



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE**

**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER**

**ADDRESS**

**BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER,**

**MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY**

**KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL DINNER WITH**

**THE PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN**

9 March 2009

Tokyo

Your Excellency Prime Minister Taro Aso

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

First, I must thank you, Your Excellency the Prime Minister, for your kind words as well as the warm and friendly welcome you have given us.

To me and to my delegation, it is a great pleasure to be here. And it is a perfect way to finish the first day of our Official Visit - having dinner with good friends.

This visit marks a new stage in our relationship that has been, in the past years, both deep and rewarding. It is ten years since the anniversary of our decision, made through the Popular Consultation, to become a Democratic and Sovereign State.

And it is ten years now since Japan held the first Donor's Meeting for Timor-Leste, in Tokyo. We will always remember that upon gaining our Independence it was Japan that stepped up in such a significant way to support our new and fragile nation.

And over the last decade, Japan has continued to provide invaluable support to our People. And so our successes as a nation are, therefore, our shared successes.

Prime Minister,

Ladies and gentlemen

What this Government wants for Timor-Leste is to make this 10<sup>th</sup> year the closing of a chapter - a chapter where Timor-Leste was regarded as an unstable or post-conflict country – a situation which is akin to being a country that cannot meet the expectations of its People.

We want to create better conditions for the People of our nation, build vital infrastructure, reform Government institutions and establish the foundations for economic growth, for sustainable development.

Japan is well known for the importance that is given to the process of peace-building, and the willingness to work in solidarity with countries that share the values of peace.

As we in Timor know from first hand experience, peace and security is one of the basic prerequisites for economic development.

For this reason we believe that this visit to Japan provides a great opportunity to learn from your experiences – your history in creating a peaceful and prosperous nation.

In finishing, I would like to, once again, thank you for the solidarity you have demonstrated to our young nation. Our hearts and our souls are deeply affected by your acts of goodwill towards us.

It is with sincere pleasure that I wish the most success and prosperity to Japan, and trust that our deep and long lasting friendship will continue with affection and solidarity.

Thank you very much!