

Launch of the National Nutrition Award Program

City 8, Haslaran
Monday, August 9th, 2021, 11:00 am

Your Excellency, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

Your Excellency, Vice-Minister and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

Distinguished Members of the Government

Your Excellency, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Timor-Leste

Distinguished Members and Representatives of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations (UNICEF, WHO, WFP, FAO, among others)

Distinguished Members and Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps

Distinguished Members and Representatives of the Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation Agencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Distinguished Guests

Welcome to the **Launching Ceremony of the National Nutrition Award Programme**, implemented by the National Secretariat of the United Nations SUN Movement, in collaboration with the Members of the Interministerial Committee on Food Security (KONSSANTIL), under the leadership of H.E. the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

A National Award supported by the generous financial contribution of US\$ 100,000 from the **World Food Programme** (WFP) and technical support from national and international Development Partners, in particular the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the Department of Foreign Affairs of Australia (DFAT).

A National Award that takes up the good examples of the Presidential Nutrition Award, implemented during my term of office between 2014 and 2017, whose good results and recommendations have always advised its continuation and extension.

A continuity that was interrupted in 2017, but whose determination and commitment was resumed by this Government in the imperative fulfilment of its Program, to achieve the great national goal of **Eradicating Hunger and Malnutrition**, provided for in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and in the commitments made by the Country for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is with great satisfaction that we relaunch a Program that aims to be a source of inspiration, encouragement and stimulus for more informed, active, participative and organized **Citizenships and Food Communities**, with emphasis on the role of local authorities, as well as the need to involve the Youth and the duty of Inclusion of Women's and Disabled' Groups.

We want citizens and communities more aware of their duty and responsibility, to support national efforts to eliminate hunger and bad nutrition habits, promoting their effective participation in the **National Food Security Plan**, recently approved by the Government and accompanies the initiative of His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the great global effort to improve the World Food System.

We wish to promote innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, involving all development partners in the implementation of the plan and the different measures to combat hunger and malnutrition, namely technicians, experts, specialists or academics for the need to debate in **National Dialogue** the topics of "*healthy and environmentally friendly food*", in a true spirit of Food Community.

A dialogue that will certainly contribute to improving our food production, distribution and storage processes, fostering the downward curve of national malnutrition rates, which in 2010 affected 58% of the population and in 2020 would still affect 48% of our citizens, especially the most deprived, vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Distinguished guests

The National Nutrition Award that we launch today aims to promote the best international examples and practices, demonstrating that the most advanced methods can and should be adapted to the Timorese reality.

We have already been able to demonstrate this purpose between 2014 and 2017, and we can do it again by disseminating at a national level again, the examples of the best Groups, Hamlets (Aldeias) or Villages (Sucos), which in practice contribute to National Food Security.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all the Civil Society Partners, especially the small or micro enterprises that participated in the Basic Food Basket Programme and the **youth, women and local groups** that won the previous editions of the National Nutrition Award, and whose example and presence honours us greatly.

With your good example and the good results achieved, it is clear that it is possible to eradicate Hunger and Fight Malnutrition in our Country.

It is necessary that each citizen gives himself completely to whatever he does with dedication, commitment, effort, teamwork and a spirit of belonging.

It is not just a wish, dream or hope, but something achievable in the short term with the mobilization of communities and citizens.

A mobilisation that will certainly benefit from the attention that this award provides in the **media** (written press, radio, television and social networks), to whom we thank the presence and whom we invite to disseminate the regulations, the conditions and the application process in order to reach all audiences, without exception, especially in the most remote areas and those with extreme isolation.

I would like to end with a word of appreciation and thanks to all our Donors and International Partners, whose support encourages us to face the future with renewed hope in the Development of a more sustainable, fair and equitable National Food System, capable of reducing food waste and achieving all our goals:

For a Zero Hunger Timor-Leste!

For a healthier country, with well-nourished people!

For a fairer and more equitable World, with a better Food System!

Thank you very much!

May God bless us all!