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## **2013 Timor-Leste Development Partners Meeting concludes with Commitment to Operationalize the Strategic Development Plan**

Over 350 delegates gathered for the Timor-Leste Development Partners Meeting held at the Dili Convention Centre on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of June. Participants including Members of Government, National Parliament, the Diplomatic Corps, Civil Society, the Private Sector, Academia and Development Partners convened to reflect on the efforts of development partnerships and to coordinate cooperation to improve outcomes for the people of Timor-Leste.

The meeting resulted in a jointly endorsed document, the “Commitment to Operationalize the Strategic Development Plan”, which outlines key commitments and actions that will address challenges identified during discussions and contribute to the achievement of the goal of Timor-Leste’s Strategic Development Plan “to transition Timor-Leste from a low income to upper middle income country, with a healthy, well educated and safe population by 2030.”

The key components of the commitment document were the benchmarking of progress on a quarterly basis linking the Strategic Development Plan and Government Plans with the New Deal and the Millennium Development Goals, joint commitment to strengthening coordination of the four strategic sectors of development: Economic, Social, Infrastructure Development and Governance and Institution Building, the establishment of a joint peer review mechanism to be completed in 2014 and lastly an undertaking to execute a 2015 mid-term review, informed by the peer review mechanism, to hold Development Partners, the Government and other stakeholders accountable through reporting on achievements.

The event, co-chaired by Minister of State and of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, H.E. José Luís Guterres and Minister of Finance, H.E. Emília Pires, was officially opened by the President of the Republic, H.E. Taur Matan Ruak. During the opening ceremony Prime Minister H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, presenting a keynote address on *Statebuilding for the Next Decade*, noted “We believe in the vision that we have for Timor-Leste, especially because we know our country from one end to the other “ and assured “We know that the challenges we must face are immense and that the only way that they can be overcome is through an integrated and sustainable development.”



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The meeting was broken onto five sessions across the two days. The first four sessions focussed on the four strategic sectors of development identifying achievements, challenges and proposing recommendations for better results. The final session included a policy dialogue on development challenges and the way forward, including consideration of the TLDPM outcome document.

Specific review process on the effectiveness of development partnerships had already begun in the lead up to the 2013 TLDPM. By example on the 13<sup>th</sup> June, the Timor-Leste National Development Partners Management Unit hosted senior representatives of AusAID including Director General Mr. Peter Baxter, for a Development Review to evaluate, assess and examine development to ensure Australia's assistance is aligned to the SDP. This review, with Timor-Leste's major development partner, in the context of the New Deal and SDP was the first one of its' kind to be held.

In his remarks at the close of the 2013 TLDPM Prime Minister Gusmão noted "The Government and other State institutions, our civil society, the private sector and our development partners have achieved an important landmark at this meeting. From now on, there is a strong and shared commitment to implementing the Strategic Development Plan."

The Prime Minister closed encouraging those assembled "Our relationship is already a long one and becomes stronger with each step we take together in our nation building process. Let us honour the commitment we have made here together, so that we may ensure a brighter future for the Timorese people."**ENDS**



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