



PRIME
MINISTER

**GENERAL STATEMENT ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO**

**IN THE OCCASION OF THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE
44TH AND 45TH ASEAN AND ASEAN RELATED SUMMITS**

Vientiane, Lao PDR

9 October 2024

His Excellency Sonexay SIPHANDONE, ASEAN Chair and Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic,

Your Majesty,

Excellencies ASEAN Leaders,

Secretary – General

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege and honour to join you once again at this important ASEAN Summit.

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the Government of Lao PDR for its warm hospitality and for the progress it has achieved as the Chair of ASEAN this year.

It has been a difficult year in international affairs with rising tensions, hostilities, conflict and war.

We are witnessing a breakdown in the international system as powerful nations ignore international law at will.

We are experiencing the failure of developed countries to address the effects of climate change – a problem that they caused, and which impacts Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing Countries the most.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, I would like to extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families and communities affected by the recent devastating typhoon Yagi in Thailand, the Philippines, Lao, Vietnam and Myanmar. We stand in solidarity with the governments and people of the affected regions as they work to recover and rebuild.

And we are seeing inequality rising to dangerous levels while the world struggles to achieve the Strategic Development Goals.

In these difficult times, ASEAN holds more significance than ever as an international model for cooperation, unity and trust.

As an observer country, I urge ASEAN to adopt a global vision and demonstrate to the world what can be achieved when we foster dialogue, when we work in solidarity and when we strive for peace.

Excellencies,

For our country, we approach a significant chapter in our national journey. As we move closer to joining ASEAN, we understand both the responsibility of membership and the great potential of ASEAN.

We look forward to a future where Timor-Leste can grow together with the countries of Southeast Asia and where we can contribute meaningfully to peace and development.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the support of ASEAN member states and dialogue partners, whose support has helped us on our path towards integration.

As we look ahead, I wish to offer my sincere best wishes to the Kingdom of Malaysia as it prepares to take on the ASEAN chairmanship next year.

I have no doubt that under Malaysia's leadership, ASEAN will continue to rise to the challenges of our time, and to lead with vision, wisdom, and compassion.

Thank you very much.

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão