



SPOKESPERSON SIXTH CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT



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International Conference on Administrative Decentralization and Local Government

On Monday the Government of Timor-Leste hosted the Fourth International Conference on Administrative Decentralization and Local Government.

Minister of State, Coordinating Minister of State Administration Affairs and Justice, and Minister of State Administration, Dionísio da Costa Babo Soares, welcomed participants gathered at the Hotel Timor Conference Hall and explained that the aim of the conference was to enrich Timor-Leste's process of administrative decentralization through contact with the realities of local governments from Portugal and Australia.

The Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, officially opened the event noting that the current reforms in administrative decentralization were being made with the "goals of bringing basic services closer to the population, benefiting our people, strengthening the ability of our citizens to manage issues concerning their daily needs and lives, and providing new dynamism to our democracy and to the type of citizenship we all want to have." He explained that this process would be gradual as Timor-Leste needed to develop its capabilities to prepare for implementation in areas such as "institutional capacity, human capacity, administrative capacity, public management capacity and logistical capacity, to name but a few".

During two special presentations Portugal's Secretary of State of Local Administration, António Leitão Amaro and Victoria's Deputy Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, Water, Land and Property, Mr. Terry Garwood, spoke about how local governance is structured in their own countries. Each were questioned by participants about features of their country systems with many reflecting on their suitability within the Timorese setting.

In the next two years Timor-Leste will be in a phase of administrative decentralization taking the country further along the path toward the establishment of local government. The Prime Minister explained "Government will be focusing on this staged administrative decentralization, including the decentralization to the municipalities of the expenditure, planning, budgeting and execution processes starting in 2016. "



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Spokesperson for the Government, Minister of State Ágio Pereira noted “The Conference has been a good opportunity to review other models and to see what we can learn from them as we develop and formalize Timor-Leste’s own forms of local government. Our Constitution says we are to organize the State in such a way as to allow for ‘direct and active participation by men and women in political life’. A well managed path towards decentralization will assist the participation of all citizens of Timor-Leste in the integrated and sustainable development of our nation.”**ENDS**



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