



PRIME MINISTER

Dili, September 28, 2017

Timor-Leste regrets the passing away of Eric Edward Hotung

The Government of Timor-Leste, on behalf of the entire nation, expresses its deep regret and condolences to the family and friends of Ambassador Eric Edward Hotung, who died last week at 91 years of age.

Named Timor-Leste's itinerant Ambassador in 2002, Eric Edward Hotung was a noted philanthropist and a close friend of the Timorese people and nation. Born in Hong Kong in 1926, he became sensitive to the Timor-Leste cause during the struggle for the Restoration of Independence.

In 1998 he helped close to 12,000 refugees to return to the territory by buying a ship from the Australian navy that was also used to provide medical assistance to the island's coastal populations and to transport around 400 tons of emergency aid, during the 1999 crisis. He also offered the rehabilitation of the Dili International Airport (now Presidente Nicolau Lobato International Airport), and donated the facilities of the Bairro Pite Clinic, also in the capital.

In August 2002, Ambassador Eric Edward Hotung hosted the official delegation in New York and Washington that attended the occasion of Timor-Leste becoming a member of the United Nations General Assembly.

Grandson of the businessman Robert Hotung and son of Edward Hotung and Mordia O'Shea, Eric Edward Hotung went to live with his father when he was still a child. He returned to Hong Kong during the Second World War, where he worked in a hospital emergency room. In December 1941, with the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, Eric Edward Hotung returned to Shanghai where he was put under house arrest. After the war, in 1947, he went to the United States of America to continue his studies. He returned to Hong Kong after the passing of his grandfather in 1956 and of his father in 1957, where he took control of the family businesses. In the 1980s, he started working in diplomacy affairs.

The Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri, expressed his condolences to the family and friends of Ambassador Eric Edward Hotung and highlighted "the great tenderness and affection the Timorese people have for this great friend of the nation. His actions and deep commitment to human rights, justice and solidarity will not be forgotten. Ambassador Eric Hotung will remain in our memory and in our hearts". **ENDS**



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