



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

**OPENING REMARKS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERMINISTERIAL COORDINATION MEETING
FOLLOWING THE ASEAN CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 46TH ASEAN
SUMMIT**

Noble Hall, MNEC
Dili, Timor-Leste
16 June 2025



Palácio do Governo
Avenida Marginal
Dili, Timor-Leste

Members of Government,
Technical teams from Government Ministries and Institutions,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to this important session — the first Inter-Ministerial Coordination Meeting — and to make some opening remarks.

This meeting comes at a significant moment in our nation's history.

On 26 May, at the 46th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, it was decided that Timor-Leste would be admitted as the 11th Member of ASEAN at the 47th ASEAN Summit in October 2025.

This historic decision is the result of many years of dedication, commitment and work — by the government, by our institutions, and above all, by the people of Timor-Leste. It is a major milestone in the life of our nation.

It also reflects the confidence and support of our ASEAN neighbours and their leaders.

We have every reason to celebrate this achievement — but we must also recognise that it marks the beginning of an even more demanding period.

From now until October, we must stay focused and coordinated to make sure that we are ready to become ASEAN's 11th member.

At the 46th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Timor-Leste was tasked with undertaking the procedural steps required for admission and to expediting negotiations on key economic agreements.

This will require serious effort. It will require unity, focus and a strong sense of urgency.

I call on all of you — Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Secretaries of State and technical teams — to approach this task with discipline and resolve. We cannot afford delay or complacency.

We must ensure that the ASEAN Inter-Ministerial Working Group and the network of focal points in each ministry are fully resourced, empowered and working together.

ASEAN has placed its trust in Timor-Leste — and in all of us here today. It is vital that we honour that trust and demonstrate that Timor-Leste is ready to make a contribution to our region.

ASEAN membership is not only a foreign policy goal - it is a national priority for our development. It reaches every sector — trade and investment, health and education, economic opportunity, security, social development and culture.

Our integration into ASEAN is a pathway to a stronger economy and a better life for our people.

Let us work to prepare not only for accession — but for long-term participation. Let us be a member that adds value and helps shape the future of our region.

Together, we can show that Timor-Leste is not only ready to join, but is determined to contribute — to regional peace, stability, integration and shared prosperity.

I urge all of us to ensure that this first Inter-Ministerial Coordination Meeting is effective and that we agree on clear next steps to secure our historic accession to ASEAN.

Thank you very much.
Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão