



PRIME
MINISTER

**MEDIA STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY KAY RALA XANANA
GUSMÃO, PRIME MINISTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE
FOLLOWING THE BILATERAL MEETING WITH HIS EXCELLENCY
LAWRENCE WONG, PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

Dili, 3 July 2026

It is my great pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Lawrence Wong to Timor-Leste for this Official Visit.

Prime Minister Wong's visit is historic. It is the first time a Prime Minister of Singapore has made an Official Visit to Timor-Leste.

It is also especially meaningful because it follows Timor-Leste's accession to ASEAN.

For Timor-Leste, ASEAN membership is the realisation of a national aspiration. It also brings us together with our Southeast Asian neighbours and gives us the opportunity to contribute more fully to the future of our region.

Prime Minister Wong's visit reflects the growing strength of the relationship between Timor-Leste and Singapore.

Our discussions today were warm, open and productive.

We discussed how Timor-Leste and Singapore can keep building a practical partnership that supports Timor-Leste's development, strengthens our participation in ASEAN and deepens the friendship between our peoples.

Singapore has been a trusted friend and partner. It has supported our people, our institutions and our preparations for ASEAN membership.

Today, we discussed how to take this cooperation into a new phase.

I thanked Prime Minister Wong for Singapore's continued support through the Enhanced Singapore-Timor-Leste ASEAN Readiness Support package.

The eSTARS package makes a significant contribution to supporting Timor-Leste's integration into ASEAN. It helps our officials, our institutions and our country participate more effectively in ASEAN's work.

Importantly, it will also support our preparations to Chair ASEAN in 2029.

I also welcomed Singapore's decision to open a resident Embassy in Dili. This is an important milestone in the relationship between our countries.

It is a strong symbol of Singapore's confidence in Timor-Leste and its commitment to our future partnership.

Our discussions also focused on trade and investment.

When I visited Singapore on an Official Visit last year, Prime Minister Wong and I spoke about how to build a stronger economy that provides jobs and opportunities.

For Timor-Leste to become more resilient we need to build a productive economy.

We need investment that creates jobs and supports development of our private sector.

Timor-Leste welcomes investment from Singapore, including in construction, tourism, health care, services and the development of the Blue Economy.

At a time of international uncertainty, Prime Minister Wong and I also reaffirmed the importance of international law, dialogue and peaceful cooperation between States.

For small States like Timor-Leste, international law is essential to our sovereignty, our security and our development.

We know from our own experience that difficult disputes can be resolved peacefully through law, dialogue and good faith.

We value Singapore's respected voice in our region and internationally in support of peace, stability and respect between States.

Prime Minister Wong, your visit has helped strengthen the relationship of trust and cooperation between Timor-Leste and Singapore.

Timor-Leste looks forward to building on the outcomes of this visit, including ASEAN cooperation, labour mobility, education, health, investment, connectivity and regional affairs.

I thank you again for your visit to Timor-Leste and for Singapore's continued friendship and support.

I now invite Prime Minister Wong to say a few words.