



## **Statement of His Excellency Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste on LGBT Acceptance**

Everyone has the potential to contribute to the development of the nation, including members of the LGBT community (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender).

Discrimination, disrespect and abuse towards people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity does not provide any benefit to our nation.

Timor-Leste is known in the region and in the world as a country that promotes and protects human rights.

Despite this, many people continue to experience discrimination. Young people are experiencing violence, sometimes from within their own homes.

Violence is a crime. Discrimination is a crime. Timor-Leste's true resources are its people, especially children and youth.

Violence and discrimination can affect the physical and mental health of this country's future.

For a nation to develop well, every young person needs to be able to grow up in an environment that provides them with protection, love, and opportunities for personal growth - regardless of their differences.

Parents need to accept their children, and schools need to create an environment where all students are protected.

As the Prime Minister, I ask everyone to accept each other, look after each other and respect each other.

Timor's struggle has taught us to respect each other. God also teaches us to love each other.

The principles of a democratic nation include everyone living freely with dignity and having respect for each other.

This is how we can create an inclusive nation, where everyone can participate in the development process and make the most of the independence we all fought for.

One for all, all for one.