



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

ADDRESS

**BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE**

KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO

**AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 10TH WESTERN
CHINA INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY AND TRADE
FAIR**

“Second Western China Forum on International Cooperation”

Chengdu, Sichuan Province

October 16th 2009

Your Excellency, Governor of Sichuan Provincial People's Government

Your Excellencies, Heads of Government

Distinguished Members of Delegations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the warm welcome we have received from the People's Government of the Sichuan Province and the Organizing Committee of the Western China International Economy and Trade Fair.

I would also like to express my profound appreciation for the opportunity to take part in this important event and to congratulate the forum's excellent organisation.

The Western China Forum on International Cooperation is an important initiative for the Asian region. It is a strategic opportunity to face international challenges at a time when cooperation that crosses continents and oceans, could strengthen our common goal of development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour and privilege to be here in this vibrant city of Chengdu and see the substantial achievements of Sichuan's post-quake reconstructions. In just a little over one year, the path travelled by the Province of Sichuan in the post-disaster provides an important lesson to Timor-Leste. You have faced the obstacles of reconstruction by committing to fast tracking social and economic development and you have achieved.

The Government of Timor-Leste, like the Province of Sichuan, has experienced similar shocks, calamities, loss of human life and material destruction.

We express, in a very modest way, our solidarity. Our People know well the suffering and the struggles of basic survival.

Now that we are here, we can better understand China's strengths in responding to difficult challenges. It is through excellence in both political and economic management.

The changes that have taken place in China over the past 60 years are remarkable, and one can only be inspired by what China represents to both the Asian region and the international community.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Timor-Leste, one of the youngest and the poorest countries in South-East Asia, cannot be isolated from its regional partners. We must instead seek strong partnerships to overcome today's challenges, the challenges of a globalised world.

It is by these shared experiences that contribute to our common values, that help define who we are as a nation and what binds nations together in unity for common goals.

The people of Timor-Leste have earned their place in history, through their selfless fight for national sovereignty and independence, based on the popular will and the vision for their own humanity.

We have overcome the experiences of foreign occupation, which is now replaced with hope inspired by the blessings of independence – but sadly that hope, for many of our people, is dampened by extreme poverty. The needs of our People are great.

However, Timor-Leste is a country blessed with natural resources that, if used wisely, may free the Timorese from poverty.

As we celebrate 10 years of self-determination, we can cast our eyes over a growing economy and emerging businesses, people safely walking our streets with improved health and access to education – all of which are adding to the great hopes for our new Nation.

Development is a word that Timor-Leste embraces as the foundations of both peace-building and nation-building.

We are prepared to learn; which is why we join our neighbors and friends here today; to explore how we can fully participate in the global platform of investment, promotion, trade and economic cooperation.

We are seeking opportunities to develop our economy, to create jobs, increase revenue, develop crucial productive sectors and, of course, above all, establish the viable condition to rise from the depths of poverty.

Your Excellencies,

This is not a political or economic agenda exclusive to Timor-Leste, but a strategic agenda common to all countries represented here today.

We must, with solidarity between nations, reinforce our mechanisms of dialogue and mutual cooperation to walk the path of consolidating economic growth.

At this forum, we represent different cultures, different political ideologies and different states of economic and social development.

However, this diversity affords us the opportunities to share best practises in economic management, explore new avenues in trade and investment and above all, exchange ideas to overcome common challenges in regional and international development.

Excellencies,

I would like to express some words of appreciation to China, a great friend to Timor-Leste, at this time of celebrations to the Chinese People for the astonishing 60 years they have had since the Foundation of the People's Republic of China.

China is a remarkable example of growing prosperity. China's domestic accomplishments in promoting unity and its pursuit of economic growth for the benefit of its People, is matched only by its contribution to international diplomacy and development.

China's success should be considered the world's successes. The benefits of China's progress and reforms have not only fuelled their own development and economy but have had far reaching benefits to the Asian region, and had a profound impact on the global economy. This brings great hope to developing nations like Timor-Leste.

It should also be recognized that China has through various partnerships with many nations, provided social welfare: Food to the starving, education to children, health to the sick and they have made vital contributions to economic developments by providing major infrastructures, supporting private sector development and public sector growth.

In Timor-Leste we also want to create better conditions for the People of our nation, by building vital infrastructure, reforming Government institutions and establishing the foundations for sustainable development.

Our participation in this forum provides us the opportunity to learn from your experience—your history in creating a peaceful and prosperous nation.

Last but not least, on behalf of my Government and my people, I would like to express my gratitude to the people of China and the People's Republic of China for their ongoing support and contributions to Timor-Leste, and, in a particular way, the doctors, men and women, from Chengdu who are in Timor-Leste combating the disease in my country.

Thank you very much!

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão

16 October 2009