



PRESIDÊNCIA DO
**CONSELHO
DE MINISTROS**



SPEECH BY

AGIO PEREIRA

**MINISTER OF STATE AND PRESIDENCY
OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND
ACTING MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND MINERALS**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
INAUGURATION OF SECTION 1
(SUAI FATUKAHU/MOLA) OF THE HIGHWAY**

SUAI
17th of NOVEMBER 2018



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**CONSELHO
DE MINISTROS**



Your Excellency Minister of Public Works, Mr. Salvador Pires
Your Excellency Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr. José da Silva
Your Excellency Chief of General Staff of the F-FDTL, Major General Lere Anan Timur
Distinguished Members of Parliament

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen
Veterans
Covalima Administrator
Community Leaders
Suai Community,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I join you today, on behalf of the Prime-Minister and the Government to celebrate the completion of Timor-Leste's first freeway.

This is an important milestone in the development of Timor-Leste's road infrastructure and our country's physical connectivity.

I have just travelled from Dili to arrive here in Suai and the drive gave me an opportunity to test out our new highway, and reflect upon the journey that has brought us here.

There is much more to this highway than meets the eye. It is made up of much more than asphalt, gravel and sand.

The completion of this first section of the SUAI – FATUKAHU / MOLA highway is the actualization of a vision, and the delivery of a promise.

It all began with a bit of faith: a belief that we are capable of building a better future for our nation.

Then, we made a Plan – our Strategic Development Plan to make Timor-Leste into an upper middle-income country with a healthy, educated and safe population by the year 2030.

This highway is part of the Tasi Mane Project that was envisioned within that Plan. The Project was designed to develop Timor-Leste's national petroleum industry with its associated support structures, including human resource skills development and service capacity, to form an important engine for Timor-Leste's economy.

This freeway belongs to a much larger, multi-year integrated project comprising 3 industrial clusters to be located along a 155-kilometre corridor on the south coast, extending from



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Suai in the west of the country in the Covalima district, to Beaço, all the way to the district of Viqueque in the east.

To link these 3 industrial clusters, a motorway will be built to connect Suai and Beaço, allowing for the fast and efficient movement of goods, materials and passengers between the planned Suai Logistics Base, Refinery and Petrochemical Complex of Betano, and the Liquefied Natural Gas Plant of Beaço.

The construction of the motorway is planned in 4 phases. Today, we inaugurate the first stretch connecting Suai to Fatukahu / Mola: a total of 30.4 kilometres, comprising 10 bridges, 4 intersections, 20 viaducts, 20 drainage boxes and 60 hydraulic passages.

With the completion of this first section of the highway, Timor-Leste's north and south coasts are now connected, and the distance separating our communities reduced. The highway will accelerate socio-economic development, and pave the way for the implementation of our national oil industry plan.

Given that the highway speed limit is 100-kilometres per hour in flat areas, and 60-kilometres per hour in mountainous areas, this is much faster than most Timorese are used to driving!

So, it is important to take extra care to drive responsibly, and to be considerate and courteous to other motorists. After all, we all want to get to our destinations – and back home to our families – safely.

After the completion of the motorway, it will be possible to travel from Suai to Beaço in just two hours, in comfort and safety.

The highway is important not only to support Timor-Leste's oil industry, but also for the development of other sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and minerals to facilitate the flow and transportation of people, products and materials to stimulate small businesses, and to create new jobs and opportunities.

This artery will make a significant contribution to the country's long-term economic growth.

As the saying goes, Rome was not built in a day, and neither was this highway.

To give an idea of what goes into these major projects, it may help to share some of the key elements of the process.

In 2011, detailed technical studies were conducted for the highway, ensuring and confirming the feasibility of the project, including an Environmental Impact Assessment, Social Impact Assessment and Road Traffic Surveys.



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The Project Management Unit - made up of representatives of the Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals, through TIMOR GAP, and the former Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communications - was established in 2015 and was entrusted with the supervision and monitoring of the construction of the first phase of the freeway project.

TIMOR GAP was assigned responsibility for coordinating the inter-ministerial team that engaged in the identification, acquisition and compensation of land and properties.

This process began in 2015, and the land acquired for the highway project totaled 289 hectares.

The amount spent for the compensation of land, property and domestic animals amounted to 9.28 million US Dollars.

Following the procurement process carried out by the National Procurement Commission, the construction contract for Phase One of the motorway project was awarded to China Overseas Engineering Group in the amount of \$304 million dollars.

The construction contract was supervised by Katahira & Engineers International, in partnership with Renardet SA Consulting Engineers, in association with Kai Watu Kmanek Consultant.

The highway construction work proper began in 2016.

Looking ahead, the identification and acquisition of lands and properties relating to the second section linking Fatukahu / Mola to Betano is expected to begin in 2019, with construction works to begin by 2020.

This highway will create many positive multiplier effects, and also further facilitate foreign investment into Timor-Leste.

As we gather today to inaugurate Timor-Leste's first freeway, it is appropriate to acknowledge and thank the Project Management Unit, the inter-ministerial team, the contractors, local government entities, the community and all those involved in this project for the good work they have done over the last few years and, of course, to wish you great success in the future construction steps.

Road infrastructure is vital to the country's development. Together, let us continue to forge ahead for the development of the South Coast, and for the bright future of Timor-Leste.

Thank you.