



**P R I M E
M I N I S T E R**

**OPENING ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
DR RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO
AT THE TIMOR-LESTE INTERNATIONAL
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION EXPO 2015**

**Dili
5 May 2015**



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

Ministers, Secretaries of State

Members of Parliament

Exhibitors

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here to open the Timor-Leste International Building and Construction Expo 2015.

The holding of this first international building and construction Expo reflects the confidence of us all in the progress of our country and the importance of this industry to our future.

Thanks to a building boom the face of our nation is changing. We are seeing Dili transform before our eyes and development spread across our country.

Timor-Leste has been enjoying an extended period of strong growth. This has included average economic growth rates of around 12.5% a year from 2007 to 2011 and of around 7% over the last three years.

This strong economic growth is forecast to continue and it is driving the demand for building and construction.

And so, the government recognises that the building and construction industry is crucial to our development.

After our people bravely voted for independence most of our infrastructure was destroyed. We had to start from nothing. As a nation, we have had to start to build our core infrastructure to be able to establish a mature and diversified economy.

At the end of March, the National Parliament endorsed the Program of the Sixth Constitutional Government. The Government Program sets out the priorities and actions the Government will take to build our economy and develop our nation.

The Program contains four sectors. These are social; economic; governance; and infrastructure development. In prioritising infrastructure development as one of the four national sectors, we recognise how central it is to our future.

We have recently completed the biggest construction project in our country's history by building a national power generation and transmission network. We have also been rebuilding our national road network and every day we are working on more and more sections of our network.

While we have made good progress, we know there is an urgent need to build critical infrastructure to underpin our economic growth and create jobs.

That is why the Government Program includes a large plan for infrastructure investment including a national port, airports, water and sanitation systems and a national road network.

We have also established a Special Economic Zone in the enclave of Oe-cusse with an ambitious building and construction plan to accelerate growth and create jobs and investment. This will include building critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, airports, hotels, schools and health services to make this special zone a success.

Ladies and gentlemen,

While we are eager to achieve progress, we also know that the quality of some of our public works has not been good enough.

We understand that we have to strengthen the capacity and experience of many of our local building companies because when a builder does a bad job we all suffer.

That is why this Government is making it one of our key priorities to improve the quality of our public works. And it is why this Expo is so important.

We want to work with the private sector as national partners to ensure that Timor-Leste gets the building and construction standards we all deserve. Together, we want to instil a culture of pride in our work and achieve building and construction excellence.

As our nation continues to grow, there will be even more demand for good quality building and construction. This is not only from government projects but across the economy including in commercial construction, residential buildings and tourism and hospitality. This demand will also see a rise in the need for materials, machinery and equipment and related services.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This Expo provides a great opportunity to promote our building and construction industry; and for people in this industry to work together towards building our nation.

I am pleased that we have exhibitors here not just from Timor-Leste but also from our international friends. I am looking forward to speaking to many of you and looking at the great things the exhibitors have to offer.

I would like to congratulate the Instituto de Apoio Ao Desenvolvimento Empresarial for working with the Minister of State and the Coordinating Minister of Economic Affairs and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, H.E. Estanislau da Silva, and his Ministry, to organise this Expo.

The Instituto de Apoio Ao Desenvolvimento Empresarial is doing excellent work in promoting the development of business by providing training and business support services.

I urge you all to make the most of this exciting Expo, to learn about our building and construction sector and to discuss the opportunities provided by our growing private and public investments.

This Expo gives you the chance to capture the promise of our nation and support the development of our country.

Finally, to the Timorese entrepreneurs, I hope that with your experience we can strengthen our will and our intentions to develop with more quality our country.

Thank you very much

5 May 2015

Dr Rui Maria de Araújo