



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

**REMARKS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRIME MINISTER
KAY RALA XANANA GUSMÃO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORKING LUNCH WITH
HER EXCELLENCY PROF. DR (H.C.) MEGAWATI SOEKARNOPUTRI, FIFTH
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA**

Dili, 10 July 2026



Palácio do Governo,
Avenida Presidente Nicolau Lobato,
Dili, Timor-Leste

Her Excellency, Prof. Dr (H.C.) Megawati Soekarnoputri, Fifth President of the Republic of Indonesia,

Her Excellency, Maria Fernanda Lay, President of the National Parliament.

Pak Hasto Kristiyanto, Secretary General of PDI Perjuangan,

Honourable Members of Parliament from Indonesia and Timor-Leste,

Members of Government,

Distinguished members of the Indonesian delegation,

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen,

Ibu Mega,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you back to Timor-Leste and to welcome your delegation.

On behalf of the Government and people of Timor-Leste, we are very pleased to receive you once again in our country and to continue the friendship that has meant so much to our people.

I trust that your visit has shown you the warmth and respect that the Timorese people feel for you and the importance we attach to the role you played at a defining moment in our history.

This working lunch brings together leaders from Indonesia and Timor-Leste, members of Parliament and Government, our Indonesian friends and representatives of our two countries.

It is an opportunity to deepen our dialogue, strengthen practical cooperation and carry forward the work of friendship that our two countries have built over many years, including through our shared future in ASEAN.

It is also a reminder that this relationship is built not only by leaders, but by institutions, political parties, parliaments, communities and people.

Excellency,

I speak today not only as Prime Minister, but as someone who shared with you a moment that I will remember for the rest of my life.

On 20 May 2002, at Tasi-Tolu, Timor-Leste restored its independence. It was an open ceremony under the sky, before thousands of Timorese and leaders from around the world.

The United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan was there. Former US President Bill Clinton was there. President Jorge Sampaio of Portugal was there. Many friends of Timor-Leste were there.

At Tasi-Tolu that night, Timor-Leste took its place among the nations of the world.

But for me, one of the most powerful moments was walking together with you into the ceremony grounds.

As we walked towards the stage, before the Timorese people and before guests from around the world, the crowd responded with loud applause.

It was applause from our people recognising the meaning of your presence at that moment.

It showed that a new relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia was already beginning, not only in formal declarations, but in the hearts of our people.

Your presence helped turn a proud moment of independence into a defining moment of reconciliation.

We all understood what it meant for you to stand with us as our flag was raised and our sovereignty restored.

You sent a message that friendship with an independent Timor-Leste was not a loss, but a new beginning. And you sent a message to the world that former adversaries can choose peace, dignity and reconciliation.

I was deeply moved by the Presidential Lecture that you delivered yesterday. You clearly showed the great respect and affection that you have for our people.

And you confirmed that night at Tasi-Tolu was not a farewell, but, as you said, the “birth of Timor-Leste as an Indonesian brother”.

You also placed our painful past in its proper historical context.

The Timorese people also understood that we were the victims of the long history of colonialism and the Cold War calculations made by others.

Excellency, allow me to also to pay tribute to your father, President Sukarno, the Proclamator and Father of the Indonesian Nation, whose leadership gave voice to the aspirations of newly independent peoples across Asia, Africa and the wider world.

Bung Karno helped lead a global movement that exposed colonialism as not only foreign rule over territory, but the denial of human dignity and the claim that the powerful could decide the destiny of other nations.

In your own commitment to self-determination, justice and reconciliation, Your Excellency has carried forward that same spirit.

That is why yesterday, when President Ramos-Horta conferred upon you the Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, his words carried such truth.

He said: “You proved to the entire world that the true strength of a great nation lies not in its might, but in its capacity to build peace, to acknowledge history and to transform former division into enduring friendship between peoples.”

I agree with those words.

Ibu Mega,

Today, as you return to Timor-Leste, we honour not only that defining moment in our shared history, but the friendship that has grown from it.

Timor-Leste now has no closer friend than Indonesia. Our relationship has moved beyond reconciliation into genuine partnership, built on trust, respect and now our shared future in ASEAN.

This working lunch is an opportunity to continue the work of many years, to deepen our dialogue, strengthen cooperation and identify practical ways for Timor-Leste and Indonesia to move forward together.

Thank you for coming to Timor-Leste and for your friendship with our people.

Please rise and join me in a toast:

To Her Excellency Prof. Dr (H.C.) Megawati Soekarnoputri, to her continued good health and to the enduring friendship and fraternity between Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Obrigadu barak, terima kasih.