



# PRIMEIRO MINISTRO

**Speech of H.E. The Prime-Minister  
Major-General Taur Matan Ruak,  
In the Occasion of the Sworn-in Ceremony of  
The VIII Constitutional Government**

Palace of Lahane, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018

H.E. the President of the Republic, Mr. Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo and Spouse

H.E. the President of the National Parliament, Mr. Arão Noé Amaral

H.E. the President of the Appeal Court, Mr. Deolindo dos Santos

H.E. the Prime-Minister of the VII Constitutional Government, Mr. Mari Alkatiri

H.E. the Former Stakeholders of Sovereign Organs

H.E. Revered Bishops of Baucau, Dili and Maliana

Distinguish Members of the National Parliament

Distinguish Members of the Government

Distinguish Members of the Special Autonomous Region of Oecusse-Ambeno

Distinguish

General Prosecutor of the Republic

Chief of the Major-State of the Armed Forces

General-Commander of the National Police of Timor-Leste

Distinguish

Members of the Diplomatic Corp

Members of the International Agencies

Members of the of the Civil Society

Ladies and Gentlemen

Distinguish Guests

It is with great honour, but above all, with great humility and profound sense of duty, that I am sworn-in today to the exigent responsibility to lead the VIII Constitutional Government.

I am very grateful for the appointment made by the Alliance Change for Progress (AMP), winner of the Anticipated Elections, but above all by the fact of being chosen by the President of the coalition H.E. Mr. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão and by the Superior Counsellor of AMP, H.E. Mr. José dos Santos Naimori Bucar, to whom I salute and thank, for this high responsibility to conduct the destinies of the country.

I would like also to express my highest appreciation to the trust given, by H.E. the President of the Republic, in my nomination as Prime-Minister of Timor-Leste.

We start our mission in a decisive moment for the development, modernity and progress of our young Democracy, in the compliance of the great Objectives of the Sustainable Development and the great national goal to transform Timor-Leste, in a “*Rich, Strong and Safe Country!*”

We continue to be faithful to the ideals of our ancestors and to the values that have justified our resistance to the invader, with the sacrifice and pouring blood of so many Timorese Martyrs, Heroes and Families.

To reach well-being and social inclusion, and achieve simultaneously the sustainability of the State, through the efficient use of available means and resources to the benefit of all; was and still is, the legitimate goal of our People, who strongly wishes to be liberated from famine and poverty, achieving the prosperity together with material and spiritual well-being, necessary to a productive and happy life.

The VIII Constitutional Government, wishes to be the motor of this change and transformation of our society. A real locomotive for social inclusion and capacitation, who does not aim only in economic growth or increase of production, but also, and above all into Social Capital, basic infrastructures and a good, efficient governance, of the scarce available resources.

An engine of opportunities and hope, that understands, that it is not possible to obtain a fair and equitable development, when only some sectors of the society are prospering, while other groups of poor, vulnerable and disfavoured persons, continue to be in the isolation of rurality and forgiveness.

An engine that bets in in the true wealth of the Nations! A Wealth more everlasting than goods, properties or minerals, and more fruitful than interests coming from the Petroleum Fund.

The true wealth of Timor-Leste is its “Social Capital”, that brings together a group of citizens, mostly young, but that counts with the participation and inclusion of all: men and women, children, adults and elders, widows and orphans, veterans and former freedom fighters, citizens with incapacities, workers, entrepreneurs, businessmen and women, and investors, “*without ever leaving anyone behind*”.

A social capital which is not limited to the one million and two hundred thousand of Timorese present in the country, but extended to the Resident Communities Living Overseas, therefore increasing the inter-change potential in the five continents.

We are therefore a **Confident Government**, in its mobilizing project and in the orientation of its strategic vision, dully expressed in the quality, integrity and commitment of the Government structure that today is sworn-in.

A competent, stable and durable structure based in solidarity, in coordination and in the capacity, of completing the constitutional mandate trusted by the Timorese and dully supported by a strong parliamentary majority coalition.

A confidence believes, that to overcome difficulties it is necessary to ear different opinions and criticism, preventing and anticipating possible crises and incidents.

The time of lacking dialogue, of non-compliance, deadlock or crisis, is fortunately past, and was overcome by the exemplar behaviour of the different parties and leaders, and by the political maturity shown by our electoral citizens.

We are also a Government of Commitments, born from the dialogue capacity, the summary of plural opinions and the will to achieve alternatives, through negotiation and conciliation in favour of great national interest causes.

Consequently, we are not a Government of unthoughtful ruptures, that forgets contracts or commitments signed under the legal State of Right or under our membership at International Forum's.

Mr. President of the Republic

Excellencies, Distinguish Guests

Our credibility as a Nation, our thoroughness as a Government, our honesty has good-hearted persons, requires the continuity and the rigorous respect of those contracts and commitments, which shall survive throughout the lives of different government's.

We shall therefore maintain in our program of Government, some choices made by previous governments, that we consider as essential, such as:

- Human Capital, development;
- Basic Infrastructures, establishment;
- Economic Sectors, diversification and expansion; and
- Consolidation of management, transparency and accountability good practices, related to governance and public administration activities, which shall have an equal gender sensibility and the necessary reinforcement investment, in social peace, through Justice, Defence and Security, or International Cooperation.

But this does not mean that we should remain restrained to the past or hostage to imposed scenarios made by previous governments, which may be incompatible with the country's interests or with the most urgent necessities needed by our population.

In this sense, we are a **Government of Changes**, dully compatible and complementary to continuity defined by the National Strategic Development Plan and reconfirmed by the Road Map to Implement the Sustainable Development Goals, till 2030.

Changes that – considering the State of the Nation, the geopolitical environment and the country's reality – aims to press forward our will and unbreakable determination to

conquer development, to liberate our People from Poverty, Famine and the lacking of Opportunities.

For this purpose, we have designed an ambitious, but also attainable program, centred into: the well-being of our citizens, the increase of productivity and the decrease of importations, with good governance and exemplar public service, dully supported by transparent and equilibrated public budget expenditures.

Accordingly, we will continue to focus in the next five years:

- In Peace and Justice with robust and efficient Institutions, which are “*vital to convey the feeling of confidence and security to the population, essential to attract investments and to develop economic and social sectors in a sustainable manner*”;
- In Economic Diversification and Employment Creation, to answer the modernity challenges and requirements of a fundamentally young population (around 51,24% younger than 20 years of age) with a fast growing.

We have a promise to “*transform Timor-Leste in a country that currently has a very low income per capita, into a country of medium-high incomes*”, under our strategic plan for the Economy.

We know that to achieve these objectives we have to continue to invest in productive sectors where we are potentially competitive, namely:

- in the various branches of Tourism, such as nature, mountain, historical, cultural, religious, sportive or simply of leasure and recreation, since we have many possibilities to promote Timor-Leste as a unique, alternative, echological and environment friendly, destination.

- in Agriculture, Forests, Live Cattle and Fisheries, we can and we should create rapidly internal supplies networks, of hortical, fruits, meats and fresh fish, products, taking advantage of the new infrastructures being constructed (such as roads and bridges) or projected (such as seaports and airports), therefore reducing external dependency and increasing exportations, especially at the level of organic products with certified quality.
- in the creation of small and medium companies, dedicated to handicrafts and manufactured products, especially aimed to tourists and visitants, but also to feed the growing internal consume of essential articles and products.
- Also, in the creation of a business environment attractive to new investments, together with the preparation of relevant development cores, with industrial parks dully licensed and prepared with teh necessary basic infrastructures to accomodate and support teh installation of enterprises and industrial units. In this sense we wish to continue the ongoing task of procedures simplification, digitalization of investment processes and legalization of companies within an hour, among other measures aiming to put Timorese market into the international investments destination.
- In Youth, since it is no longer acceptable to continue with current situation: with the lack of work opportunities and where unemployment is abundant, forcing the youth to immigrate (to Northern Ireland, Australia, Portugal or South Korea), in the search of better living conditions.

We have the moral obligation and the duty to answer those calls from the Youth, with a message of Hope and Faith in the future, under the motto of “*every Citizen with a Life Plan*”, with clear orientations and proper counselling about education or training opportunities and different professional options, available at their disposal.



- In Gender Equality, in order to continue to answer to the expectations of our Women (around 49,2% of the population) who wish to have more active and participative lives in the development process of our country. We need to continue to invest in their potential through a policy of Equal Opportunities, in all levels of society and of the State, with a special emphasis for learning, training and economic opportunities.
- In Education, additionally to the projected investments in the University City of Aileu and in the University Campus of Hera, or in the recovering, rehabilitation and construction of new school infrastructures or equipment's, we aim to continue to answer to the need of better capacities, qualifications and competencies, required by the labour market, by the companies and investors, promoting the appearance of young citizens increasingly better prepared to face a World increasingly globalized and competitive.

In this sense, we will continue to bet in basic training for the youth that may have vocation for the teaching career. Simultaneously to conclude and reinforce the ongoing process of qualifying and training of teachers.

We aim to increase the offer of practical competencies in general school and to invest in the creation and adaptation of the new establishments of technical-vocational training at secondary and superior polytechnic levels.

- In Natural Resources, we have the benefit to own great energy resources, but we should put all our effort to escape from the "*Curse of Resources*", building bridges that may hold solid ties between resources and progress.

Consequently, we aim to continue prioritizing the South Coast, in the inter-sectoral project of Tasi Mane, where we want to install a modern Petro-chemical Industry, and a generating core for social-economic development.

Recently we achieved a victory in the International Law arena, related to the maritime border negotiations with Australia, and other battles are predicted under the leadership of the Principal Negotiator, our beloved Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão. It is still pending maritime border and land border negotiations with Indonesia, but above all the tough deal to guarantee the construction of the gas pipeline from the Greater Sunrise to Timor-Leste.

- In Territorial Decentralization and the creation of Municipal Development Hubs, we do not wish for a country in two velocities, where only the capital and some municipalities are benefiting from progress development.

We are a **Government of Cohesion**, where territorial solidarity is upheld, as well as the fighting of asymmetries and forgetfulness. We believe decentralization previously initiated, with the target to create Regions and Municipalities, is a tangible opportunity to establish in those locations real Development Hubs.

For this purpose we shall count with the enormous potential and resources of each Municipality, namely: the Mountain Tourism in Ainaro; the Superior Education in Aileu; manufacturing industries of minerals and cements in Baucau; landborder opportunities in Bobonaro, Covalima and Oecusse; information technologies in Dili; coffee production and organic products in Ermera; Tourism, agriculture-business and fishing industries in Manatuto and industries supporting the petroleum sector in Covalima, Manufahi and Viqueque.

One Country, with cohesion and progress, united in a shared Development!

- In the implementation and concretization of valuing, recognizing, preserving and celebrating the Memory of Former Freedom Fighters of National Liberation, we aim in current mandate to make an effort to complete the gathering of mortal remaining's of Heroes and Martyrs, resolving simultaneously pending questions related to pensions and monetary entitlements. We also wish to be able to create an Investment Fund, which will not only stimulate auto-sustainable business opportunities but also guarantee support for future social allowances.
- In International Relations, we shall continue to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation, increasing cultural, economic and commercial partnerships which are essential for the outsourcing of investment and for the capacity building of institutions and human resources.

Consequently, we aim to reinforce the friendship and cooperation ties with our neighbouring countries, Indonesia and Australia, with a special focus for the development of the trilateral project, related to the economic opportunities linked to connectivity, infrastructures, transports and liaisons between the three countries, and known as “*Timor-Leste, Indonesia and Australia, Growth Triangle*” (TIA-GT), between Timor-leste, the Australian Northern Territory and the Indonesian Province of Oriental Timor.

Also giving privilege to the historical, cultural and friendship ties, among the CPLP countries (Portuguese Speaking Countries Community); a common agenda with the G7+; to reinforce the relations at all levels with ASEAN countries, as part of the efforts to become a fully member state of this organization; and also to reinforce bilateral relations with friendly and important partnership countries, namely: China, South Korea, Cuba, United States of America, Japan, New Zealand and Portugal; among others.

We would also like to expand our participation in International and Regional Forum's, with special remarks to our launching application to become a member state of Commonwealth.

- Also, to continue aiming for a Society based in United, Healthy and Educated Families, facilitating for their harmonious development an integrated package of measures and instruments for social well-being, namely in the access of basic services such as education, health, electricity, drinking water, basic sewer system, maintenance of natural resources and environment, housing and urbanism.

This enormous challenge will test our determination and capacity to plan the actions and investments at short, medium and long term. Measures such as implementing an ecological and agricultural reserves, regional and municipal master plans, detailed and urban plans for Dili Capital City and for the head cities of the Municipalities, giving a practical and timely answer to the needs of population in an integral and transversal manner throughout the sectors of the State.

For this government it is inadmissible to continue licensing projects and constructions, without the necessary connections to basic services. We cannot accept the inauguration of a school, hospital or public building, without the necessary linkage to water, electricity, sewers, garbage management or internet, among others.

Similarly, we do not accept to discriminate small or big projects, since inaugurating a social house from a poor family or a small or medium company from a Timorese entrepreneur, has the same value and rights to receive public services from the State.

Simultaneously, it does not make sense to continue building cities and enterprises without territorial order, since it threatens the access to roads, transports, supplies or communications, essential to our lives and activities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguish guests,

This Government believes that it is not possible to complete the proposed goals and objectives, without a continuous participation, monitoring and evaluation of Citizens and their organizations.

Therefore, we assume three responsibilities that seems to us fundamental to maintain a permanent dialogue to approximate leaderships to common citizens.

Firstly, a Communication Responsibility, in order to allow, when possible, an expanded public debate about the different options and policies to be implemented, promoting a good understanding of questions and benefits to the country, of various decisions.

Secondly, a Collaboration Responsibility, with groups of citizens and civil society organizations, that are dedicated to monitoring, vigilance and accompanying State's activities, giving special attention to impacts caused by the different measures and to the satisfaction from the beneficiaries, related to public services provided.

Thirdly, a Transparency Responsibility, in budget execution, when possible through social communication organs, especially with those measures that requires a great financial effort and that compromises future generations.

We will be rigorous to ourselves government members and to public administration members, as well as with all of those that directly and indirectly benefit from public resources and State's subventions, or who may use goods and equipment's provided by public services (such as electricity, water, transports and communications, among others), to encourage good use, maintenance our conservation, therefore preventing damage and unnecessary expenditures to public assets.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguish guests,

We maybe a poor Country, in a development process, but we need to be able to have a mentality, thoughts and attitude correspondent to the Developed World.

Consequently, we are also a Government of Hope, adapted to our national, regional and international realities, that requires a lot of work, dedication, commitment, vocation, team spirit and sacrifice, voluntarism, discipline, solidarity, tolerance and a constant willingness to learn.

Timorese have demonstrated these characteristics among its people throughout the twenty-four years of freedom fighting. In the past as nowadays, there may be discordant and pessimistic opinions, but these obstacles shall not make us forget that our People is capable of great deeds even with extreme adversities.

If we are capable to face, resist and win a powerful occupant, we will also be capable to vanquish the new development challenges and to liberate our People.

But to achieve this great National Cause, it is necessary to mobilize and to reunite, in a single force, in a single will and in a common dream, all the citizens, all the entities and productive forces.

No one is dispensable, facing this enormous task that we have in front of us. The Government alone, without the active collaboration of all citizens and sectors of the society will not be capable to remove the structural blockades and obstacles that may condition our future.

It is not a moment for crispation, but for cooperation!

It is a moment for the mobilization of wills to win!

A time to unite all Timorese, from the East-extreme to Oecusse, from Tasi Mane to Tasi Feto.

For a Timor-Leste, Modern, Developed and prosperous!

May God Bless us All

Thank you for your attention.