



**PRIME
MINISTER**

**ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE BALI DEMOCRACY FORUM VI**

“Consolidating democracy in a pluralistic society”

Bali
7 November 2013



Palácio do Governo,
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,
Dili, Timor-Leste

Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

Your Majesty, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah of Brunei Darussalam

Your Excellency, Dr. R.M. Marty M. Natalegawa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia

Excellencies, Heads of Delegations
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to again participate in the Bali Democracy Forum. This is the sixth time I have addressed this Forum, having attended every year from the very beginning, and I have watched as it has grown in international significance and global reach.

This Forum is of course a special one. It will be the last one under the Presidency of my dear friend H.E. Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Since coming to office almost ten years ago President Yudhoyono has transformed Indonesia.

Indonesia is a thriving and tolerant nation that celebrates its diversity with pride. It is one of the great democracies of the world, and economically Indonesia is now one of the world's leading emerging nations.

Next year, when he departs office, President Yudhoyono will certainly leave his country in a stronger and better position than when he became President.

While I have not come here today to celebrate the achievements of President Yudhoyono – there will be much time for that next year – I would like to again touch on his contribution to building peace and reconciliation with Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste and Indonesia now enjoy the strongest of relationships. Together we have moved on from our difficult history, to build bonds of solidarity, trust and cooperation. We recognise that Timor-Leste not only shares an island with Indonesia, but that we also share a future and a commitment to democracy and the rights of our people. We also view the strength of our relationship as an important model of how, with goodwill, a focus on the future and with leadership a history of bitterness and conflict can be overcome.

President Yudhoyono deserves much of the credit for leading us on a path towards a relationship of peace. Of all international leaders, Timor-Leste has no better friend than President Yudhoyono.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We all know that the world is currently in a difficult situation. Across the globe the various continents are reeling from the near collapse of the world's system. A global

system of inefficient decision making around the financial crisis that puts hundreds of millions of people, including in Europe itself, in anguish for their daily survival.

A global system that reflects the intransigency of the decision makers who choose threats and the use of war to fatten a massive military industry, in the guise of "imposing universal values", instead of favouring dialogue and reconciliation.

I have said it before and continue to say it today that in Africa not a few countries are being torn apart, causing enormous suffering, that even if today we started taking concrete action towards a long term solution we may need half a century to address.

Right from the start I expressed my reservations towards the enthusiasm that was nurtured through the improper use of armed violence in support of the Arab Spring, which is proving by facts that it was unable to install universal values because the Arab Spring fuelled destruction and killings and deepened the disputes and rivalries in society.

As the developing world looks for global leadership we are aghast. The Arab Spring has turned into a nightmare with the transition to peace and freedom thwarted by greed for power, revenge and intolerance.

I was always against the invasion of Iraq and the war in Afghanistan. Western democracies have helped to destroy the millennial history of those peoples and what we see is their self-extermination.

Evidently, before such a result and before the division created within the populations of these countries, no one has the morals to speak about human rights and democracy!

As I have said since the beginning of the BDF, democracy is not an end unto itself; democracy is a social and political process with many components, which should be considered within the context of each reality.

I cannot see in the entire world that there is one example proving that democracy alone solves all political, social and economic problems. What I notice is that all large developed countries are just capable of imposing rules on the whole world with conventions and treaties of all kinds that they themselves do not comply and demand of other countries, particularly the least capable of complying, which has always provoked the beginning of their own agony.

What I notice is the global failure of a system where arrogance prevails and the paranoia of some has led to extreme actions that offend human sensibility.

In old Europe, the old democracy is only ensuring the right to massive protests and demonstrations, without being capable of changing the circumstances of misery of its people. One Europe that is so economically fragile it can only contemplate that democracy, after all, is just the opportunity for political demagoguery and dull debates on recovery achieved at the expense of denying bread to the most vulnerable.

Europe is suffering from the Global Financial Crisis which has flowed into the ongoing Sovereign Debt Crisis. The countries of Europe are facing a reckoning after a period of unsustainable financial behaviour. This has led to a rise in instability and insecurity and the emergence of extremism in the midst of pluralist democracies.

With the irresponsible leadership of those in power and the manipulation of the financial system, Europe faces an uncertain future of high unemployment and a lost decade of economic growth.

In the USA itself, millions of households do not have food and people must enlist in order to receive a meal from social security.

As I said before, nowhere in the world is democracy solving every issue, although we recognise it is the system that can ensure individual freedom and the civic rights of the world's citizens.

It is true that across the world we are seeing progress with millions of people being lifted out of poverty, especially in the Asian region as well as in South America and Africa.

However, with the growing middle class we are also seeing growing democratic tensions. As the wealth of people increases they are becoming better educated and enjoying access to the internet and global connectivity. This has profound implications for democracy as it is leading people to ask more of their governments. As they become more prosperous their focus turns to rights and entitlements. We are seeing this not only in mass action from Brazil through to Turkey, but also in other ways in my own country of Timor-Leste.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We also watch as the leaders of proud democracies do not strive to work together for a better future but instead appeal to the uglier side of human nature and descend into a pattern of mindless negativity, partisanship and conflict that goes so far as to put international stability at risk.

Still, when it comes to civic rights, which are imposed on new democracies or on countries in transition, we see that it is the powerful that shamelessly violate the civic rights not only of their citizens but, more scandalously, the citizens of other countries.

Either we are in the presence of an extreme distrust where everyone is a potential enemy, or we are witnessing the fraudulent use of technology to obtain economic advantage over others, which is even more immoral when those others are weak and small. I would say, with respect for opposing opinions, that both factors are the origin of this lack of ethics, of values of fairness and of principles of equality in regard to rights and obligations.

At the recent Shangri-la Dialogue in Singapore, I appealed to the sensitivities of the powerful to stop 'labelling' people, organisations and countries as enemies. In this new millennium, let us be more human and let us not be too radical when we proclaim, in

every set of circumstances, to be defending so-called national interests, while violating the legitimate interests of others.

While we question how democratic a society can be that is ruled by the few in their own interests there are other concerns and challenges that democracy faces.

I ask you all whether we can really say that we are living in a democracy if we are subject to pervasive surveillance. Now that information technology is part of the fabric of our lives we have to consider the impact on democracy when our communications are being watched by others. This is not, however, just a matter of privacy and personal freedom. For nations of the world this question goes to the very heart of what it means to be sovereign. And for a small nation like Timor-Leste, with limited resources, it means that we are subject to prying nations acting in their own national interest.

Democracy also faces other challenges and I regret to say that too many democratic nations are failing to address them.

We are seeing too many democracies around the world captured by a ruling elite, many of which are supported by a broken financial industry. While it is clear that global free market finance has failed, we continue to see the financial industry perpetuating and reinforcing inequality.

The Global Financial Crisis stripped bare the world of finance and exposed gross incompetence, unrestrained greed and systemic corruption. The problem was that while no one in the developed world took responsibility for the Crisis it was the world's poor and vulnerable that suffered the most.

It is as if the world's financial industry transcends, or simply ignores democracy, and acts with unrestrained greed in its own interests which ignores the plight of the world's poor and fans the flames of conflict and fragility.

Strong action must be taken to hold the world's powerful elite to account and to tackle growing and indefensible inequality. Without addressing poverty and inequality the social cohesion and stability of pluralistic democracies will be at risk.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let us now look to Asia, where we belong. We are currently in the Asian century and we understand that this relates to economic growth, which also depends on the purchasing power of the developed countries.

The Asian region is not immune to problems of stability and to social and economic inequalities.

The conceptual diversity of political systems can be seen as a weakness so it always deserves our consideration and gradual motivation for changes that, overtime, will come by themselves, and which should never be imposed from outside in convulsions as it was in the Middle East and in an avalanche as it was in Northern Africa.

I also ask what it says about respect for democracy and human rights, and for international solidarity, when we see whole nations, such as the Republic of Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu, slowly sink into the vastness of the ocean as a result of climate change.

That is not to say that there is not progress towards democracy and peace. Close to home Timor-Leste looks to ASEAN as example of the success that regional zones can have in promoting cooperation, progress and development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This brings me to the situation in Guinea-Bissau where democracy has been under great threat, for over 30 years, making the country a failed state. Guinea-Bissau was a country that once inspired the Timorese people as it led the Lusophone countries in the struggle for independence. A country with such a proud and dignified history has been shamed by a consecutive leadership motivated by personal, rather than national interest.

I recently visited Guinea-Bissau with the Timorese opposition leader, Dr. Mari Alkatiri, to determine if there was anything that we could do to help put the country back on the path to democracy. We wanted to show how Timor-Leste has overcome a bitter history of animosity to work together for the good of our people in the context of a robust democracy. As a leading member of the g7+ group of 18 fragile and conflict affected nations, we also had a responsibility to support other fragile nations of the world. Our dear brother, Dr. José Ramos-Horta, also has the difficult task of leading the UN Mission in Guinea-Bissau and we wanted to support him in his efforts to steer the nation towards elections and democracy.

While we were there, members of the civil society, intellectuals, women, youth and the political and military leaders of the Guinea-Bissau made a declaration of principles to demonstrate to the international community their total commitment to the restoration of constitutional order and democracy in their country. There was a recognition that the country and its leadership had lost its way and it was now time to act in the national interest.

The coup d'état of April 2012 has resulted in sanctions been imposed by the International Community.

In NY and Washington, we conveyed to the International Organizations that if we want to help the people of Guinea-Bissau to have a new future where the rule of law, social justice and democracy prevails we must act now. Timor-Leste is doing what it can and we are providing \$6 million, in equipments and technical assistance and working together with the United Nations Development Programme in Guinea-Bissau to support the electoral process. Nigeria and New Zealand have also committed to provide assistance and I urge the wider international community to support the restoration of democracy in Guinea-Bissau, by sending rice to diminish the suffering of the population. Timor-Leste can be the focal point in Asia for this purpose.

It may seem strange that Timor-Leste, one of the poorest nations in the world, is providing aid to Guinea-Bissau but we remember the generosity of the many nations around the world that supported our nation as we started on the path to peace and stability. And we know, that democracy is worth the investment.

It is worth recalling the key objective of the Bali Democracy Forum, that is to promote “political development through dialogue and cooperation in strengthening adherence to democratic values and development of democratic institutions.”

Guinea-Bissau may be a long way from Asia but it will equally benefit from the development of a thriving democracy.

Still in Africa, we can see positive development in another member state of the g7+, the Democratic Republic of Congo, where it seems they would put an end to the long armed conflict. I appeal, to the authorities and to the people of DRC, for moderation and restraint from avengeful behaviour. Only dialogue and tolerance would help consolidate peace, obtained at high cost.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In reality, the subject of this Conference is not only pertinent but also extremely timely – the great challenge for pluralistic societies is how to consolidate democracy.

When it comes to us directly I would like to address the topic under two aspects:

- the political aspect of consolidating the State
- the social and economic aspect of national cohesion.

Regarding the first aspect,

If democracy is the expression of the will of the people, then the elected bodies must, in accordance with the aspirations of the people, do everything so that the State apparatus is strong, which means credible, responsible and fair in the fulfilment of the central objectives of the State.

Because of this, elected representatives must ensure that the national interest prevails over all and any other interests.

The system of checks and balances must be operational, operative and, above all, consistent so that we can ensure the rule of law.

The elected bodies should use democracy as a positive instrument of debate for the construction and/or consolidation of the Nation.

Regarding the second aspect,

Society must adopt a culture of tolerance and honest and frank dialogue for solving differences.

Civil society (NGOs and the press) should assume a critical but responsible attitude, lest it ferment unnecessary and avoidable divisions that, if they develop, can create deep breaches in society and hinder the development of the country.

Citizens should assume a positive patriotic spirit and not fall for manipulations aimed at weakening national sovereignty.

Rulers should be able to present concrete programs to, over time, eradicate poverty and situations of marginalisation or exclusion, which are social factors that are the basis of several convulsions that we see in many developed and developing countries.

Religious faiths should advocate moderation, fraternity and the human values of solidarity and peace of mind.

In this new millennium, let us put an end to war to give space to the blossoming of democracy because if democracy is developed and strengthened, in a process in accordance with the intrinsic conditions of each country, we can envision an environment of peace across the planet for all humankind.

Only constructive dialogue, persistent and careful, can change the current inflexibility of all parties and that has to start at the major circles of decision making.

I urge the participants of this Forum to do all that we can to address the problems the world faces. Leaders must look beyond the language of blame and conflict, and speak of the possibility of progress, of reconciliation and of tolerance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Finally, I want to again thank my dear friend H.E. Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono for his leadership and friendship.

I have no doubt this Forum will be a lasting legacy that continues to build peace stability and prosperity in our region and beyond.

Thank you very much!

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão
7 November 2013