-Awakening](#)' initiative. The bonds between the Australian



Agio Pereira
+670 77045002
agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl
govtlmedia@gmail.com
www.timor-leste.gov.tl

veteran community and Timor-Leste are a fine example of what can be developed in a spirit of friendship characterized by cooperation and mutual respect. **ENDS**



Ágio Pereira

+670 77045002

agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl

govtlmedia@gmail.com

www.timor-leste.gov.tl