



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
ON THE OCCASION OF THE HANDING OVER OF X-
RAY SCANNERS DONATED BY THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

18 MARCH 2012

Your Excellency the Ambassador of China
Members of Parliament and Government
Members of the Diplomatic Corp
Staff of Government Ministries
Members of International Organizations
Industry representatives
Friends

Customs has come a long way since its formation in 2000 and is making significant advances towards its goal of becoming a modern customs service. It is embarked on an ambitious reform and modernization program involving restructuring its management and operations in line with best practice guides set out by the World Customs Organization, which involves utilizing the latest technologies, introducing a customer friendly culture and working more closely with its stakeholders.

X-Ray inspection scanners are one form of technology support that my Government is keen to introduce to assist Customs in its goals of collecting more revenue, speeding up Customs processing through non-invasive inspections and protecting the community from the introduction of dangerous and prohibited goods.

We are very pleased to have received these very impressive X-Ray scanners from Nutech a world leader in X-Ray technology.

In the years to come it is vitally important that we increase the non-oil revenue collection in Timor-Leste and Customs has an important role to play in this objective.

In recent years the Customs collections have increased significantly with the total collections in 2011 of approximately **\$43.2 million**, representing a **66% increase** over the sum collected in 2010. I congratulate Customs Management and Staff on this very impressive statistic and look forward to even greater increases in the years to come.

In July 2011, when I launched the Strategic Development Plan I indicated that the Plan seeks to transform Timor-Leste from a low income country to a medium to high income country by 2030. One of the three key focus areas of that Plan is the building and maintenance of core and productive infrastructure that facilitates economic development.

One such example in this area is the recently inaugurated Batugade Border Post which represents a modern, inviting gateway where the business community and travelling public can enter Timor-Leste with a minimum of disruption. Similar posts are nearing completion at Salele near Suai and at Sakato in Oecussi. Each of these complexes will utilize the latest in X-Ray technology.

With modern facilities and the increased use of technology it is absolutely vital for Customs staff to function at the highest level. Customs is in the process of changing, improving and broadening its role.

Never before has so much effort been invested by the Ministry of Finance in continually improving the professional skills of its staff particularly those in Customs. It is important for all staff to embrace these opportunities and to realize that in the future, the effectiveness of public employees will be measured in terms of job performance and productivity rather than just turning up for work.

Distinguished Guests
Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to thank the Government of the People's Republic of China, and the Chinese people for providing the scanners and for the technical and consultancy support that will be provided as part of this Donation.

Mr Ambassador, please pass on my thanks and the thanks of the people of Timor-Leste to your Premier, Mr Wen Jiabao, for this very generous donation and for being a loyal friend of Timor-Leste.

It now gives me very great pleasure to accept these new x-ray scanners on behalf of the Government of Timor-Leste and hand them over to the Acting Minister of Finance for safe keeping and use within the Timor-Leste Customs Service.

Thank you.