



PRIME
MINISTER

**ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO AT THE OPENING OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT
AGENDA**

**27 February 2013
Dili, Timor-Leste**

Excellency, Anote Tong, President of the Republic of Kiribati

Excellency, Gordon Darcy Lilo, Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands

Excellency, Minister Emilia Pires, Member of the High Level Panel

Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Special Envoy of H.E. President of the Republic of Indonesia

Dr. Oluremi Gabriel Sogunro, Advisor to H.E. President of the Republic of Liberia

Dr. David Hallam, on behalf of the Office of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Honourable Ministers of the 'g7+' and the Pacific Nations and PALOPs

Excellency, Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Distinguished Members of Parliament and Government

Ambassadors

Representatives of the Church, Civil Society and the Private Sector

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to welcome you all, on behalf of the Government and the People of Timor-Leste, to this International Conference. I would like to give a special welcome to our 227 international guests, who have travelled from all over the world to participate in this conference.

It is a privilege to have such a distinguished group of international leaders, development experts, academics, representatives of civil society and the private sector, here with us, in Timor-Leste.

I believe we come together with common goals – to eradicate poverty and to contribute to world peace. Speaking of peace, I returned yesterday from South Korea where I participated in a World Summit on “Peace, Security and Human Development”. There, in Seoul, I informed the plenary that we would be gathered here today to discuss the post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Millennium Development Goals, which were launched in 2000, have helped us on the path to development, but some countries – many of the world's poorest countries – have been left behind.

This is why, over the next two days, we have to speak. We have to be prepared to listen to what is good and what is bad, what was successful and what provoked stagnation or failure, in each one of our countries and in the larger family of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

As we approach 2015, there is not one LDC (fragile or conflict affected nation) in the world that has achieved even a single Millennium Development Goal. We are all here in the spirit of learning, from each other and to support each other, to change the course of events, in each one of our countries and in our relations with the international community.

Over 1.5 billion people live in fragility and conflict affected nations. This is almost twenty per cent of humanity.

What we have learnt in Timor-Leste, from experience, is that development cannot be achieved without security, without peace.

We had to stop fighting among ourselves and learn to reconcile our differences peacefully, before we could even begin to properly address the Millennium Development Goals.

That is why we believe that addressing global fragility is one of the most pressing development challenges of our time.

Together, we must change the mindsets of development policies.

We must work out why, with all the efforts and aid, from donor countries and international organisations, there is still so much poverty in the world.

And we must explore how – in this modern and globalised world – mainstream economic theories are imposed on, or absorbed by, the poor and the weak when these theories cause such harm and only serve the interest of the strong and powerful.

But, firstly, we have the obligation to look at ourselves, to the errors that we have committed, to the setbacks that we may have caused in our own processes. Only in this way, will we be able to guide our future plans, with a realistic roadmap of practical actions.

Ladies and gentlemen

With the MDGs soon to expire, the world community has the opportunity to set new priorities, and a new vision, for years beyond 2015.

We embark upon this task at a time of global uncertainty.

Along with conflict and fragility, the world is experiencing increasing inequality.

We are seeing global wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, while many remain in extreme poverty.

And too often the poverty – and the conflict – of powerless nations benefit the powerful nations. And so, poor people continue to suffer. And unemployment around the world continues to rise. And with lack of jobs comes criminality and conflict.

We must not continue to pretend that inequality and conflict are unrelated. That is why, Timor-Leste is so committed to the 'g7+' group of fragile and conflict affected nations.

This group of 18 nations works in solidarity, and speaks with one voice, to build peace and strengthen our States. But now, we need more than 18 countries working together, we need the whole global community focused on achieving agreed goals.

Yesterday, our brothers and sisters from the Pacific Islands came together to make their voice heard. We will hear their message today.

They are 13 and adding the voices of five PALOPs nations, with the development partners, we have here a total of 48 nations, one quarter of UN Member States.

Together, we can have a powerful voice.

Ladies and gentlemen

We must now not only look at the future, we must shape the future.

Now is the time for discussion about what has been working in the past and what we should do to secure our shared future.

As you know, the UN Secretary-General has established a High Level Panel.

Two days ago, I participated in the inauguration ceremony of the President of South Korea, Mrs. Park Geun-hye and I could see the pride in the Korean people's eyes.

We too are proud of having a Timorese woman on the UN High Level Panel. We trust in her, because we know how much she is doing to reform our system, how much she gives to the 'g7+' to change bad practices of development aid and how strong she has been in the process of State building.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The results of our discussions at this Conference will feed into the UN High Level Panel Report to the Secretary General.

And so, I urge you all to participate, to share your views and work together.

This is why the agenda of the Conference is so interactive. It has break-out sessions designed to allow everyone to participate and to allow everyone to be heard.

We must remember that great ideas can come from the most unexpected of places.

They can come from the youngest person or from the smallest nation.

And while many of you are from places where your voices are rarely heard on the global stage, they are places that the world must listen to for the post-2015 development agenda to have a real meaning. That is why the theme of the Conference is 'Development for All'.

And so, while we must be practical in our contributions, this does not mean we cannot be ambitious.

We must not forget that peace building and State building are critical to establishing a foundation, on which to eradicate poverty and achieve our development goals.

Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for attending this Conference.

I would like to give a special thanks to our generous supporters who have made this conference possible, the Pacific Institute of Public Policy, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, AusAID and the g7+.

Here, we are all among friends, among brothers and sisters. I hope that the ideas discussed, and the conversations we take part in, will inspire us all and will unite us.

I look forward to joining with you over the next two days and trust that this will be an important and productive conference, in shaping the global vision post-2015.
I wish you all very participatory discussions!

27 February 2013
Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao