



Gabinete do Primeiro Ministro

Dili, 14 March 2013

Your Holiness,

On behalf of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, I wish to congratulate Your Holiness on your ascension to the Chair of Saint Peter and to convey our faith in your papacy.

Our country is a strong Catholic nation and your selection inspires our people. We have faith in your leadership of the Catholic Church to spread the message of God and to strengthen the solidarity of humanity.

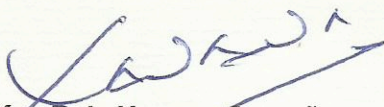
We all face a difficult world with so much conflict, violence and suffering and we look to Your Holiness to help bring reconciliation, security and peace. Around the globe we are also experiencing rising inequality which threatens peace and causes poverty and suffering. We are, therefore, comforted not only by your strong sense of social justice, but by how you have also lived your life with humility and in accordance your principles. This provides an example to us all and, at a time of growing materialism, encourages us to join with Your Holiness in working to build a fairer world.

We are also inspired by the selection of a non-European Pope which brings hope and joy to many as it demonstrates a great willingness of the Church to reach out to people across the world. Our region also knows well the importance of religious freedom and positive relations between the great faiths of the world, and in particular Christianity and Islam. We look to Your Holiness as a strong supporter of inter-faith dialogue to promote reconciliation and harmony.

The Catholic Church played a central role in the struggle for our self-determination and independence and during some of our darkest times, was a source of hope and shelter. The visit of Pope John II to our shores in 1989 was a historic moment that gave inspiration and renewed faith to our people. Timor-Leste would, of course, be proud and honoured if Your Holiness considered visiting our small nation.

The people of Timor-Leste pray for Your Holiness and your success in spreading the word of peace and leading the Catholic Church at this important time.

Please accept, Your Holiness, the assurances of my highest consideration and respect.



Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão

Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste