



REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DE TIMOR-LESTE IV CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

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Statement

By

*The Spokesperson of the IV Constitutional Government,
The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers*

Referendum Package to Rebuild Timor's Rural Areas

On behalf of the IV Constitutional Government, the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Xanana Gusmão, presented the plan to National Parliament for the “**referendum package**,” a national strategy to fast track rural development and empower the private sector with around 700 small to medium size infrastructure projects.

The Gusmão Government unveiled the \$US70 million plan to build and/or rehabilitate, amongst other things, roads and bridges, sanitation infrastructure, schools, health care facilities and water supplies and address special needs such as flood control infrastructure with a broad range of projects in all thirteen districts of Timor-Leste.

The plan is a unique initiative established for the exclusive use of the Timorese private sector to empower local businesses in the districts and sub –districts.

By injecting funds directly into communities for infrastructure projects, the Government will be stimulating local economies, creating direct and indirect employment opportunities, identifying and mobilizing the local skills base and giving communities the opportunity to participate in nation building.

As part of the Government's decentralization reforms, contracts under the referendum package will be decentralized with the assistance of the Business Association of Construction and Public Works (AECCOP). With a national scope to organize construction businesspeople in the districts and sub-districts; it will be responsible for the process of proper, transparent and fair contracting, together with a Government “Task Force” that will provide effective oversight of the process of awarding contracts as well as ensuring the transparent and accountable implementation of the package and guaranteeing compliance with the procurement laws of Timor-Leste.

Agio Pereira, the Secretary of State of the Council of Ministers and the Official Spokesperson of the IV Constitutional Government, said “The referendum package fits with the objectives of the State and the Government Program. Localizing public investment and empowering the emerging private sector in rural areas is a critical purpose of the referendum package. This referendum package is part of an overall National Development Strategy; helping to rebuild

our nation and its communities with projects prioritized at a local level, taking ownership of and taking pride in completing important projects for the betterment of the lives of the people and the environments they live in.” **ENDS**

For More Information Contact: Agio Pereira +670 723 0011; E-mail: agiopereira@cdm.gov.il