



PRIME
MINISTER

Speech of H.E. Prime Minister, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão
at the Launch of the Timor-Leste's Future Leaders for ASEAN (FLBA)
Program

Salão Multiuso GMNTV
3 April 2024



Palácio do Governo
Avenida Marginal
Dili, Timor-Leste

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the launch of Timor-Leste's Future Leaders for ASEAN Program.

We are honoured to have His Excellency ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn with us this morning.

We are grateful for your visit as a demonstration of ASEAN's support for Timor-Leste's journey towards ASEAN membership.

Thank you very much for joining us and for your guidance and advice.

Can I also acknowledge Members of Government, our friends in the Diplomatic Corps, representatives from the private sector, international agencies, civil society, and academia.

I would also like to acknowledge and congratulate the first cohort of participants in the Timor-Leste Future Leaders for ASEAN program.

Your selection for this program is both an investment in your future, and in the future of our nation.

Developing the next generation of leaders is crucial for any country.

It is particularly important for Timor-Leste now as we embark on our final preparations to join ASEAN.

This program is a sign of our commitment to regional integration and cooperation, and it marks a significant step in our journey towards national development.

Timor-Leste's development is dependent more than ever before on our human resources and the empowerment of our human potential.

Which is why we are investing in the next generation of leaders.

The 9th Constitutional Government has identified human development and social capital as priority areas for investment, along with economic diversification, infrastructure development, and good governance.

We believe that our membership of ASEAN will augment these priorities.

Timor-Leste is a young nation with untapped potential.

Our young people – including the future leaders here today – will play an essential role in accelerating our progress.

We are committed to creating opportunities that enable young people to fulfil their potential.

And we are taking concrete action.

This year's annual budget increased funding in the education sector so that we can improve the quality of education at all levels.

The Human Capital Development Fund, established in 2011, is continuing to fund education and vocational training based on the greatest areas of need.

We believe that investing in future leaders will help our country better navigate global challenges, as well as foster innovation and contribute to a sustainable and prosperous future.

The Future Leaders for ASEAN Program is one way we are investing in our leadership, as we look to integrate further into our region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

To the 100 future leaders present here today, I wish you all a successful leadership program and a rewarding engagement with our ASEAN neighbours.

We look forward to you sharing the benefits of your experience on the program with your colleagues here in Timor-Leste and in your future leadership roles with our ASEAN partners.

Congratulations and good luck.

Thank you

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão