

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

MR. PRESIDENT, today, as the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, I hold my first official visit to the Republic of Indonesia at the invitation of His Excellency Pak Joko Widodo “Jokowi”, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, and I am honored to meet with him and his cabinet. I also would like to express my sincere appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to my delegation and me.

I have very productive and constructive talks with Mr. President Jokowi. We also exchanged, in-depth, views on bilateral relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia and discuss a wide range of regional and international issues of common interests.

At the bilateral level, I welcome the solid development of cooperation ranging from political, diplomacy, security and defense, economic, education, and socio-cultural that does not only solidify G-to-G and Business-to-Business relations but also strengthen further our People-to-People relations. Good frequencies of exchange of high – level visit further cementing our political commitment towards strengthening bilateral

relation. Business relation marks its positive trends of enhanced trade and economic cooperation where our chamber of commerce maintains contacts and many Indonesian companies (14 state-owned companies and about 400 private trading companies) are operating in Timor-Leste. There are about 5000 Timorese students who are studying in Indonesia while there are 7000 Indonesian citizens who are currently residing in Timor-Leste for different purposes.

Bilateral cooperation is increasing in all areas established through more than 50 frameworks of agreement between our two countries. I appreciate Indonesia's continued commitment to enhance capacity building partnership and technical assistance, particularly in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, trade and infrastructure, in line with Timor-Leste's national development agenda and priorities. Today we witnessed two (2) more agreements in the area of agriculture and forestry signed.

On land border negotiation, I welcome the progress made thus far where all nine (9) border crossing points have been opened to utilize border crossing pass in order to facilitate the movement of peoples of both countries who reside in the

border areas. I look forward to the launching of border regulated market in the near future, perhaps in 2016. I also would like to reiterate the commitment of the Government of Timor-Leste that I lead to expedite the effort leading towards the resolution of the two (2) remaining un-resolved segments of the land border.

Having said that, I would also like to inform that my government is ready to commence the discussion on the maritime boundary delimitation with Indonesia in accordance with UNCLOS 1982 of which our two countries are party to. In this regard, I have instructed my technical team to prepare for the initiation of the consultation within this year, perhaps before or during the next Joint Border Committee (JBC) meeting to be held in Dili soon.

I would like to reiterate the commitment of my government and underscore the importance of maintaining close coordination and consultation between our two countries through the existing bilateral mechanisms namely Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) Scorecard of the JMC on Bilateral Cooperation, the

Senior Officials Meeting of the Commission of Truth and Friendship (SOM-CTF) as well as Joint Border Committee (JBC).

On regional issues, I would like to express our appreciation for the continued support of Indonesia for Timor-Leste membership in ASEAN and I would like to emphasize the importance that my government attaches to ASEAN.

Apart from our engagements on other regional mechanisms such as South West Pacific Dialogue (SWP) Coral Triangle Initiative, the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) and the trilateral cooperation between Timor-Leste, NTT and Australian Northern Territory, that is still at its inception stage.

Last but not least, I would like to commend the leadership of Indonesia in conducting the Asian-African Summit successfully and congratulate the people of Indonesia for celebrating their 70<sup>th</sup> Year of Independence Day.

I would wish to end by reiterating the invitation by our President of Republic and stress that I would be more than happy to welcome His Excellency President Joko Widodo in Timor-Leste at His Excellency's convenience. THANK YOU