



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER**

**ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SWEARING-IN OF THE JUDGES,
PROSECUTORS AND PUBLIC DEFENDERS FROM THE 3RD TRAINING
COURSE**

**16 May 2011
Legal Training Centre
Dili**

Excellencies,
President of Parliament,
President of the Court of Appeal,
Madam Prosecutor-General,
Public Defender,
Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General,
Members of Parliament,
Members of Government,
Senior State Representatives,
Ambassadors and Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps,
Judges, Prosecutors and Public Defenders,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great joy that I stand here today to witness one more vital step towards the growth and consolidation of our legal system.

The judges, prosecutors and public defenders being sworn-in today are to be congratulated, but they are not the only ones who deserve praise.

I consider that on a day such as today, all of us – the entire Nation of Timor-Leste – should be congratulated, as we are proving that we can reach the goals we set for us, being knowledgeable of the past, active in the present and having our eyes on the future. We all remember the condition of the justice sector after the referendum and the independence process. In those years, Timor-Leste presented a challenge to the world: how to build a justice system from scratch within the context of a Democratic State with the Rule of Law?

If this seemed difficult to the international community, it looked overwhelming for us Timorese, since we had to deal with:

1. The destruction of our infrastructure
2. The lack of a coherent and modern legal order
3. The lack of trained Timorese staff able to take on the difficult but essential task of administering justice.

From these three problems I have identified, the most difficult one to solve was surely the latter.

One decade later, moments such as these can only make us more confident in our future.

Today Timor-Leste can say that, despite all setbacks, it already has a system that is able to train legal professionals who are not only technically competent but who also have the dedication, sense of duty and professionalism required for performing their tasks.

Timor-Leste is counting on you!

With the new judges being sworn-in today, we can believe that the role of the courts will be strengthened, that they will be more responsible and more able to administer justice in a manner that is both faster and in accordance with the high requirements of the Timorese people.

From the new prosecutors we can expect greater technical ability to act against those who breach the penal law, to protect all those who need representation and to ensure legitimacy, and in doing so promote a more transparent society that respects the law.

Lastly, with the new defenders we believe that the weaker citizens will be able to have their voices heard in Court, so as to assure the full defence of their rights, thereby consolidating the goal of creating a justice system that is accessible for all.

The new legal actors who stand before us today are a testimonial of the commitment and desire of the entire society towards the consolidation of the sector. The Government has succeeded in responding to this desire, making Justice one of its main concerns.

This is not a path we are treading alone. We have relied on the valuable contribution from all nations and international organisations, which have honoured the lofty ideals of justice by contributing funds, human capital and particularly their experiences. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for giving all of this to a young nation that will be celebrating the 9th Anniversary of the Restoration of its Independence on May 20th.

Dear magistrates, dear prosecutors, dear defenders,

On this day that is so symbolic and so relevant to the Timorese magistracy, I wish to convey to you all my trust, respect and admiration. I know that you will always guide yourselves by a sense of justice and that you will serve no one but the country and its People.

I have no doubts whatsoever that you will perform your tasks with the competence, dedication and devotion of those who wish to dedicate their lives to the public cause and to the common good.

I wish you all great success in the performance of your new duties and look forward to you being an example and an encouragement to all those who work in the area of justice.

Congratulations and good luck to you all!

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão