



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

**CLOSING REMARKS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
AT THE TIMOR-LESTE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS' MEETING**

**16 May 2012
Díli Convention Centre**

Development Partners
Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Distinguished Members of the National Parliament
Members of Government
Representatives of Civil Society
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and a pleasure to give the closing address to this meeting, the last Development Partners' Meeting under the mandate of the IV Constitutional Government.

During this meeting we have discussed the challenges that we have faced as a nation.

The Government has given a high priority to this annual meeting of development partners.

We have done this not only out of a deep respect for our international friends, and to show our profound appreciation of the support you have provided.

We have done this because this meeting is fully integrated into our government's planning processes.

It is a critical review of where we have come from as well as a discussion of what we should do for the future.

And it is the primary forum in which we can make sure that our efforts and approaches are aligned, just as our goals are already aligned: to improve the lives and living conditions of the Timorese people.

We must always remember that this is why we are here today.

The ideas and the opinions expressed at these meetings feed into the development of our national priorities, our budget planning processes and the actions that we will take to progress our nation.

In recognition of the importance of this meeting, at the 2011 Development Partners' Meeting we released the Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030.

And today, we held the Government Handover Report Ceremony as well as the Development Partners' Handover.

This is a remarkable milestone in our development and confirms that we are focused on what we can achieve in the future and not just about the past.

That Ceremony will prove a milestone in the development of our system of public administration.

And it also signifies the importance that the Development Partners' Meeting plays in our governance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Over the last several years we have used the opportunity of the Development Partners Meetings to speak freely between ourselves.

Unless we speak honestly to each other then there is, in fact, little point in coming together.

And as friends, we should feel that we can speak to each other openly. We need to be able to speak hard truths and also give credit where it is due.

While we have had setbacks as a nation, working together with our development partners we have made progress.

But I have not come here today to list our achievements.

Instead, we have tried to honestly take stock of the state of our country. We have tried to discuss what has been working well, and what has not been.

Yesterday we discussed our social conditions, the state of our economy and the progress in building a framework of good governance.

And today we discussed our future challenges as well as our opportunities.

As we reflect on our progress at this special time in our nation's history we must be positive.

Independence provided our people with the opportunity to set their own priorities and the right to determine their own destiny.

Nationhood also brought with it responsibility, but it is a responsibility we take very seriously.

At times our first ten years have been difficult. We have endured times of anguish and pain.

Our development partners have stood with us during those times.

And today, we are asking you to stay with us. We are asking you to stay with us but in a different relationship.

We are seeking a real partnership: a partnership where we both stand equal.

Under this partnership our relationship will have matured. Rather than development assistance being used to provide urgent relief, we want to work together on sustainable programs.

We want to focus work on preventative health care and building the skills of our health professionals rather than relying on donors to address our emergency cases.

We want to focus on improving our agricultural practices and systems rather than relying on other countries for urgent food supplies.

It is working in such an equal partnership that we can make great progress together.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I hope that many of you who are here from abroad can stay with us for this weekend so that we can celebrate our 10 year anniversary together.

This will be an occasion of great pride for our people.

It brings us a collective sense of achievement.

It is also a time to remember, and to honour the sacrifices that were made so that we can enjoy this anniversary.

With all that our people have suffered, with all that our people have given, and with all that our people have struggled – they deserve to celebrate on 20 May.

And our development partners, and our international friends, should also be given credit for the contribution that they have made to our ten years of nation building.

It is a matter of honour for us that the relationship with our development partners works well.

We recognise that the assistance provided is funded by the taxpayers of our development partners.

With the global economy so fragile, and the national budgets of so many countries under great strain, we know that we all have a responsibility to make sure that development assistance makes a difference.

It is through lifting people out of misery and extreme poverty, that we can rightly say that all our peoples have achieved success.

And so, I urge us all here today to continue to work together towards that goal of eliminating poverty

Thank you very much

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão
16 May 2012